

to the *Sacrorum Rituum Congregatio* (S. R. C. = Congregation charged with the guardianship of the Liturgy and Sacred Rites), which with the concurrence of the Pope nominated a special commission of five skilled and competent Professors. This commission determined the fundamental principles of the Roman Chant as they were embodied after the Council of Trent, though not yet generally fixed or adopted uniformly in all their bearings, and examined the new melodies for new offices that were put before them.<sup>1)</sup>

But since 1884, we have a complete and authentic edition of all the Liturgical books which contain the Gregorian-Roman Chant. This colossal and costly work was undertaken by the Pontifical printer, Frederick Pustet of Ratisbon, to whom, in consideration of his enterprising spirit, an exclusive printing privilege of thirty years was granted by the Holy See, whilst all proprietary rights remain reserved to the Sacred Congregation.<sup>2)</sup> The several editions brought out by De Voght, and E. Duval of Mechlin, those by Jacques Lecoffre of Paris, the Rheims-Cambrai edition, the *Liber Gradualis* of Dom Pothier and others similar, were submitted to the Holy See after they had been published; and the Holy Father was pleased to signify his appreciation of the praiseworthy zeal displayed by both authors and editors in their efforts to

<sup>1)</sup> Dr. Thalhofer writes in his *Handbook for Catholic Liturgy*, Freiburg, Herder, 1887, p. 38: "The Church authorities are certainly not to be blamed, if, recently, the better to bring about all possible uniformity in liturgical chant, they did not rely upon the ever unsteady archaeological principles, but, in the official edition of the Choral-books, kept steadily to melodies now long established in use." See also, pp. 549 *et seqq.*

<sup>2)</sup> The position which some wish to make for science and archæology against the Liturgy and liturgical chant must be decidedly rejected. Nowhere does the Church take a more decided stand than in the Liturgy. Archæological science comes in only as a helpmate not as a judge; she can help to its better understanding, and within certain limits co-operate, but she has no right to command. See *Musica Sacra*, 1889, pp. 58 *et seqq.*

promote the study and practice of Plain Chant. The principal difference however between these private enterprises and the official editions of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, lies in the fact, that every single sheet of this latter was sent for revision to the Commission established by the Holy See; which having examined it as it came before them, and made the necessary corrections, passed it on to the Sacred Congregation where it was stamped and sealed and delivered over to the printer. The Brief of the Holy Father dated May 30<sup>th</sup> 1873, says: „We particularly recommend this edition to all local Ordinaries; the more so, as it is Our sincere desire, that in all Dioceses and localities, as in other liturgical matters, so also in the Church Chant, the same customs be uniformly observed as prevail in the Roman See." Nothwithstanding this explicit declaration of the mind of the Supreme Pontiff, disputes, suspicions and doubts arose as to the authentic character of the official editions, and Rome was obliged to confirm in 1877, what Pius IX. had so clearly expressed. The sincere desire of the latter Pontiff, which so closely resembled a command, was reiterated in a similar sense by his glorious successor the reigning Pontiff Leo XIII.<sup>1)</sup>

Moreover the Sacred Congregation has again and again issued clear precise and definite answers to the many queries, doubts and difficulties that have arisen regarding the authenticity of these choral books, declaring them to contain the *cantus legitimus*. Finally, when the so-called "Congress for Liturgical Music", which was assembled in Arezzo<sup>2)</sup> in 1882 impugned, though only indirectly, the official editions, with a view to having substituted a still newer edition based upon scientific and

<sup>1)</sup> See Preface.

<sup>2)</sup> On the History and results of this see "*Offene Briefe*" von Prof. J. Lans, Regensburg, Pustet.