PREFACE

On November 29, 1931, Hugo Distler (1908—1942) conducted the first performance of his opus four, A Little Advent Music, at the St. Jakobikirche in Lübeck; he had been organist of this church for less than a year, having come to this position in January, directly from his study at the Conservatory in Leipzig.

"Little" only in the forces it employs, the Advent Music was heard again in November 1936, Distler’s penultimate Musical Vesper in Lübeck. This north German city figured prominently in resistance to the Nazi pressures against the church; consequently the life of a church musician became too precarious for a creative artist, and Distler moved his family to Stuttgart in 1937, where he turned his attentions largely to secular music.

General acquaintance with German church music in the third decade of this century is a recent development in America. To further this cause it is a special pleasure to offer this English-language edition of a miniature gem to a wider public.

The composer himself provided many suggestions for alternative ways of performing his work: with or without narrator, with a choice of keyboard instruments, in excerpted or complete form. The absence of a tenor part will be a boon to many church choirs.

The chorale on which the work is based, Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, is Luther’s German version of the ancient Latin hymn, Veni, Redemptor gentium, attributed to St. Ambrose. Hopefully Distler’s setting may now take its place in the concert of compositions on this noble melody, another voice to praise the Advent of our Lord.

Larry Palmer

St. Paul’s College
Lawrenceville, Virginia
All Saints, 1964

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Catalog Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus part</td>
<td>97-4707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>97-4708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>97-4709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>97-4710</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violoncello</td>
<td>97-4711</td>
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Engraved and printed in the U. S. A.
A Little Advent Music
For Flute, Oboe, Violin, Chamber Choir, Organ
(Harpsichord or Piano), Violoncello ad lib., and Narrator

Tr., L. P.  SONATA

Quiet \( \dot{\} \)

Flute

Oboe

(Violin

Quiet \( \dot{\} \)

Organ 2)

\( (P \text{ dolce}) \)

\( (P \text{ dolce}) \)

97-6438

1) Solo stop: when possible a delicate reed, such as a Krummhorn or a Regal.
2) If the organ is replaced by the harpsichord or piano, it is absolutely necessary to reinforce the bass by the addition of a cello because of the numerical superiority of the high-pitched melody instruments and voices. In the Sonata the cello should play the bass line of the organ part.

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Moving

Savior of the nations, come,

Savior of the nations, come,

Savior of the nations, come,

Virgin’s Son, make here Thy home!

Virgin’s Son, make here Thy home!

Virgin’s Son, make here Thy home!

1) At the piano, be sure to bring out the c.f.
I. The Promise

_Narrator:_ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the Light, that all might believe through Him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the Light. The true Light that enlightens every man was coming into the world.

(John 1: 6-9 RSV)

**VERSUS II**

**Moving **\( \frac{1}{s} \); delicate and light

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Music Notation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soprano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Voices</td>
<td>(mo no <strong>p</strong>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organ 2</td>
<td>4' alone; if a piano is used, play the 2nd verse an octave higher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Between the 7 parts of the _Advent Music_ a narrator reads the Gospel.
2) Without cello.
3) Extremely clearly, in the quality of a delicate mixture.
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; And of His kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1: 26-33, 38 RSV)
In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? . . . Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." (Luke 1: 39-43, 45 RSV)

1) For a performance without organ the other instruments should take these parts: harpsichord (piano), the Soprano and Alto; violin in unison with the Soprano part; the flute should play the Alto an octave higher; the oboe, the C. F.; both cello and harpsichord should play the bass.
And Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation." (Luke 1: 46-50 RSV)

VERSUS V

Concise, moderate

1) May be sung by a member of the choir!
2) Organ registration: 8, 4, 2, or a delicate Mixture (Sesquialtera).

97-6438
V. The Journey to Bethlehem

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. (Luke 2: 1, 3-5 RSV)

VERSUS VI

Slow † Very contemplative, restrained

Flute

Oboe

Violin

Soprano

So brightly doth Thy manger shine,

Alto

So brightly doth Thy manger shine,

Organ

(Violoncello)

Slow † Very contemplative, restrained.

5

marcato: c.f.!

The night has new light di-

1) See the note to Verse III.

97-6438
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. John bore witness to Him, and cried, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for He was before me.'" And from his fullness we all received, grace upon grace. (John 1: 14-16 RSV)

VERSUS VII

Moving

Flute

Oboe

Violin, molto marcato

Soprano

Alto

Male Voices

Moving

Organ 1)
(Violoncello)

1) At the piano, be sure to bring out the c.f.