

III. — The name, shape and value of notes, and the names of neums or groups.

A. — SINGLE NOTES. — with or without rhythmic signs.

Two kinds of notes only are used as single notes i. e. notes standing alone :

	1	2	3	4	5
1. The square punctum	■	■	■	■	■
2. The Virga	┘	┘	┘	┘	┘
The Modern transcription of these					

Explanation :

Column 1. In this column, the single notes without rhythmic signs have the value of a quaver in modern music. And as in modern music we usually have two or three quavers to the beat, so likewise in Plainsong, we have two or three single notes forming a compound beat or rhythmic group.

Three rhythmic signs may be added to these single notes; hence in

Column 2. The vertical episema, (a) which marks the beginning of a compound beat and the rhythmic step of the movement, (see further on § VI).

Column 3. The horizontal episema which indicates a slight lengthening of the note. This stroke may also cover a whole group, but in such cases, the lengthening must not be too marked, in order to maintain the rhythmic unity of the group.

As regards the value of the lengthening, a good rule is : the oftener it occurs, the less we must mark it and vice versa. Notice also that, while the note lengthened by the horizontal episema may often be strong from its position in the melody or text, more frequently perhaps it must be weak; intensity is not inherent in any rhythmic sign.

Column 4. Here both the vertical and the horizontal episema are attached to the same note, thus indicating at once the beginning of a rhythmic group and a slight lengthening during which the voice dies away in order to mark the conclusion of a small melodic phrase.

Column 5. Here the dot doubles the note which precedes it.

B. — NEUMS OR GROUPS OF TWO NOTES.

1. Ascending :

Podatus

2. Descending :

Clivis

3. On the same degree :

Bivirga

or :

Distropha

C. — NEUMS OR GROUPS OF THREE NOTES.

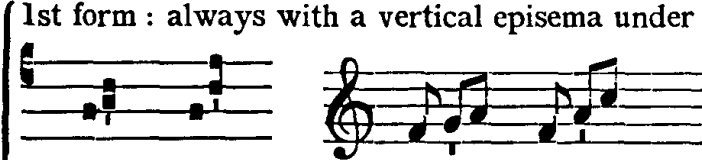
1. Ascending :

a) *Scandicus*

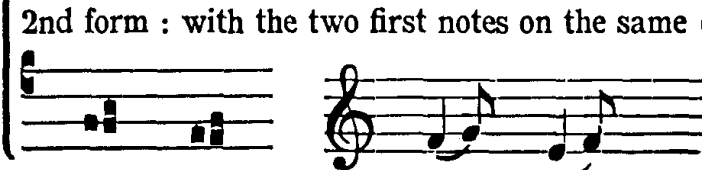
(a) *Episema*, a Greek word, meaning mark or sign.

b) *Salicus*

1st form : always with a vertical episema under the 2nd note :




2nd form : with the two first notes on the same degree : (a)




2 Descending :

Climacus




3. With the 2nd note of the group higher than the two others :

Torculus




Lower than the two others :

Porrectus

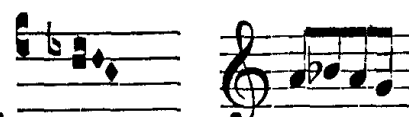
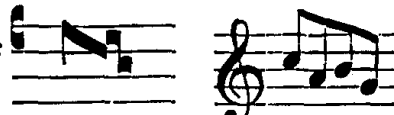


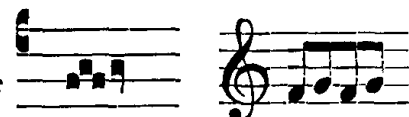

4. On the same degree :

Tristropha



D. — COMPOUND NEUMS OR GROUPS OF MORE THAN THREE NOTES.

<i>Pes or Podatus sub-bipunctis</i>		<i>Porrectus flexus</i>	
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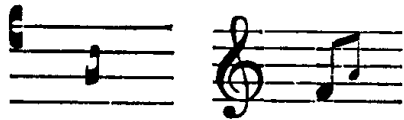
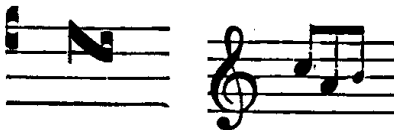

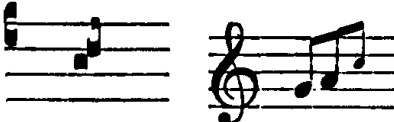


<i>Torculus resupinus</i>		<i>Salicus flexus</i>	
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<i>Scandicus flexus</i>		<i>Climacus resupinus</i>	
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(a) For practical purposes this second form of *Salicus* will be treated as a *pressus* (see note on this group).

E. — SPECIAL NEUMS OR GROUPS.

1. — Liquescent neums or groups. (a)

<i>Epiphonus or liquescent Podatus</i>		<i>Liquescent Porrectus</i>	
<i>Liquescent Torculus</i>		<i>Liquescent Scandicus</i>	
<i>Cephalicus or liquescent clivis</i>		<i>Ancus or liquescent Climacus</i>	

2. — Oriscus.



3. — Pressus.



4. — Quilisma.



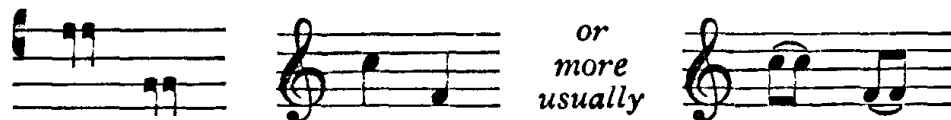
IV. — Remarks on some of the above notes or groups.

1. Each note in Plainsong, whether isolated or in a group, whatever be its shape, has the same value, the value of a quaver in figured music; followed by a dot, its value is equivalent to a crochet. Evenness and regularity of the notes is the first and essential condition of a good rendering of the chant. In syllabic chant no syllable or note must break this regularity, yet here especially the light,

(a) We mention the strange names of these groups for the sake of completeness; there is nothing otherwise mysterious about them. They are sung in the ordinary way (See further, Liquescent Notes).

uplifted accent of the words must give life, variety and movement to the singing. In neumatic pieces (those with groups) care must be taken to keep the exact relative value of the simple, double and triple notes. Very frequently a single note immediately preceding a long note and, still more, a single note between two long ones, is not given its full value; the same fault occurs in the case of the last note of a group leading to another group.

2. The *virga* is sometimes repeated; it is then called a *bivirga* or double virga which is represented in modern notation by a crochet or two tied quavers. For example :



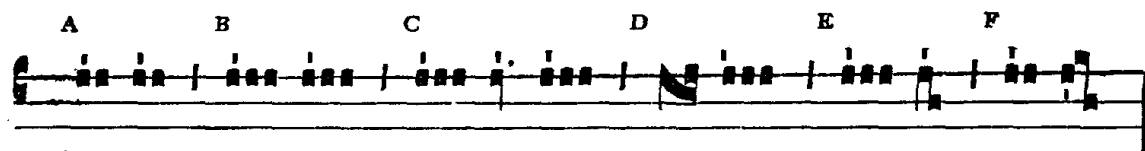
3. The *apostropha* is never used alone; it may occur twice (*distropha*) or thrice (*tristropha*), and these again may be repeated :



The Tristropha is frequently met with in this form :



Formerly each of these two or three notes was characterised by a slight stress or impulse of the voice; in practice, we advise the joining of the notes in one sound. These double or triple notes, especially when repeated, may be sung with a slight crescendo or decrescendo according to their position in the word or in the melodic line. A gentle and delicate repercussion (i. e. a fresh layer of sound) is needed at the beginning of each distropha or tristropha (cf. next example A. B. C. D.), as well as on the first note of any group which begins on the same degree as the strophicus. (Cf. examples E. F.). In the following examples the place of this repercussion is marked by the vertical episema, but usually the rule will be known.



4. The *podatus*: two notes, the lower of which is sung first; the higher note should be sung gently, and gracefully rounded off. If the *podatus* forms part of the upward movement of the melody and comes on the accented syllable of a word, its first note must receive a marked impulse.

5. *Scandicus and climacus* : these groups may be made up of three, four, five, or more notes. Care must be taken to have regularity in these groups, especially not to slide the descending diamond notes of the Climacus, which, notwithstanding their shape, have exactly the same value as the Virga at the beginning of the group.

6. *The salicus* : this group, as a rule of three notes, may also be made up of four or five notes. Not to be confused with the Scandicus, it can be recognised by the vertical episema placed *under* one of the notes which make up the group. The note thus marked should be emphasised and lengthened, just as in the case of the note which precedes the quilisma. (see 13) :



If in an ascending group the vertical episema is placed *over* one of the notes it indicates a rather important ictus which should be brought out in the rendering. In the case of a group giving *an interval of a fifth*, the upper note whenever marked with the vertical episema should be notably lengthened :



7. *The torculus* : three notes, perfectly equal in length, the top one gently rounded off.

8. *The porrectus* : three notes, the first two of which are placed at the extremities of the thick oblique stroke :



9. *The flexus, resupinus, subbipunctis, subtripunctis* : for practical purposes these need not be studied; they are technical traditional names for compound groups which are rhythmically divided and sung according to the ordinary rules. (see further on § VI).

10. *Liquescent notes* : these are printed in smaller type but this does not affect their duration nor their execution, except in that they must be sung lightly. They occur when two vowels form a diphthong (*autem, euge*), or at the junction of certain consonants (*Hosanna, tollis, mundi*, etc.) or to introduce the semi-consonants *j* or *i* (*ejus, alleluia*).

11. *Oriscus* : a note placed at the end of a group, on the same degree, and very often at the end of a Torculus (see table of Neums); it forms a double note with the preceding one and should be treated lightly.

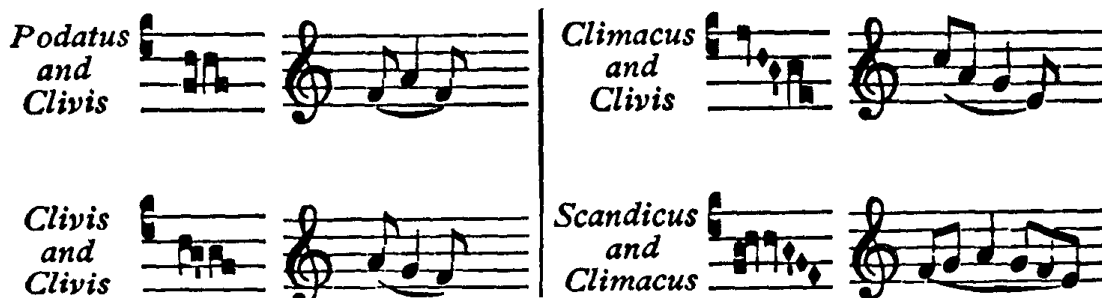
12. *Pressus* : two notes placed side by side on the same degree, the second of which is the first of a group. This may occur in two ways :

a) By a *punctum* being placed just before the first note of a group :



In the MSS some of these groups are not a *Pressus*, but Solesmes treats them as such in view of the notation of the Vatican Edition.

b) By the juxtaposition of two neums, the last note of the first being on the same degree as the first note of the second.



The two notes placed side by side in the Gregorian notation combine when sung to form one note of double length; in the *pressus*, the ictus is placed on the first of these two notes.

13. *The quilisma*: this jagged note \sim is always preceded and followed by one or several notes (see examples in the table of neums); its value is the same as that of other notes, but it must always be rendered lightly. The note immediately before the quilisma should be notably lengthened, and be the most emphasised of the whole group even when preceded by a double note.

V. — Pauses, Breathing.

A single note has exactly the same value, in intensity and duration, as the syllable to which it is united. The approximate value of a syllable may be reckoned as a quaver.

Like speech, a Plainsong melody may be divided into periods, sections, and phrases, in which the last note or the last two notes of each division are lengthened. And as in speech, so here also, pauses must be in proportion to the importance of the rhythmic divisions. The ending of each division should always be softened; if a division ends with two double notes, the last should be the more notably softened, and no fresh impulse of the voice should be noticed on it.

1. The endings of short unimportant phrases do not, as a rule, allow the taking of breath; these are marked by the two episema attached to a punctum (square \blacksquare or diamond \blacklozenge), or more rarely by a dotted note ($\bullet \cdot \blacklozenge$), sometimes

followed by a quarter $\begin{array}{c} \text{—} \\ \text{—} \\ \text{—} \end{array}$ or half bar. $\begin{array}{c} \text{—} \\ \text{—} \\ \text{—} \end{array}$.

2. More important groups, forming small sections, are indicated in the same way; these are always followed by a quarter or half bar.

Often however, these quarter or half bars, especially in the shorter antiphons, merely indicate the rhythmic subdivision, and no breath should be taken.

3. The end of a section properly so called, which is made up as a rule of two or more phrases, is indicated by a half bar. Here it is generally necessary to take breath, yet without break in the movement; hence the dotted note before the bar must necessarily be shortened slightly — almost to half its value.