

XVII.—Salve Festa Dies

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This study presents the history and influence of the poem, *Tempora florigero rutilant distincta sereno* (Carm. 3.9), by Venantius Fortunatus (c. 530–c. 600), especially in the form of the cento, *Salve festa dies toto venerabilis aevo*. A medieval processional hymn of wide diffusion, it occurs in more than fifty versions, adaptations or imitations of the original. An evaluation of the whole series is attempted from the literary and liturgical points of view.

Among the hymns of Fortunatus, none has enjoyed a wider diffusion than his Resurrection poem, *Tempora florigero rutilant distincta sereno* (Carm. 3.9), dedicated to Felix, Bishop of Nantes.¹ It is more readily recognized in the form of the cento, *Salve festa dies toto venerabilis aevo*, well known as a medieval processional hymn of great prestige.²

Fortunatus, man of letters, writing prose as well as verse, a courtier, a traveller, a churchman and finally bishop of Poitiers, has appeared to his biographers as a unique figure standing on the borderline between the antique and the medieval ages. As one who entered so fully into the life of the sixth century and observed with such keen enjoyment the society and natural environment of western Europe, he is an authentic interpreter of the contemporary scene and truly representative of that period of transition.

His forte was occasional poetry. The occasion of the reception at Poitiers of a relic reputed to be of the true Cross, a gift of the Emperor Justin II and his wife, evoked his hymns on the Crucifixion theme, *Crux benedicta nitet* (Carm. 2.1), *Vexilla regis prodeunt* (Carm. 2.6) and *Pange lingua gloriosi proelium certaminis* (Carm. 3.2).³ The Resurrection poem *Tempora florigero* is also occasional

¹ MGH, Auct. Antiq. 4.1, Venanti . . . Fortunati . . . Opera poetica, ed. F. Leo (Berlin, 1881) 59 f.

² *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*, edited by C. Blume and G. Dreves, 55 vols. (Leipzig, 1886–1922), vol. 50, pages 76, 79. In later references this work will be indicated as A.H.

³ D. Tarde, *Fortunat. Etude sur un dernier représentant de la poésie latine dans la Gaule mérovingienne* (Paris, 1927) 161–2. Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. franc.* 9.40 (MPL 71.518); B. M. Peebles, "Fortunatus, Poet of the Holy Cross," *Amer. Church Monthly*, 38 (1935) 152–166.

since it was composed for the Paschal baptism rite, administered by Felix at Nantes when he gathered into the fold a throng of pagan converts.

Aspera gens Saxo vivens quasi more ferino
Te medicante, sacer, bellua reddit ovem. (lines 103-4)

As Fortunatus came to Poitiers about the year 567 and issued his first collection of *Carmina* about 576, an approximate date of composition for the poem is determined.⁴ During this period the poet's friendship with three great bishops, Leontius of Bordeaux, Felix of Nantes and Gregory of Tours, to a certain extent shaped his literary course.⁵ In his association with Felix, as recorded in his work, Fortunatus praises him for successful negotiations with the Britons (*Carm.* 3.5, 8);⁶ he is invited to Nantes by Felix on the occasion of the dedication of a church (*Carm.* 3.6, 7); he congratulates Felix on the completion of an irrigation project in his diocese (*Carm.* 3.10); he is the guest of Felix at his country estate (*Carm.* 5.7). Of particular interest, however, is the baptismal ceremony for which the *Tempora florigero* was written, which Fortunatus is assumed to have attended and at which his poem may have been used.⁷

The poem, comprising 110 lines or 55 elegiac strophes, falls naturally into well marked subdivisions. The first of these, lines 1-38, is devoted to the springtime renewal of life in nature as a symbol of praise to the Risen Lord.

Ecce, renascentis testatur gratia mundi
Omnia cum Domino dona redisse suo. (lines 31-2)

Although the Easter festival had been celebrated in hymns from an early period, to link the theme of nature's renewal with that of the Resurrection is original. It marks new and unconventional thought. References to the violet, the green herbage, the vine, the myrtle, the willow and the fir, suggest scenes familiar to the poet from his travels and leisurely visits to the homes of the great. One recalls too, how the later medieval poets rejoiced in the springtime. The possibility should not be discounted, however, that Fortunatus here interpreted nature through Virgilian eyes as well as from direct

⁴ W. Meyer, *Der Gelegenheitsdichter Venantius Fortunatus* (Berlin, 1901) 19, 20, 29.

⁵ W. Meyer, *op. cit.* 19; *Carmina*, especially Books I-V.

⁶ Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. franc.* 5.32 (MPL 71.348).

⁷ W. Meyer, *op. cit.* 38.

observation. Manitius enumerates four similarities of expression with the *Georgics*.⁸

At line 39, which opens the second part of the poem, the festival theme is introduced with the words, *Salve festa dies toto venerabilis aevo*. New praises lead up to the direct address to Christ as creator and redeemer.

Christe, salus rerum, bone conditor atque redemptor. (47)

From lines 47 to 88 the theme of the Incarnation is expanded, reaching its climax in line 60,

Intras mortis iter dando salutis opem.

The subject of the descent of Jesus into the infernal regions and his conflict with the powers of hell, which follows, is treated in characteristic medieval fashion, alternating with references to the Resurrection triumph.⁹ The Christian concept of victory over death, similarly to the poet's concept of nature, is colored by the recollection of classical phrases from Virgil and Ovid. The poet seems also to have been familiar with the *Carmen paschale* of Sedulius (5th C.) and the *Historia evangelica* or *Libri evangeliorum* of Juvenius (4th C.).¹⁰

At line 89 the transition is made to the final section of the poem which has reference to the praise of Felix and the baptismal rites mentioned above.

Rex sacer, ecce, tui radiat pars magna triumphi,
Cum puras animas sacra lavacra beant.
Candidus egreditur nitidis exercitus undis,
Atque vetus vitium purgat in amne novo. (89-92)

It seems superfluous to call attention to further details of style and content illustrative of the older poetical models or the new infusion of medieval feeling and expression — except for the metrical form. The elegiac distich of classical poetry is now employed in the Christian hymns, *Crux benedicta nitet* and *Tempora florifero*. Referring to the *Crux benedicta*, Raby speaks of these elegiacs as "full of that strange and novel beauty with which Christian mysti-

⁸ M. Manitius, "Poetarum priorum loci expressi a Fortunato," *MGH, Auct. Antiq.* 4.2, *Venanti . . . Fortunati . . . opera pedestria*, ed. B. Krusch (Berlin, 1885) 133.

⁹ For a discussion of this subject, see R. E. Messenger, "The Descent Theme in Medieval Latin Hymns," *TAPhA* 67.126-47.

¹⁰ M. Manitius, *op. cit.* 133.

cism was learning to adorn the measures borrowed from the ancient world."¹¹ Fortunatus was an instrument in perpetuating a classical metrical tradition which persisted throughout the Middle Ages.

Although the poem in its entirety is unsuited to general liturgical use, it appears in a tropary of St. Gall of the tenth century and a few other manuscripts.¹² In contrast, are the many shorter excerpts or centos which are multiplied in liturgical sources throughout the medieval period. From these the following cento emerges about the tenth century as a liturgical hymn standardized, so to speak, in the form most widely favored.

- R. Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aevo,
Qua Deus infernum vicit et astra tenet.
1. Ecce, renascentis testatur gratia mundi
Omnia cum Domino dona redisse suo.
 2. Namque triumphanti post tristia tartara Christo
Undique fronde nemus, gramina flore favent.
 3. Legibus inferni oppressis super astra meantem
Laudant rite Deum lux, polus, arva, fretum.
 4. Qui crucifixus erat, Deus, ecce, per omnia regnat,
Dantque creatori cuncta creata precem.
 5. Nobilitatis anni, mensum decus, arma dierum,
Horarum splendor, scripula puncta fovent.
 6. Christe, salus rerum, bone conditor atque redemptor,
Unica progenies ex deitate patris,
 7. Qui genus humanum cernens mersisse profundo,
Ut hominem eriperes, es quoque factus homo,
 8. Funeris exsequias pateris, vitae auctor et orbis,
Intras mortis iter dando salutis opem.
 9. Pollicitam sed redde fidem, precor, alma potestas,
Tertia lux rediit, surge sepulte meus!
 10. Solve catenatas inferni carceris umbras
Et revoca sursum, quidquid ad ima ruit.
 11. Redde tuam faciem, videant ut saecula lumen,
Redde diem, qui nos te moriente fugit.
 12. Eripis innumerum populum de carcere mortis,
Et sequitur liber, quo suus auctor adit.
 13. Hinc tumulum repetens post tartara carne resumpta,
Belliger ad caelos ampla tropaea refers.

The cento of 28 lines opens with the second part of the original poem but the praise of nature has been preserved by selecting four preceding lines on that theme. Otherwise the strophes are chosen

¹¹ F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry etc.* (Oxford, 1927) 89.

¹² *A.H.* 50.79.

here and there in the order of the original, closing with line 86. Thus, the Resurrection theme is expanded while the final section of the poem referring directly to Felix is omitted. With the establishment of the cento comes its general use as a processional hymn, with a refrain consisting of the opening strophe, to be repeated after each of the following strophes.

An account of the medieval processional hymn, with its associated ceremonial practice, is impossible here. Information upon this subject, particularly direct evidence as to the singing of specific hymns in processions, during the period when the cento was constructed, is extremely rare. If we approach the problem from the history of processional practice, it seems clear that the religious procession was a feature of Christian worship as early as the fourth century. Public processions at Jerusalem are described in the *peregrinatio Sylviae*.¹³ Ambrose observed them in the western church.¹⁴ Processions in the City of Rome took place from the fifth century on, centering about the churches which had received the bodies of martyrs once buried in the catacombs.¹⁵ Singing, especially the chanting of Psalms, was heard in early processions but the medieval processional hymn came later. Since processions were introduced into the western church from the eastern, associated hymns began to appear only when this form of festival practice was well established in the west. Dom Férotin is of the opinion that the Palm Sunday procession and blessing of palms was first observed in Spain.¹⁶ The Palm Sunday processional hymn written by Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans (d. 821), *Gloria laus et honor*, may have a direct connection with processional tradition in western European regions.

A second type of procession took place within the church walls, preceding the mass.¹⁷ In connection with this ceremony, the medieval processional hymn was used on special occasions increasingly

¹³ S. *Sylviae, quae fertur, Peregrinatio ad loca sancta*, ed. P. Geyer, C.S.E.L. 39 (Vindobonae, 1898) 35-101. See chapters xxvi, xxxi, xliii. For liturgical implications see the translation by M. L. McClure and E. L. Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria* (London, S.P.C.K., 1919; Translations of Christian Literature, Series 3, Liturgical Texts).

¹⁴ Ambrose, *Ep.* 40.16, *Ad Theodos.* (MPL 16.1107).

¹⁵ M. F. Valletta, "Religious Processions in Catholic Lands," *Amer. Cath. Quar. Review*, 43 (1918) 302.

¹⁶ Dom M. Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, in *Monumenta ecclesiae liturgica*, 5 (Paris, 1904) 178-87.

¹⁷ Gulielmus Durandus, *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (Lugduni, 1612) 4.6.98-103.

to the end of the Middle Ages. One of the earliest processional hymns, of which the use can be proved, is *Magnum salutem gaudium*, attributed to Gregory the Great.¹⁸ However, these ceremonies, the hymns which accompanied them and the traditions which they represent, form only a part of a much larger subject which must be postponed for future treatment. From the general development of the medieval procession and the processional, *Salve festa dies* has alone been selected for study because of its interest both in literary and liturgical tradition.

St. Gall, a musical center so noteworthy in the evolution of the sequence, was also influential in the evolution of the processional hymn. In the tenth century a type of hymn called *versus* was highly developed at St. Gall. The *versus*, in the opinion of Gautier, constituted a true processional, neither a hymn which belongs to the canonical hours nor a sequence which belongs to the mass. It is marked by a refrain and is always accompanied by music. Gautier enumerated thirty-eight pieces, properly termed *versus*, among them the cento *Salve festa dies* which he asserted had its origin at St. Gall and was there entitled *Versus de Resurrectione Domini*.¹⁹ However, at least one manuscript of the *Carmina* of Fortunatus named the poem *versus*.²⁰

The refrain, sometimes double, is a distinguishing feature of the processional hymn but its origin may antedate the practice at St. Gall. A refrain, either poetical or musical, is a device not exclusively associated with medieval hymnology. The suggestion has been made that the refrain may have entered western Europe with Moorish poetry and music.²¹ Its pattern certainly bears a close resemblance to that of the lyric poetry emanating from the Spanish peninsula and is perfectly illustrated in the *Gloria laus et honor* which was written during the Carolingian revival and not the later revival at St. Gall. Again, a full presentation of the evidence from hymns other than *Salve festa dies* cannot be offered here.

In addition to the original cento, from fifty to sixty versions, adaptations or imitations occur with the same opening words *Salve*

¹⁸ L. Gautier, *Histoire de la Poésie liturgique au Moyen Age: Les Tropes* (Paris, 1886) 25. See Blume's notes, *A.H.* 51.74-5.

¹⁹ L. Gautier, *op. cit.*, *Versus*, ch. iv, especially page 28.

²⁰ *Codex Petropolitanus*, see *MGH, Auct. Antiq.* 4.1.59.

²¹ J. B. Trend, *The Music of Spanish History to 1600* (London, 1926) 29.

festas dies.²² It must be kept in mind, however, that the original is used continuously and the most frequently during the whole period in which new versions were created and sung. No new version for Easter rivals the original. An attempt was made in the twelfth century to divide the first half of *Tempora florigero* (lines 1–60), into parts each with the refrain, for Easter and the five Sundays following (*A.H.* 50.82). In a later adaptation, 30 lines selected from lines 1 to 48 are divided into seven portions for the days of Easter week, again with the refrain (*A.H.* 50.83).

The processional model, *Salve festa dies*, proved so attractive that it was adapted for a variety of feasts other than Easter. Chronologically, they are common from the twelfth century and reach their climax in the fifteenth century. In each case, the first strophe reveals the feast to be celebrated. Beginning with Ascension, we have

Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aevo
Qua Deus ascendit victor et astra tenet,

a formula which introduces three short hymns closely resembling the poem of Fortunatus (*A.H.* 50.80, 81a, 81b). The Resurrection theme is transformed into that of Ascension by incorporating the lines which describe the victorious Christ bearing the spoils of death to the celestial realm. In a fourteenth-century hymn a selection is made describing the white-robed throng of the redeemed, which has additional interest since *Felix*, the proper noun, has become *felix* the adjective.

Additur ac felix consors mercede sacerdos
Qui dare vult domino dupla talenta suo. (*A.H.* 4.26, lines 13–14)

A longer Ascension hymn of 38 lines,

Salve, festa dies, qua Christus ad astra regressus
Nostrum de terra corpus ad ipsa levat (*A.H.* 43.27)

is an entire departure from the text of Fortunatus except for the introductory words. Sooner or later, hymn writers apparently recognized the inadequacy of the original for other feasts. In consequence, the new versions far outnumber the adaptations of the old. At the same time, groups of processional hymns derived from

²² *A. H. passim*. Detailed references in text of article. *Salve* hymns are noted in C. U. J. Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum* (Louvain, Bruxelles, 1892–1920) 17921–17962, 33100–33102, 40643–40666.

one religious center and appearing in the same liturgical collection show common characteristics of style and authorship or common standards of selection. The hymn just cited is one of a group from an Augustinian manuscript of Bridlington belonging to the twelfth or thirteenth century, of which others will be mentioned presently.

Greater changes in the original text would seem to be demanded by the theme of Pentecost, yet short centos were constructed, surprisingly faithful to it, with opening lines such as the following:

Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aeo

Qua sacer accendit spiritus igne suos (A.H. 43.30a)

and

Qua nova de caelo gratia fulsit humo (A.H. 50.81d)

also

Qua Deus in sanctos affluit igne suos. (A.H. 4.27)

All these are of late medieval origin.

In the Bridlington series two new hymns appear with the same opening lines.

Salve, festa dies, quam sanctificavit ab alto

Cordibus infusus spiritus uberior. (A.H. 43.31a, 31b)

The manuscript presents the two as one hymn comprising 50 verses symbolic of the 50 days from Easter to Pentecost. The fire from heaven (*caelitus ignis*) is mentioned in the first part, and the harvest garnered by the apostles under the power of the Spirit, true Pentecostal themes. The second part or the latter hymn is more subjective, echoing the *Veni creator spiritus*, attributed to Rabanus Maurus (A.H. 50.193). To compare, the third stanza of *Veni creator* follows:

Tu septiformis munere,
Dextrae Dei tu digitus,
Tu rite promisso patris
Sermone ditans guttura.

Turning to the processional, we have

Iste Dei digitus, manus est sed dextera Christus,

Indicat hic digitus, quae manus illa facit . . .

Corda replet sensu, ditat sermonibus ora . . .

In quo septeno cor munere consecrat aram.

(A.H. 43.31b, lines 17-18, 21, 27)

If one follows a single theme throughout the hymnology of the Middle Ages, one discovers the dominating pattern of a truly great

hymn repeated by a host of lesser writers, for instance, in the Ambrosian models. This study, as a whole, is such a record. But in a lesser degree, the same tendency is observable where the poetic expression of medieval thought or belief is guided by literary masters from century to century.

Wholly new texts were required for the hymns to be written for the remaining feasts when the *Salve* model was used, among them Trinity, Nativity, Epiphany, Corpus Christi, Invention of the Holy Cross, Name of Jesus, All Saints, the feasts of the Virgin and those of individual saints. Several of these are well illustrated by the fifteenth century processions of St. Ositha (St. Osyth) in Essex.²³ For Trinity, we have

Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aevo
Qua colitur trinus unus ubique Deus (A.H. 11.12)

in which Father, Son and Holy Spirit are successively praised. For the Nativity,

Salve, etc.
Qua Deus extat homo, qua polus instat humo . . .
Nascitur ergo Iesus de virgine, regia proles;
In nobis habites; sit benedicta dies.
(A.H. 43.18a, lines 1, 2, 9, 10)

In the processional,

Salve, etc.
Qua Deus in utero virginis extat homo,

although it is designated for the Nativity, the praise of the Virgin is marked. The words *sit benedicta dies* here occur as an inner refrain.

En ancilla Dei, respondens Virgo beata
Concepit Dominum; sit benedicta dies.
(A.H. 11.13, lines 1, 2, 11-12)

For Epiphany, we find

Salve etc.
Qua Iesus in cunis claruit esse Deus (A.H. 43.18c)

a short piece of sixteen lines into which are crowded the Epiphany themes, the star, the magi and their gifts, the miracle at Cana of the water changed into wine, and the revelation of divinity at the baptism of Jesus.

²³ All these open with the full line, *Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aevo*.

The St. Ositha series includes processional for the Virgin feasts of the Nativity, Visitation and Assumption, as follows:

Salve, etc.

Qua nova regina gignitur orbis hera. (A.H. 11.43)

Salve, etc.

Qua Christi mater visitat Elisabeth. (A.H. 11.51)

Salve, etc.

Qua fuit assumpta virgo Maria pia. (A.H. 11.55)

The three are so similar in poetic style and treatment that they may well be the work of a single author, imbued with the symbolism of the Virgin theme made familiar by medieval theologians and poets, especially Adam of St. Victor.

Tu Libani cedrus, Moysi rubus, integra nardus

Et Aaron virga, tu Jerichoque rosa. (A.H. 11.55, lines 9-10)

The processional hymn for All Saints, the last to be chosen from the series of St. Ositha, again offers a conventional treatment.

Salve, etc.

Qua Deus in sanctis regnat ubique suis. (A.H. 11.62)

The elegiac strophe is peculiarly adapted to the successive praises of the heavenly panoply, the Trinity, the Virgin, the angels, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins. With a fine musical rendering such a processional must have been very impressive.

Among the festivals introduced in the later medieval centuries, that of Corpus Christi (1264) is perhaps the most important. In the history of processional usage it is of the highest interest, for it was so frequently accompanied by the act of carrying the Host in procession within the walls of the church or through the public streets. The sequence which St. Thomas Aquinas wrote for the feast, *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem*, and the office hymns, especially *Pange lingua, gloriosi corporis mysterium*, its form copied from the *Pange lingua* of Fortunatus, were imitated on every side for every liturgical purpose. Unfortunately, the imitators of St. Thomas were inferior to him as poets. A lengthy processional of 44 lines begins

Salve, etc.

Qua caro Messiae fit cibus ecclesiae. (A.H. 4.32)

With its labored strophes and the repetition of the refrain it seems interminable. A finer effort dates from a manuscript written shortly after the death of Aquinas. It is also nearer to his thought.

Salve, etc.

Qua nova dat Christus munera christicolis. (A.H. 43.33)

A later hymn is centered about the typology of the heavenly manna.

Salve, etc.

Qua Christi corpus turba renata colit. (A.H. 43.34)

A few illustrations of hymns devoted to the feasts of individual saints will close this review of the new hymns derived from the *Salve festa dies* model. Perhaps the most notable of these is the work of Pope Calixtus II (d. 1124), entitled *Versus Papae Calixti cantandi ad processionem Sancti Jacobi in solemnitate passionis ipsius et translationis eiusdem*. It became a liturgical hymn in Spain.

Salve festa dies, Iacobi veneranda trophaeo

Qua caelos subiit proximus ille Deo. (A.H. 17.194)

The legend of a saint, especially a patron saint, provides appropriate material for a processional in the place where his praises are to be celebrated. Thus St. Patrick (A.H. 43.266) and St. George are honored. The hymn for St. George from a manuscript dated 1413-1422 is exceptionally interesting.

Salve, etc.

Qua pugil Anglorum migrat ab orbe polo.

It seems to be dedicated to the peaceful interlude between France and England brought about by Henry V, after the battle of Agincourt.

O pugil Anglorum, pugna cum forma virorum,

Prospiciens famulis semper adesto tuis.

Henricus Quintus, rex Anglus, et Anglia tota

Regnet pace Dei gaudia pacis habens.

Anglis Francisque pax perpes detur ubique,

Martyris in iubilo laus tibi, Christe, Deo . . .

Pace reformatur Angli Francique, ut in aevum

Alterutris maneat intemeratus amor.

(A.H. 43.157, lines 1, 2, 9-14, 21-22)

In the group honoring saints, the Processional of St. Ositha includes hymns for St. Augustine (of Hippo), Sts. Peter and Paul, patron saints of the Priory,²⁴ and naturally St. Ositha herself. Other saints honored in processional hymns of the *Salve* type are St. Dunstan, St. Hugh of Lincoln and St. Kineburga. It may be

²⁴ *History of Essex II, Victoria History of the Counties of England*, ed. H. A. Doubleday and W. Page (London, 1903) 157.

of significance that the local saints or the patron saints as a group belong predominantly in the British Isles where the model of Fortunatus seems to have been a favorite.²⁵ However, the reasons for this are obscure, for we know nothing of the hymn writers concerned or why they chose this particular hymn pattern.

A partial evaluation of the entire body of poetry represented in this study has been possible in connection with the themes of individual feasts. We have, for instance, an original Easter cento which maintained its purity to a high degree throughout the medieval period. We have, also, a group of hymns which follow the cento more or less closely. New feasts, however, required fresh subject matter and treatment often suggested by hymnic tradition from other sources. The difference from the original seems to be proportional to the distance in time and difference in the theme of the feast. The literary evolution cannot be separated from the liturgical, for the processional hymn from the beginning was inspired by liturgical practice and was written to be sung.

If one scans the geographical extent covered by a list of places where *Salve* hymns were used, as a guide to liturgical practice, three areas appear to be represented, St. Gall and central Europe, the Frankish or western European lands, and the British Isles.²⁶ Perhaps they can be linked with the spread of processional practice but the evidence cannot be presented here. Again, it must be recalled that the *Salve* series comprises only one group from the much larger total of processional hymns actually used in the Middle Ages.

A second basis of evaluation has been offered by the hymns from a particular collection such as that of St. Ositha. A poetic similarity prevails through the disparity of theme. The group as a whole reveals a relatively high standard of poetic expression and, on the liturgical side, an unusual interest in the music and ceremonials attending a variety of feasts. The Augustinian Priory of St. Osyth was founded by Richard de Belmeis, Bishop of London (1108-27), in the reign of Henry I. In the fourteenth century it was favored by Pope Boniface IX and enjoyed for a time pontifical privileges.²⁷

²⁵ For the popularity of the *Salve* type in England, see Blume's notes to *A.H.* 52, no. 56.

²⁶ Manuscripts with *Salve* hymns are associated with St. Gall, Mainz, Salzburg, Klosterburg; Nivers, Messin, Cambrai, Tournai, Poitiers, Campostella; York, Salisbury, Winchester, Bridlington, St. Osyth, Lincoln, Canterbury, Dublin and many other places. See notes to hymns in *A.H.* for details.

²⁷ *History of Essex II* (above, note 24) 157.

Whether this period of influence or a later one coincided with the writing of the hymns in the fifteenth century manuscript, or have anything to do with their production, cannot be determined without historical sources unavailable to the present writer. The suggestion is offered tentatively.

A literary evaluation, on any basis suggested above, is impossible without reference to the general deterioration which marked Latin hymnody in the later medieval period. It is, of course, apparent in certain specimens of the *Salve* type. But a new and opposite current is observable from the period of the liturgical revivals in England which accompanied the founding and continued influence of the rituals of Sarum and York, especially the former. As a guide to values, the versions used in the *Sarum Processional* are significant. They have been reserved for consideration at this point in order to exhibit the standard which prevailed in the diocese of Salisbury and eventually became influential throughout Britain as a whole and in southern England particularly.²⁸

There are seven versions of *Salve festa dies* in the *Sarum Processional* as edited in 1882 from early printed editions of the sixteenth century.²⁹ They were used for the feasts of Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Visitation, Name of Jesus, and for the Dedication of a Church. The traditional music used both in York and Sarum is known from manuscript sources and has been published in modern times.³⁰

The Easter processional is a new cento of 22 lines made directly from *Tempora florigero*. Ascension and Pentecost processions of 24 and 16 lines respectively are also drawn from the original. (*S.P.* 93, 122, 124). The hand of the purist is evident here as the ultimate sources are once more utilized. A glance at the *York Processional* shows a new cento for Easter unlike that of Sarum but resembling the old St. Gall version (*Y.P.* 175-6). For Ascension and Pentecost wholly new versions are provided (*Y.P.* 187; cf *A.H.* 52.24; *Y.P.* 188).

²⁸ See R. E. Messenger, "Hymns and Sequences of the Sarum Use," *TAPhA* 59.103. Sarum influence upon St. Ositha is observable in processions for Visitation (*A.H.* 11.51) and Dedication of Church (*A.H.* 52.35).

²⁹ *Processionale ad Usum . . . Sarum* (Leeds, 1882), ed. W. G. Henderson. Cited as *S.P.*

³⁰ *Manuale et Processionale ad Usum . . . Eboracensis*, ed. W. G. Henderson, *Surtees Society, Publications*, 63 (Durham, 1875) 175-6. Cited as *Y.P. Hymns, Ancient and Modern, Historical Edition* (London, 1909) 204; reprinted from *Sarum Graduale* (facsimile edition, 1894) 116.

The remaining four Sarum hymns are also new. The hymn for Corpus Christi is inferior to the other Sarum hymns and difficult to classify. It lacks the beauty and warmth with which Aquinas informed the theology of the Corpus Christi theme. It is bleak and sometimes threatening.

Si capis indigne, te iudex puniet igne;
Qui digne capiunt, hi bene proficiunt.
Extra mortalem culpam si sis, cape talem
Sanctorum panem; non cibatur ille canem. (S.P. 126, lines 21-4)

The meter, too, has degenerated from the elegiac model. In contrast, the *York Processional* hymn uplifts the thought to the festival nature of the day and the solemn rejoicing appropriate to it (Y.P. 192; cf. A.H. 52.25).

The high standard of hymnology which characterizes, in general, the Sarum Rite, is illustrated in the remaining three processionals. For the Visitation, we have 26 lines, beginning

Salve, etc.
Qua Christi mater visitat Elizabeth (S.P. 149)

18 lines of which are repeated in the St. Ositha version above mentioned. Its inspiration is drawn directly from the Biblical narrative. For the Feast of the Name of Jesus, we have

Salve, etc.
Qua Jesus hoc nomen flectere cuncta facit.
Caelica namque pavent, terrestria quoque verentur,
Et baratri prope consistere taetra vetat.
(S.P. 152; cf. A.H. 52.23, lines 1-4)

As the hymn proceeds, it becomes evident that the older hymn *Jesu dulcis memoria* was before the mind of the author.

Hoc nomen maestis laetitia, tristibus amplum
Praesidium confert, bella necat trucia.
O Jesu, O pulcher, summe bonus ipse valore,
Quam pius et lenis dulcia dando foves! (lines 15-8)

In choosing the processional hymn for the Dedication of a Church, the sixteenth century liturgists of Sarum and York were of one mind. A thirteenth century version was selected, built upon the medieval typology of the church (S.P. 134, Y.P. 202; cf. A.H. 52.35). It is quoted in full to illustrate the long road of time, place and theme traveled by the poem of Fortunatus in a thousand years.

- R. *Salve festa dies*, toto venerabilis aevo,
 Qua sponso sponsa iungitur ecclesia.
1. Haec est aula Dei pacis locus et requiei,
 Hic ineunt inopes ad Salomonis opes.
 2. Filius ille David, qui nos sibi consociavit,
 Hac in matre domo et Deus est et homo.
 3. Copula caelestis vos spiritualiter estis,
 Si servando fidem esse velitis idem.
 4. Urbs nova Ierusalem descendens spiritualementem
 Attulit ornatum lucis ab arce datum.
 5. Hunc fidei fructum sacro baptismate ductum
 Dat rex iustitiae caelitus ecclesiae.
 6. Firma David turris, huc si pede perpeti curris,
 Invenies in ea pignora siderea.
 7. Haec est arce Noë, credentibus auxiliatrix,
 Quae vehit ad portum, quos vehit unda maris.
 8. Haec est scala Iacob, per quem conscendere solum,
 Credenti populo dat bona vitae, polum.

After a triumphant progress throughout the medieval centuries, *Salve festa dies* has persisted into modern times and today is still sung in the Easter version in every corner of Christendom.³¹ No single explanation will suffice to account for its prestige. Much may be said for the attractiveness of the poetical model and the freshness of its inspiration. To that advantage must be added the adoption of the hymn in a musical and liturgical center like St. Gall, where its processional character was confirmed. Through the extension of processional ceremonies the hymn undoubtedly gained a wider circulation. A traditional musical setting, to which any number of new poetical versions could be fitted, may have played its part in the diffusion of the *Salve* type. Finally, its original connection with Easter, greatest of all Christian festivals, assured universal repetition of the hymn which, century by century, inspired the hymn writers of each succeeding age.

³¹ Versions in English are *Welcome, happy morning*, translated by J. Ellerton, 1868; *Hail thee Festival Day*, translation from *Enlarged Songs of Praise* (London, 1931) 389. A modern German version is *Heil dir, festlicher Tag*, translated by R. Zoosmann, *Laudate dominum* (München, 1928) 83.