**Emendemus in Melius**

**William Byrd (1543-1623)**

Byrd's "Emendemus" is a setting of a prayer for the first Sunday in Lent.  It is an ancient text, which was set by several of the great Flemish composers working in Italy during the Renaissance.  Byrd's setting is typical of the dense and learned style employed by that composer in his first book of Latin motets. There is a richness of the "British" harmony that is unknown in continental music of this period, but that would soon take over German composition.

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| Emendemus in meliusQuae ignoranter peccavimus,Ne subito praeoccupati die mortisQuaeramus spatium poenitentiaeEt invenire non possumus.Attende, Domine, et miserere,Quia peccavimus tibi.Adjuva nos, Deus salutaris noster,Et propter honorem nominis tuiLibera nos. | Let us amend what we have transgressedThrough ignorance,Lest, should the day of death suddenly overtake us,We seek time for repentanceAnd cannot find it.Hearken, o Lord, and have mercy,For we have sinned against thee.Help us, O God of our salvation,And, for the glory of thy name,Deliver us. |