

you right up to the doors of heaven, nay, right into heaven itself. Is not this what great music is all about, what great art is all about? I am a great believer that religion and great art goes hand in hand and cannot be separated; for both glorify the eternal, the undying; they touch the soul of man, the goal of which we never should lose sight. Surely, it deals with human weakness and the whole cycle of human faults; but like religion, great art, and that includes great organ music, always gives us a ray of hope, a beam of light. It shows us the Way. It picks us up, out of our earthly misery and struggle, and gives us courage, needed to fight and hope; needed in order not to despair.

Not only is the music great but the performance, the re-creation, is equally inspiring. Performed on a great instrument by an excellent craftsman and artist, I can only highly recommend this recording to all lovers of organ music, and to those who still are in the stage of "learning" to appreciate real organ music. To listen to this record is both a musical and a religious experience.



Sonata in G Major, Op. 28 by Sir Edward Elgar and
Fantasia in F Minor by W. A. Mozart;

Symphony No. 1 by Louis Vierne;

The American Collection, works by Charles Ives, Sowerby, Copland, Samuel Barber and other American composers of organ music.

These three recordings are part of a series put out by Repertoire Recording Society and performed by Rollin Smith.

The Vierne work is performed on the Austin organ of the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York City; The Elgar and Mozart compositions on the Holtkamp organ of the Church of St. Rose of Lima in Brooklyn and the "American Collection" on the Hilborne L. Roosevelt organ of the First Congregational Church in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

The organist, Rollin Smith, is director of music at the Church of Our Lady of Angels, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. He started his musical training at the age of five and pursued formal studies at Butler University in Indianapolis and at Union Theological Seminary's School of Sacred Music, New York. He has been a major recitalist for National Conventions of the Organ Historical Society and the American Liszt Society.

Space in this column does not permit us to dwell at length on the excellence of the performances and the marvellous instruments on which these works are performed. May it suffice to say, that we in this country have caught up with the Europeans in the field of organ music. This country too can be proud of the many great and (at least futuristically speaking) "historical" organs

we now have, and of the many great performers of organ music. Rollin Smith is one of these.

N.G.

V Book

Vatican II Hymnal, edited by Terry L. Haws. The New Catholic Press of Seattle, Washington, 1974. 586 pages, \$10.00.

It is rather difficult to make a proper assessment of this hymnal. I am afraid that the good qualities are outnumbered by its weaknesses. Among the qualities, I might mention its size. On 586 pages there are no fewer than 490 selections, with 400 hymns, a good number of responses, psalms and English Mass settings. No one will complain about the omission of this or that favorite type of music. There is something in it to suit every taste, from the traditional to the contemporary style. The binding is excellent. Also praiseworthy is the whole *Jubilare Deo* section in Latin.

And this is where I must begin with the criticisms. The claim by the members of the music commission of the Archdiocese of Seattle that this hymnal is superior to the two existing hymnals in general use at the present time in the United States (I know of four at least) is certainly questionable. It is undoubtedly more voluminous, but quantity has never been a substitute for quality.

The printing is far from uniform. There are at least three different size types of music notation and text, from the Sebastian Temple folk songs (so large that they could be read by a near-blind person) to some spirituals (to read with a magnifying lense would be helpful). Perhaps economical reasons might explain this inconsistency.

I found many of the arrangements rather poorly written. To pick one or two at random: in No. 74 for Palm Sunday, "Hosanna to the Son of David," the natural rhythmic accentuation of the text is at time at odds with the musical metre. I was horrified to see the liberties taken with the traditional Lourdes' *Ave Maria*, No. 159. A first year music student would have done a better job with the harmonization. The inclusion of No. 160, "Mother Dear, O Pray for Me," might be welcome by some people for sentimental reasons, but definitely not for its artistic merit. While I don't object to the use of some of the old traditional hymns of the past, I think we should draw the line somewhere and conveniently forget about this barcarole. Our Blessed Mother, I am sure, would welcome better words and better music. No. 165, "Behold your Mother," is ever so trite musically.

One of the weakest sections of the hymnal is the one with the Mass settings. It was only natural that one of these should be the work of the editor. But why should

one out of the three Masses have been composed by a Canadian priest, and a very mediocre one at that (the Mass, not the priest)? Surely the editor could have selected one Mass out of the dozens and dozens written by reputable American composers. The third Mass is anything but inspiring.

In all charity, I suspect the editor may have parcelled out the gigantic task of preparing the manuscript for the hymnal among several collaborators, some of whom obviously knew precious little about music. Then the result was rushed to the printer, without any further checking. I cannot think of any other explanation. My own reaction, for instance, to Nos. 77 (Je-ru-SA-lem), 105, 145, 168 and others, but especially No. 171 (which really takes the cake), was alternately one of shock, laughter and finally sadness, much sadness. It is also tragic to note that the hymnal was officially approved by the music commission of the Archdiocese of Seattle. Music commissions in the country, please take note.

All in all, I can sincerely say that if we needed another hymnal, this would not be the type I would recommend. When, some time ago, the National Federation of Liturgical Commissions voted in favor of publishing a national Catholic hymnal, I wrote an article in *The Tablet* against the desirability of such a project for a variety of reasons. One was that we were not ready for it. Another was the fact that already there were several good hymnals available. I believe the project has since been shelved.

The editors of *Vatican II Hymnal* may not have intended to produce a national Catholic hymnal; but whether or not the thought ever crossed their minds, they failed miserably.

REV. JOSEPH ROFF



SACRED VISUAL ART

Prof. Heri Bert Bartscht, Sculpture Atelier

1125 Canterbury Court, Dallas, Texas 75028

Music Director-Organist Available. Male, 41, M.M. degree. Previous parish, college, cathedral and concert experience. Wide liturgical experience. Parish must have good organ or plans for same. Prefer Southern, S.W. or S.E. locations but will consider others. Would prefer to be available for some private instruction. Contact: Occupant, Apartment 2F, 1420 N. Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610.

Complete volumes of SACRED MUSIC are available from 1967 to 1974 for a price of \$5.00 per volume. Orders will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. This will be of special interest to new universities and colleges that are beginning or expanding their libraries. Send requests to: Mrs. R. H. Dres, 11016 Strayhorn, Dallas, Texas 75228. Checks should be made payable to Church Music Association of America.
