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T H E

Monthly Melody

OR

POLITE AMUSEMENT

For

Gentlemen and Ladies.

Being a COLLECTION of

Vocal and Instrumental Music

Composed by DR. ARNE.



London.

Printed for G. Kearsley at the Golden Lion, in Ludgate Street.

M·DCC·LX·



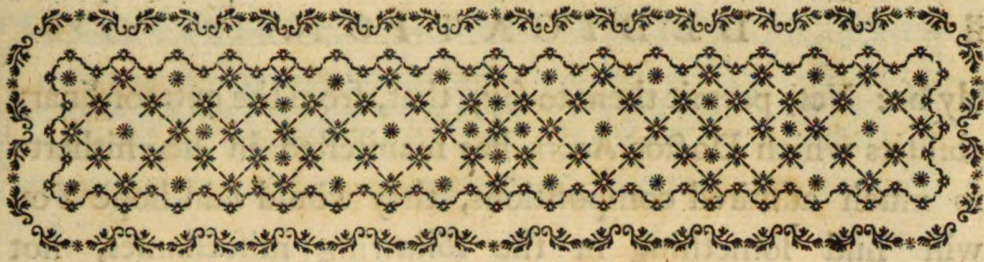
T. W. R.  
LONDON  
OR  
POLITE AGREEMENT  
FOR  
PUBLICATION AND  
BEING A COLLECTION OF  
POETRY AND  
COMPOSED BY DEARNE



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LONDON  
Printed for J. B. Nichols in Pall Mall  
M. DCC. LXX.





T O

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
PRINCE EDWARD.

S I R,

**Y**OUR well known readiness to countenance and protect all works of genius, and to encourage, as far as may be, every attempt to facilitate the progress of the polite arts, has emboldened the proprietors, of the present publication, most humbly to lay it at Your Royal Highness's feet.

It would be presumption in them to enter into encomiums on the merit of a performance, of which Your Royal Highness, through Your own great skill in the science of Music, are no doubt a much better judge than they can possibly



bly be: Yet, permit them to say, that, from the extraordinary abilities which Doctor ARNE has manifested in his hitherto so much admired compositions, they would fain hope You will find something in the following miscellanies, not often to be met with in collections of such a nature, nor wholly unworthy of Your attention.

One circumstance they are sure of, that nothing has been wanting on their parts to render them deserving of so great an honour! and if, from that condescension, and goodness, which has rendered Your Royal Highness so justly amiable in the eyes of all his Majesty's subjects, You should think proper to receive this dedication as a well-meant testimony of respect, it will be answering all the purposes of,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

March 30,  
1760.

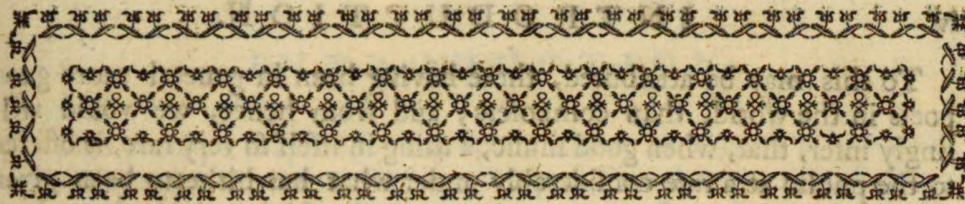
Most obedient,

Most devoted,

And Most humble Servants,

THE PROPRIETORS.





T H E

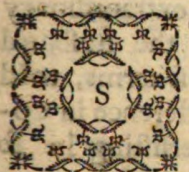
# COMPLEAT MUSICIAN.

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## CHAP. I.

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### INTRODUCTION.



OME critics tell us there is no medium in poetry; but that the bard must either be at the top of Parnassus, or the bottom; others indeed object against this hypothesis, and perhaps not without reason; be that as it will, the rule undoubtedly holds good with regard to a sister science, for I think there is nothing more certain than that in Music every thing must be exquisite, or execrable.

Nor are we to imagine, that there may not be scriblers in the one, as well as in the other of those arts; I forbear giving example, lest they should appear invidious: but this we may lay down as an uncontrivertable postulatam, that the person, who happens to have a smattering in the rules of harmony, and can prick down a tune, has, for that reason, no more right to be stiled a composer, than he, who knows that love and dove rhyme, and who can measure a couplet on his fingers, has, for a similar one, a right to be stiled poet.

To say the truth, there goes more towards the forming of a composer than is generally imagined: in poetry, a man has been known to excel merely through the force of natural abilities, without any, or at least with very small assistance from art and education. But supposing a person to have the greatest genius for music imaginable, it is like a diamond in the mine of no service or value, 'till vast labour and industry has work'd it into lustre.

To



To this may be attributed, there having been in general more good poets in the world, than composers; and from hence, we would willingly infer, that, when good music, a thing in itself so very rare, is offered to the public at a rate considerably under what has hitherto been given for contemptible performances, the public should shew its taste and generosity, by encouraging an undertaking so highly meritorious.

The great admiration in which the antients of all nations held music is well known: a capital master, in the earlier ages of the world, was not only honoured and rewarded during his life, but oftentimes worshipped after his death as something more than human: from many passages, both in sacred and prophane writings, it is clearly demonstrated, that music was prescribed as a cure for many, if not most diseases: and yet several men of distinguished judgment and learning, have not scrupled to give it as their opinions, that antient music fell greatly short of modern in almost every circumstance incident to its perfection; which is mentioned only to silence those who cite the antients as precedents on every other occasion; yet affect to decry music as a trifling and useles art, and below the cultivation of people of understanding.

In truth, such wise Gentlemen put me in mind of an accident that once happened to me. Not many days since, I was going through a dark alley in the city, I heard a man and woman before me at very high words; and, having the curiosity to listen with more than ordinary attention, soon found out their dispute was occasioned by a cloak which the good woman had purchased, but paid an extraordinary price for, in consideration of its being scarlet. This the husband was terribly enraged at, and, cursing her folly in very gross terms, told her over and over again, there was neither beauty nor difference in colours. I could not help being surprized at the fellow's persisting in so absurd an argument, but coming up towards them, he quickly put an end to my astonishment on that head, by crying out in a very audible voice, "Dear good Christians pity the poor blind."

The application of this little anecdote I am persuaded will not be difficult; those people who undervalue music not doing it from their being endowed with a superior taste and judgment, but indeed through a defect of nature, having no ear: while they give themselves supercilious airs, and call that good sense, which is their misfortune. Let us hear what that best judge of Truth and Nature, Shakespear, has said upon this occasion:

The man that hath no musick in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections as dark as *Erebus*:  
Let no such man be trusted. -----



This perhaps may be looked upon, rather as a poetical rhapsody, than the voice of truth; for my own part I must own, that I do not think it absolutely impossible for a man to be honest, though he has no more ear for music than a hedge-hog; but in plain prose, and consonant with the soberest reason, I think it may be affirmed, that persons so circumstanced are, for the most part, of morose, and unfociable dispositions; and, during rainy weather, I should hardly chuse to leave a knife, or a pistol in their way.

We have heard a poet in verse; now let us hear a critic in prose, the celebrated M. Rollin, upon this subject: in his Antient History, p. 323, he has the following observation. "Music was cultivated  
" with no less application than success. The antients ascribed won-  
" derful effects to it. They believed it very proper to calm the pas-  
" sions, soften the manners, and even humanize people naturally sa-  
" vage and barbarous.

Polibius, a grave and serious historian, and who is certainly worthy of belief, attributes the extreme difference between two people of Arcadia, "The one infinitely beloved, and esteemed for the elegance  
" of their manners, their benevolent inclinations, humanity to  
" strangers, and piety to the Gods; the other, on the contrary, ge-  
" nerally reproached and hated for their malignity, brutality, and  
" irreligion:" Polibius, I say, ascribes this difference to the study of music, cultivated with care by the one, and absolutely neglected by the other.

One word more from a poet and I have done: Pindar places this elogium in the front of his favourite Hiero's character; "That he took  
" a noble delight in the most exquisite strokes and performances of  
" poetry and music."

Here, gentle reader, I have cited both ancient and modern authority to prove the excellence of music; the high esteem it always has been, and always ought to be, held in. I shall now draw towards the conclusion of this introduction.

Though music has, together with dead men's bones, and some other prescriptions of the antient school, been long since expelled from the *Materia Medica*; yet let the worshipful faculty make what alterations they please, Nature must be Nature still; and, for that reason, music will continue to the end of the world, a specific for disorders, where a physician can be of no service.

The disorders I mean are the spleen, vapours, hyppocondria, lowness of spirits, and that train of little equivocal diseases, which are



continually pestering people, but which appear too insignificant to ask advice about --- the phrase for seeing a doctor with one, two, three, four, or five guineas; according to the largeness of his peruke, his vicinity to a square; the number of his fashionable patients; or some such enhancing attributes.

Now I do positively affirm, that neither the celebrated Dr. James's powder for fevers; nor yet the no less famous Dr. Ward's pill and drop for head-achs; no, nor the infallible Anti-arthritic wine for the gout; nor the Essence of Water-dock for the scurvy; I say, I do positively affirm, that neither all, nor any of these never failing remedies, have half the efficacy in conquering the several infirmities which they wage war against, that music hath, in the cases above mentioned; which, supposing the patient capable of taking it, I will forfeit fifty pounds, if it fails once in a thousand trials.

And for this reason I desire, that the pieces in this musical collection may not be considered as songs, airs, cantatas, &c. but as so many excellent remedies against hyppocondria, and lowness of spirits, prepared by Dr. Arne; who, after many years labour, and a thorough knowledge and experience of their amazing effects, in the several cases heretofore mentioned; is now induced, out of a regard to the welfare of his fellow-creatures, to make them public, (under his majesty's royal licence and protection, granted to the proprietors for that purpose).

And here we put an end to our introduction, only adding a few lines to assure the purchasers of this work, that they shall find every article specified in the title page, scrupulously adhered to in the body of the performance; if any thing appears deficient in one number, which may sometimes unavoidably happen from want of room, it will certainly be completed in the next; and every thing shall be done, by the authors of these practical essays on music, to render them, in some degree, equal to the work of the admirable composer. There will be given, in the course of this work, several pieces of very fine Italian music, both vocal and instrumental, which were never before made public; and, in particular, some original pieces, by Correlli and Scarlatti, extremely valuable.





## C H A P. II.

Containing a PLAN of the WORK.

**B**Y whom music was first practised, or by what means it was originally found out; whether it owes its beginning to Tubal Cain, or Orpheus; or whether the primitive professors of it caught their knowledge from the whistling of reeds, or the singing of birds; is a matter of such very little consequence, that I do not think it deserves the least notice or attention.

It is not the business of the present undertaking to amuse the readers with a string of impertinent conjectures; or to lead them in search of truths, which, could they be investigated with any degree of precision, would, in the end, not be worth the trouble of finding: the essays here to be comprised under the title of the *Complete Musician*, and of which the vocal and instrumental music of the *Monthly Melody*, may be considered as an illustration; are designed to bear a strict analogy to their title, and with that view shall contain nothing but what is absolutely necessary towards the formation of a complete musician.

An historical account of the rise and progress of music we have nothing to do with: variety of practice is the only thing which can bring any person thoroughly acquainted with that, in such a manner as to be of service to them: but music itself we mean to explain, not only in its fundamentals, but in its most abstracted parts; and in order to render the utility of our work as extensive as possible, this we shall do in the easiest and most familiar terms, that a subject, so purely scientific, will admit of.

Method is the soul of every thing, and without it nothing can be brought to perfection: we shall therefore lay down a plan for ourselves to pursue in the following work, which we propose confining under the subsequent heads.

1. We shall consider music, as far as such a disquisition can turn to our readers advantage, merely as an art.

2. Sc-



2. Secondly we shall treat of instrumental music properly so called.

3. We shall endeavour to explain what is meant by the word *time* in music, with the various modes of it.

4. We shall give a dictionary of the several terms made use of in music books, with an explanation of them.

5. We shall give new, and separate instructions for learning every instrument, now in use, such as, the violin, the harpsicord, the german flute, the guittar, &c. &c. &c.

6. We shall consider vocal music in its utmost extent.

7. We shall give new and complete instructions for singing with taste and judgment.

8. We shall endeavour to render thorough bass easy to the meanest capacity.

9. We shall conclude with rules for composition.

From the foregoing articles, the reader may judge of what vast advantage this work must be to studiers of music in general: every rule laid down will be enforced by proper examples; so that we cannot think we said too much in our address to the public, when we affirmed, "That with common attention to our performance, no person could fail of becoming a perfect master of the theory and practice of music in a short time."


Yet let not the meaning of this expression be extended too far: music, to the greatest capacity, is a difficult study, and though the grounds of it be explained ever so judiciously, the success must chiefly depend upon the application of the persons instructed.---In a word, when a master has done all a master can, it is practice alone, on the side of his scholar, which can render his labours successful.





## C H A P. III.

## Of Music in General.

USIC is the science of sounds; and may properly be divided into Vocal and Instrumental. The first imitates the tones, accents, sighs, and inflections of the human voice, and in short all those sounds by which Nature herself expresses her sentiments and passions; and these have a surprizing power of moving us by reason of there being signs instituted by nature, from whence they receive their energy; whereas articulate words are arbitrary signs of passions, and draw their signification and value from human institution, which has been able to render them current only in particular countries.

Music in order to render the imitation of natural sounds, more capable of moving and pleasing, has reduced it to a continued modulation of singing, called the subject. It has also found out two methods of rendering this modulation more capable of moving and delighting us; the one is harmony, the other measure and movement.

The concords of which harmony consists, have a most pleasing attractive for the ear; and the concurrence of the different parts of a musical composition, which form these concords, contributes also to the expression of the sound the musician intends to imitate. The thorough bass, and the other parts assist the modulation greatly in expressing the subject of imitation.

But it is the measure and movement that give life, as it were, to a musical composition. The knowledge of these by directing the proper variation of measure, takes off from music that uniformity of cadence, which would soon render it tiresome and disagreeable. In the next place, the measure throws a new likeness into the imitation arising from a musical composition, because it also produces an imitation of the progression, and movement, of the natural sounds already imitated by the modulation and harmony.

The natural signs of the passions which a master collects, and employs with art, in order to increase the energy of the words he sets; ought to render them more capable of moving, because these natu-



ral signs have a surprizing power over us. By this means the pleasure of the ear is communicated to the heart, and from hence songs have had their first rise.

Musick however, not satisfied with the inarticulate language of man, and the several sounds which he makes use of by instinct; attempted to form imitations of all the sounds which are most capable of making an impression upon us. In this part of its art it employs only instruments.

Yet though this kind of music be merely instrumental, yet it contains a true imitation of Nature: particularly with regard to the symphonies of vocal music, in which the instruments only are heard; where the truth of the imitation consists in their resemblance with the sounds they are intended to imitate. There is nature in a symphony composed for the imitation of a tempest. For example, when the modulation, harmony, and measure convey to our ears, a sound, like the blustering of the winds and the bellowing of the waves which dash impetuous against one another, or break against the rocks. Handel in his oratorio of Sampson, has given a beautiful instance of this verisimilitude in the symphony designed to imitate the noise and confusion of the temple of Dagon falling on the heads of the Philistines.

The inarticulate sounds of instruments indeed have been employed in all countries and ages, to move the hearts of men and to inspire them with particular sentiments, especially upon particular occasions, where it was impossible to convey them by the assistance of language.

Civilized nations have always made use of instrumental music in their religious worship; the inhabitants of all countries have had their proper instruments for war; and have made use of their inarticulate music, not only to render the word of command intelligible to those whose business it is to obey, but likewise to excite and even sometimes restrain the ardour of their soldiers. These instruments were differently touched according to the effect expected from them; and people endeavoured to render their sounds suitable to the use they were designed for.

We too should probably have studied the art of making military instruments as much as the ancients, if the thundering of our fire-arms left our soldiers capable of hearing a musical sound. But though we have not endeavoured to perfect ourselves in these instruments, but have so much neglected this favourite art of the ancients, as to look upon those who profess it, in our days, as the meanest fellows of the army. We find nevertheless the very first principles thereof in our camps. Neither our trumpet's sound, nor our drum's beat a charge like a retreat.

Cicero



Cicero and Quintilian tell us that the Pythagoreans made use of a certain piece of music to calm, before they went to bed, the tumultuous ideas which the bustle of the day had left in their imaginations. In the same manner they employed symphonies of an opposite nature, to put the spirits in motion when they awoke, in order to render themselves fitter for application. It is evident indeed, that nothing is more proper for calming the agitations of the mind than music; and as an exact discussion always justifies our sensitive perceptions, we find upon enquiry, the reasons which make it so proper for making this impression. The first principles of music, are the same with those of poetry and painting. Music like those two arts is an imitation, and like these arts it must conform to the general rules with respect to the choice of the subject, the probability, and several other points: "all the liberal arts (as Cicero observes) seem to have an uncommon chain of agreement, and to be connected together by a kind of mutual affinity."

As there are some which are more affected with the colouring of pictures than with their expression of the passions; in like manner, there are people who are only pleased with the agreeableness of the singing, or with the richness of the harmony; without considering attentively whether this singing imitates the proper sound, or whether it be suitable to the meaning of the words to which it is adapted. They do not require the musician to fit his melody to the sentiments contained in the words he sets to music, but are satisfied if his modulations be very graceful, or even whimsical, so they give a transient expression: and the number of musicians who conform to this task, as if music were incapable of doing any thing better, is it must be confessed but too considerable.

I should willingly compare a piece of music, composed by such masters, to a picture which is only well coloured, or to a poem which has nothing to recommend it but the versification. As the beauties of execution in poetry and painting ought to be employed in displaying the graces of invention, and the strokes of genius, which paint the object imitated; so the richness and variety of concords; the charms and novelty of modulation; should be applied to no other use in music, than that of drawing and embellishing the imitation of the language and passions of nature. That which is called the knowledge of composition, is an handmaid to make use of this expression, which a musical genius ought to entertain in his service in the same manner as a poet's genius should keep the knack of rhyming; he is undone to continue the figure, if the maid makes herself mistress of the house, and has liberty to dispose of it according to her own fancy and pleasure. I am apt to think that all poets and musicians would be of my opinion, were it not easier to rhyme exactly than to sustain a poetic stile; or to find such modulations as are both natural and agreeable, without exceeding the limits of proba-



probability. But it is impossible to attain to the pathetic, without a genius; though to compose learnedly in music, or to rhyme with correctness, requires no such assistance, it being sufficient for that purpose to have professed either of these arts.



## C H A P. IV.

### Of M U S I C in General, but in particular of the Antient M U S I C.

**T**HE antient music, was a science of much greater extent than the modern. The latter teaches only two things, the composition of musical pieces, and the execution of these pieces, either with the voice or with the instruments.

But the science of music had a much more extensive object among the Greeks and Romans, It contained not only the same precepts as ours, but it moreover included several subjects, which ours does not; either because part of them are at present neglected, or because the art which instructs us in the rest, is not supposed to constitute a part of music, inasmuch that the person who professes it, bears no longer the name of a musician.

Among the antients, poetry was one of the arts subordinate to music, and consequently the latter contained precepts relating to the construction of all sorts of verses. The art of gesture, likewise, was one of the musical arts. Hence those, who taught the steps and attitudes of our dancing, or of dancing properly so called, which formed a part of the art of gesticulation, had the appellation of musicians.

In fine, the antient music taught to compose, as well as write, the simple declamation in notes, a thing disused in our days. There is an excellent book in the Greek tongue, written in the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian, according to the author of which, most preceding writers defined music "The art which teaches a decency or grace in the voice, as well as the motions of the body."



As writers in general have not had this idea of the Greek and Roman music, but have supposed it to be confined within the same limits as ours; they are therefore very often at a loss upon attempting to explain what the antients mention concerning their music, and the use it was applied to in their time. I shall, for this reason, enter a little more deeply upon the topic of antient music.

We have already taken notice of the definition of Aristides Quintilianus, who says, "Music is an art which teacheth whatever regards the use of the voice, as well as the graceful movement of the body." This was a Greek writer; and Quintilian, who was a Latin writer, affirms the very same thing. "Music, says that author, gives instructions for regulating not only the several inflexions of the voice, but likewise all the movements of the body." These inflexions and movements are to be managed according to a certain and judicious method. The same author adds, lower down. "A decent and proper motion of the body is likewise necessary (speaking of oratory) which can be learnt from no other art but music."

St. Austin, in a work which he composed upon this art, says the same thing as Quintilian; he affirms, "That music delivers instructions relating to the countenance, and in short, concerning all those motions of the body whose theory is reducible to science, and their practice to method." The antient music subjected all the motions of the body to a regular measure, in the same manner as the motions of our dancers. The science of music was called the *Harmonica*, because it delivered the principles of harmony; and the general rules of concords. This it was that taught what we call composition; as the songs, which were the work of composition, had sometimes among the antients, as with us, the absolute denomination of music. They divided music in the sense here explained into three heads, viz. the *Diatonic*, the *Chromatic* and the *Enharmonic*.

The difference between these three kinds was, that one admitted some sounds which the other rejected. For example, in the Diatonic the modulation could not make its progressions by intervals less than major, or semi-tones. Whereas the modulation of the Chromatic made use of minor semi-tones; and, again, in the Enharmonic the progression might be made by quarters of tones.

The antients divided their music also into several kinds with respect to their mode or tone: and they called these modes after the name of the country where they were principally used: thus one was called the Phrygian mode; another the Lydian, another the Dorick, and so of the rest. Mr. Dryden, in his *Alexander's Feast*, for example, talking of Timotheus, the musician to Alexander, says,

D

Softly



Softly sweet in *Lydian* measures,  
Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasures.

The *Lydian* measure was the same as the *Amoroso* in our music books.

As music embraced so extensive a subject, it was natural it should include several arts, each of which should have its particular object: the best authors reckon six arts subordinate to music: of these, three taught all sorts of compositions, and three all kinds of execution.

Music, with respect to composition, was divided into the art of composing the *Melopœia*, or Songs; the *Rhythmica*; and the *Pœtica*: with regard to the execution it was divided into the *Organical*, or the art of playing upon instruments; the *odical*, or the art of singing; and the *Hypocritical*, or the art of gesticulation.

The *Melopœia*, or art of composing melody, taught the manner of composing and writing by notes all sorts of songs, that is, not only musical songs, or such as are properly so called; but also all sorts of recitation or declamation.

The *Rhythmica* prescribed rules for subjecting the movement of the body and the voice to a certain measure, so as to beat time with a motion suitable to the subject.

The *Pœtica* taught the mechanic part of poetry, that is, how to compose regularly all manner of verses.

We have just now observed, that music with regard to the execution was divided into three parts; the art of playing upon instruments, called *Organical*; the art of singing, called *Odical*; and the art of gesticulation, called *Hypocritical*.

'Tis easy to conjecture what were the lessons of the *Organical* music, and of that which was called the *Odical*, or art of singing: with respect to the *Hypocritical*, which was so denominated by reason of its belonging properly to comedians, who by the Greeks were called counterfeiters, it taught the art of gesture, and shewed, by rules established on certain principles, the manner of executing what we perform in our days merely by the direction of instinct, or at the most by a sort of rote knowledge, supported by some few observations.

Let me make one remark here by way of digression. Since the antient music gave methodical lessons on so many things, and since  
it



it contained precepts that were useful to grammarians, as well as necessary to poets, and all those who were obliged to speak in public; one ought not to be surpris'd; that the Greeks and Romans thought it a necessary art, and bestowed so many encomiums upon it that are unapplicable to our music.

But to return to the musical arts. It is a great misfortune we have none of those methods left, which were invented for teaching the practice of these arts, of which there were so many professors in Greece and Italy. Besides antient authors, who writ on music, and whose works are extant, have said very little concerning the mechanic parts of the subordinate arts, which they considered as easy and common practices; the explication of which was fit only for exercising the talents of a school-master: and the authors, hitherto mentioned, have written rather like philosophers, who reason and speculate upon an art, the practice of which was known by their cotemporaries, than as persons who intended their book should, without any other assistance, instruct us in the art they treat of.

Nevertheless, I hope, with the help of such facts as are related by those antient writers; who have occasionally spoken of the musical arts, I shall be able to give, if not a complete, at least, a clear and distinct notion of them. In a word, I flatter myself I shall be able to present the purchasers of the Monthly Melody, with such a picture of the antient music, as is necessary for every body to be acquainted with, who would pretend to any degree of knowledge in the modern.



## C H A P. V.

Of Music in general, and particularly of that part of Antient Music termed Rhythmical.

WE have already mentioned that the Rhythmica prescribed rules for reducing all the motion of the body and the voice to a certain measure, so as to beat time: it must, for the same reason, have taught the great use that may be made of measure and  
move-



movement. And, by what we are going to say, it will evidently appear that the antients set a great value upon this art.

The Greeks acknowledged, as well as we, four things in music, the progression of the tones of the principal subject; the harmony, or the agreement of the different parts; the measure; and the movement. The two last were taught by the Rhythmica.

'Tis not a difficult matter to understand how the antients measured their vocal music, or that which was composed in words. The syllables had a determined quantity in the Greek and Latin tongues, this quantity was even relative; that is, two short syllables ought not to be longer in pronouncing, than a single long one. And on the contrary, a long syllable ought to be as long in pronouncing as two short ones.

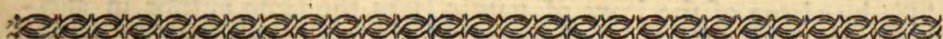
This proportion, between long and short syllables, was as fixt as that which is between notes of different value. As two crotchets in our music ought to have the same duration as a minim; so, in the antient music, two short syllables had just the same tone as a long one. Wherefore, when the Greek, or Roman musicians set any piece whatsoever to music, all they had to do, in order to measure it, was to conform to the quantity of the syllable on which every note was placed. So that the value of the note was already divided by that of the syllables.

With regard to musical compositions in prose, 'tis plain, that it was also the quantity of the syllable which decided the value of a note placed on that syllable. Perhaps the antients did not measure musical pieces of that kind, but left the person who beat the measure by following the principles of the Rhythmica, left him, I say, at liberty to mark the cadence after such a number of durations as he should think proper to join, as it were under the same measure. How long ago is it since we ourselves began to write the measure of our music? 'Tis for this very reason the antients ranked poetry among the musical arts. Hence also most Greek and Latin authors, who have wrote upon music, treat very copiously of the quantity of the syllables, feet, and figure of verse, as well as of the use that may be made of them in strengthening and imbellishing the discourse.

But how was it, somebody will ask, that they had the value of the notes of their instrumental music, since these notes could not draw their value from the syllable over which they were placed: however, I conceive a method by which the value of the several notes might hence be ascertained, by points placed either above or below, or at one side; or else by putting at the top of each note, one of the  
two



two characters which denoted whether a syllable was short or long, characters that every body had learnt at school. However these, with many other particulars regarding the ancient music termed rhythmical, it is impossible to explain, as the things are not at present done before our eyes. But with regard to the movement which the ancients set as great a value upon as Handel, Arne, and our best English musicians, 'tis, methinks, impossible the Greeks and Romans should write it down, as it were, in notes, or that they could fix by means of any character, the precise duration of every measure.



## C H A P. VI.

### Of Organical or Instrumental Music.

**I**T would be unnecessary to treat here of the structure of stringed or wind instruments, which were made use of by the ancients. I think it even proper to defer what I have to say concerning the use the ancients made of their instruments in accompanying the declamation of the actors, to that part of this work which treats of the execution of composed and noted declamation. In effect, as one of the strongest proofs that can be produced to demonstrate that the ancients composed and noted the simple theatrical declamation, is to shew that it was accompanied; we should be therefore obliged, when treating of the execution of this declamation, to transcribe the same passages, and repeat the same reflections already made use of, were we to speak here of the manner of accompanying the recitation. I shall confine myself therefore to say something concerning the musical compositions of the ancients, which were not made for vocal performances, but were to be executed simply with instruments.

The ancients had the same idea as we, concerning the perfection of music, and the use to which it might be applied. Aristides Quintilianus, speaking of the several divisions which the ancients made of music considered under different respects, says that music with regard to the spirit with which it is composed, and the effect expected from it, may be divided into that which afflicts us, that which animates

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us and renders us gay; and that which calms us by quieting our agitations.

We have already observed, that symphonies, as well as compositions of vocal music, were susceptible of a particular character, which renders them capable of affecting us differently by inspiring us sometimes with mirth, and sometimes with sadness; one time with martial ardor, and another time with sentiments of devotion. The sound of instruments (says Quintilian, the best qualified writer to give us an account of the taste of antiquity) affects us, and tho' it has no words to express itself, yet it inspires us with various sentiments.

'Tis by virtue of the laws of nature (says the same author in another passage) that tones and measure have such an effect upon us. Were it not for this, why should the modulations of symphonies which utter no words, have such a power of moving us? Will any one say 'tis merely by chance that certain symphonies upon great festivals warm the imagination, by throwing the spirits into motion, and others appease and calm them? Is it not manifest that these symphonies produce such different effects, because they are of an opposite character? Some were composed in order to produce a particular effect, and others for quite the reverse. When our troops march towards the enemy to give them battle, the instruments do not play an air of the same character, as when they sound a retreat. The sound our military instruments make, when we are obliged to ask for quarter, does not resemble that with which we charge the enemy. As the ancients had no fire-arms that could hinder the soldiers from hearing, in time of action, the sound of the military instruments, the use of which was to signify the general's orders, and animate them to battle; they consequently made a particular study of this part of the art of war, which in our times would be quite needless. The ratling of the canon and musketry obstructs the hearing of the signals of a great number of drums or trumpets, which beat or sound at the same time. The Romans piqued themselves above all nations for excelling in military music.

Quintilian, after observing that even great generals thought it not beneath them to play upon military instruments, and that music was in great esteem in the Lacedemonian armies, adds; of what other use are the trumpets and cornua in our legions? Is it not even highly probable that a great part of our military reputation is owing to our knowledge of military instruments, in which we excel other nations?



Livy relates a fact very proper for corroborating what has been here affirmed by Quintilian. Hannibal having surprized the city of Tarentum at that time in possession of the Romans, he made use of a stratagem to prevent the garrison from throwing themselves into the citadel, and to make them prisoners of war. As he had discovered that the theatre was the place for assembling the Romans upon any sudden alarm, he ordered the same air to be played as that which the Romans used upon their running to arms. But the soldiers of the garrison soon perceived by the awkward manner of mouthing the trumpet, that it was not a Roman that sounded, wherefore suspecting some artifice of the enemy, they retired into the fortress instead of repairing to the theatre.

Longinus speaks of the organical music, just as we speak of our instrumental. He says that symphonies move us, tho' they are only simple imitations of inarticulate sounds, and have not a perfect being. This author understood by perfect sounds (to which he opposes the sounds of symphonies that have but an imperfect being) those of the recitatives in music, where the natural sound being adapted to the words, occurs in conjunction with the articulate sound. To the passage here cited Longinus adds what follows: do not we observe that the sound of wind-instruments moves the souls of those that hear them, throws them into an extasy, and hurries them sometimes into a kind of fury? Do not we see that it obliges them to conform the motions of their body to that of the measure, and that it frequently forces them into involuntary gestures? Instrumental music influences us therefore in a sensible manner, since we perceive it produces the effect intended by the composer. Tho' the inarticulate sounds of this music do not convey words to our ears so as to raise precise ideas; nevertheless the concords and rhythmus excite various sentiments in our minds. These inarticulate imitations move us as much as the eloquence of an orator.

As the distempers of the body are sometimes caused by the agitations of the mind, 'tis not at all surprizing that music should ease and even cure under certain circumstances the disorders of the body, by giving relief to the distempers of the mind. That music alleviates and even dispels our chagrin and ill temper, is a thing which every one is convinced of by experience. I am not ignorant that the circumstances under which music may effectually relieve our distempers are very rare, and that it would be quite ridiculous in case of illness to prescribe songs and airs instead of purging and bleeding. Hence ancient authors, who mention cures performed by virtue of music, speak of them as of very extraordinary events.

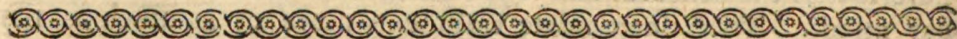


In fine, as miracles of this sort happen sometimes in our days, the ancients are free from any charge of having been too credulous with respect to the cures here mentioned, or of publishing lies and fables for true histories. To mention it only by the way, this is not the only point on which our own experience has defended them against the accusation of imposture or credulity.

We find in many other ancient writers, most surprizing recitals concerning the wonderful effects of the Greek and Roman music.

But 'tis certain that the organs of hearing have a greater sensibility in those countries, than where cold and dampness reigns eight months in the year. As the sensibility of the heart is generally equal to that of the ear, the inhabitants of the provinces situated on the Ægean and Adriatic Seas are naturally more susceptible of passion than the English. 'Tis not such a vast way from the isle of France to Italy: and yet a Frenchman observes upon his coming into Italy, that the beautiful passages of the operas are applauded in that country with transports, which in France would appear like the sallies of a frantic multitude.

On the contrary some of our northern neighbours are naturally less sensible than we of the pleasure of music. Only to judge of them by the instruments they are most fond of, and which to us are almost insupportable, either by reason of their too great noise, or of their little justness and extent; their ear must certainly be much coarser than ours.



## C H A P. VII.

### Of the Melopœia or Ancient Songs.

**A**RISTIDES Quintilianus says in that part of his book, where he treats of the Melopœia, that it taught the method of composing songs, and had different denominations, pursuant to the tone in which they were composed. With regard to this tone, one Melopœia was called low; another middle; and the third high. The

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ancients did not divide, as we do, the general system of their music by octaves. Their gamut was composed of eighteen sounds, each of which had a particular appellation, as we shall be obliged to observe hereafter. The lowest of those sounds was called Hypate, and the highest Nete. Hence Aristides denominates the low Melopœia Hypatoides; and the high one Netoides.

Our author after giving some general rules in relation to the composition, and which are as applicable to the simple declamation, as to musical songs, adds what follows: the difference between the Melopœia and the Melody consists in this, that the Melody is the song itself written in notes; and the Melopœia is the art of composing it. The Melopœia may be divided with respect to the tone in which it is composed, into the Dithyrambic, the Nomic, and the Tragic. The Nomic (that, as we shall see hereafter, which was used in the publication of the laws) composes in the highest tones; the Dithyrambic, in the middle ones; and the Tragic in the lowest of all. These are the three kinds of Melopœia, which may be subdivided into several species, because of some difference there is between the Melopœiæ comprized under the same kind. Such is the Melopœia of tender verses which includes the Epithalamiums; such is also that of comic verses and panegyrics. Thus the Melopœia was the cause, and the Melody the effect. The Melopœia, strictly speaking, signified the composition of songs of whatsoever nature; and the Melody implied the songs themselves. Wherefore we ought not to be surprized to meet sometimes with the word Melopœia, where they should have wrote Melody; since 'tis only the name of the cause put for that of the effect.

In order to enter upon the explication of the above passage of Aristides it will not be amiss to give some extracts of a book which Martianus Capella composed in Latin, concerning letters and music. This author is indeed later than Aristides Quintilianus; but he is older than Boetius who cites him, and this is sufficient to render his authority of great weight in the subject in debate. According to Capella, Melos, the word from whence Melopœia and Melody are derived, signified the connection between an acute and a grave sound. I cite Capella's text, according to the emendations which ought to be made pursuant to Meibomius's opinion. As the simple declamation, as well as the song, consists in a series of tones graver or acuter than the preceding tone, and artificially connected, there must certainly be Melody in the simple declamation, as well as in the song, and consequently a kind of Melopœia, which teaches the method of making the connection mentioned by Capella, that is, of composing the declamation. Let us give the whole passage at length, in which the above cited words occur. The Melopœia is the art of composing  
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the modulation. The Melos is the connection between an acute and a grave sound. The modulation is a varied fingering, composed and written in notes. There are three kinds of Melopœia. The Tragic or the Hypatoides, which commonly uses deeper or graver sounds. The Dithyrambic or Mesoides, which employs middle sounds, and in which the progression of the fingering is oftner made by equal intervals; and the Nomic or the Netoides, which uses several of the highest sounds. There are some other kinds of Melopœia, as the Comic, which may be all reduced to those abovementioned, tho' each species hath its proper tone. 'Tis not only with respect to the tone that the Melopœiæ may be divided into different kinds; for if in relation to this tone, they are divided into low, middle, and high; they are likewise divided with regard to the intervals they observe, into Diatonics, Chromatics, and Enharmonics; and with respect to the modes, into Phrygian, Doric, and Lydian.

Our author after adding to what has been here cited, some instructions relating to the composition, proceeds to treat of the rhythmus, having mentioned all he had to say concerning the Melopœia.

To return to Aristides Quintilianus, the following passage contains what he has further to say with respect to the Melopœia, before he enters upon the rhythmus. The Melopœia may be divided under several considerations into different kinds. Some are Diatonic, others Enharmonic, and others Chromatic. With regard to the tone of the general system in which they are composed, Melopœiæ are divided into those of a high, low, and middle modulation. With respect to the mode, some are Phrygian, others Doric, and others Lydian, &c. In relation to the manner in which the mode is treated, the Melopœia is divided into Nomic, Tragic, and Dithyrambic. In fine, with reference to the intention of the composer, as well as to the effect they are intended to produce, they may be divided into the Syftaltic, or that which renders us melancholy; the Diastaltic, or that which enlivens us and pleases the imagination; and the middle, or that which composes a proper melody for calming our spirit by quieting its perturbations.

Of all these different divisions of the Melopœia variously considered, there is only one that falls under our present inquiry, that which divides it into the low or tragic, the middle or dithyrambic, and the high or nomic, and which consequently makes the same division of the melodies. According to Aristides Quintilianus, and as we ourselves have observed, the Melopœia was the cause, and the melody the effect. There ought therefore of course to be as many kinds of melody as of Melopœia.



If we peruse with attention the passages of Aristides and Capella, where the Melopœia is divided into nomic, dithyrambic, and tragic, we shall quickly perceive that it was impossible for all their melodies to be musical songs, and that several of them could be nothing more than a simple declamation. 'Tis visible that the dithyrambic Melopœia was the only one that composed what we properly call songs.

In the first place, supposing that some of the Melopœiæ, which were the species of the tragic kind, composed what we properly call songs, yet it cannot be controverted that some of those species composed only a simple declamation. 'Tis not at all probable that the singing of panegyrics, which was one of the kinds of melody composed by the low or tragic Melopœia, was really a musical song. With respect to the singing of comedies, which was another kind of tragic melody, we shall produce undeniable arguments hereafter to shew, that the singing of the comic pieces of the ancients, tho' written with notes, and supported by an accompany'd recitation, was nothing more in reality than a strict declamation. Besides, I hope to demonstrate that the melody of the ancient tragedies was not a musical song, but a simple declamation. Wherefore there was not perhaps in the kind of the tragic Melopœia any one species that composed a musical song.

Secondly, the nomic melody could not be a musical singing. It had the name of nomic or legal, because it was principally used in the publication of laws, for Nomos signifies a law in the Greek tongue. Besides, the tone in which the high or nomic Melopœia composed was very proper for rendering the public crier's voice more easy to be heard in the promulgation of the law.

Those who knew how nice the Greeks were in point of eloquence, and especially how offended they were with a vicious pronunciation, find no difficulty in conceiving that some of their towns were so jealous of the reputation of having every thing done in a polite and elegant manner, as not to let the public crier, who was charged with the promulgation of the laws, have the liberty of reciting them according to his own fancy, lest he should chance to give the words or phrases a tone capable of exciting the laughter of jocular people. These republics apprehending lest the mistakes into which their officer might fall in the pronunciation, should reflect a kind of ridicule on the laws themselves, had the precaution of causing the declamation of those laws to be composed; and they even required that the crier who recited them should be accompanied by a person capable of setting him right if he chanced to commit a mistake. They insisted upon having their laws published with the same assistance, as that which the actors had (a point we shall prove hereafter) who re-  
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cited upon the stage. Martianus Capella giving an encomium upon music, says, that in several cities of Greece, the officer who published the laws, was accompanied by a harper. It would be unnecessary to observe that the reciter and the harper could never join in concert, if the declamation of the reciter were quite arbitrary. 'Tis evident on the contrary that it must have been subject to rules, and consequently composed. It would not be impossible to find some facts among the ancient writers, which suppose the practice mentioned by Capella. We see, for example, in Plutarch, that when Philip king of Macedon, and father of Alexander the Great, after having defeated the Athenians at Chæronea, intended to ridicule the law they had published against him, he recited the commencement of this law on the very field of battle, as a measured and composed declamation. Now Philip (says Plutarch) having obtained the victory, was so seized at first with joy, as to fall into some extravagances: for after having drunk heartily with his friends, he went to the field of battle, and there he began to sing in a strain of mockery the commencement of the decree proposed by Demosthenes, pursuant to which the Athenians had declared war against him; raising his voice at the same time, and beating measure with his foot. *Demosthenes, son of Demosthenes the Peanian, proposed this decree.* But soon after, when his drunken fit was over, and he reflected on the danger he had been in, his hair stood of an end. Diodorus Siculus says, that Philip after having drunk too much wine the day above-mentioned, committed several indecencies on the field of battle; but that the remonstrances of Demades an Athenian, and one of the prisoners of war made him enter into himself; and that his concern for what he had done, rendered him more condescending in treating afterwards with the vanquished enemy.

Undoubtedly Athens and the other cities of Greece, who chanced to agree in this article with the Athenians, did not order their laws to be sung, (taking the word singing in the signification it bears with us) when they caused them to be published.

'Tis therefore my opinion, that out of the three kinds into which the Melopœia was divided, when considered with respect to the manner in which it treated its mode, there was only one, to wit, the dithyrambic which composed musical songs; at the most there were only some species of tragic melody, which might have been properly called songs. The other melodies were only a composed and noted declamation.

As this opinion of mine is quite new in the republic of letters, it becomes me to omit nothing that can contribute to establish it. Before I produce therefore the passages of the Greek or Latin authors, who in speaking occasionally of their music, have advanced things that



that prove, if I may so express myself, the existence of a melody which was only a simple declamation, I beg the favour of the reader to give me leave to transcribe here some passages of those ancient authors, who in treating dogmatically of music, have sufficiently established this existence.

Doctor Wallis, a gentleman famous for his learning, and for having lived the longest of any man of letters in our days, published in 1699, in the third volume of his mathematical works, Porphyry's Greek commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics, together with a latin translation of this commentary. We find by this piece, that the ancient music divided all the operations of the voice into two sorts. The author treats afterwards of the difference we find between vocal sounds. " One of these sounds, says he, is continued, namely, that which the voice forms in common discourse, and is therefore called the language of conversation. The other sound, which is called melodious, is subject to regular intervals, and is that which is formed by those who sing, or who execute a modulation, and who imitate such as play on stringed or wind instruments". Porphyry explains afterwards at large the difference there is between those two kinds of sounds, after which he adds: " This is the principle which Ptolemy established in the beginning of his reflections on harmony, the same as that which, generally speaking, is taught by the followers of Aristoxenus". We have already mentioned who this Aristoxenus was. Thus this division of vocal sounds into continued and melodious, or a sound subject to regular intervals in its progression, was one of the first principles of the science of music. We shall see presently that this melodious sound or melody was subdivided into two species, to wit, into what we properly call singing, and that which was only a simple declamation. Martianus Capella says: " the sound of the voice may be divided into two kinds with respect to the manner in which it comes out of the mouth: to wit, into continued, and discrete or divided by intervals. The continued sound is the pronunciation used in ordinary conversations. The discrete is the pronunciation of a person who executes a modulation. Between these two sounds there is a middle sort, which partakes of the continued and the discrete. This middle sound is not so much interrupted as in singing; but its motion is not so continued as that of the sound in ordinary pronunciation. The voice produces this middle sound, when we pronounce what we call carmen". Now, as we shall see hereafter, carmen signified properly the measured declamation of verses that were not sung, taking the word singing in the signification it bears with us.

'Tis impossible to give a better description of our declamation, which preserves a kind of medium between the musical song, and the



continued pronunciation of familiar conversations, than Capella has done by the name of a middle sound.

I am not afraid of being reproached here with restraining the term modulation to musical songs, tho in other places I give it a much wider sense, by making it import all sorts of composed songs. 'Tis evident by the opposition Capella makes between Modulatio and carmen, that he uses the word modulatio in the sense in which I have here taken it, by making it signify what we properly call a musical song.

Byennius tells us how this middle sound or declamation was composed. This Greek author is one of those whom doctor Wallis has inserted with a latin version in the third volume of his mathematical works. Bryennius's words are as follow: " there are two kinds of " singing or melody. One is that which is used in common conver- " sation, and the other a musical song. The melody used in ordi- " nary pronunciation is composed with accents; for the voice is na- " turally raised and depressed in speaking. With respect to singing, " properly so called; that which the harmonical music treats of, is " subject to certain intervals." This is said with regard to the rules of the Diatonic, Chromatic, and Enharmonic music.

It would be unnecessary to remind the reader that the progression of the declamation may be made by the smallest intervals the sounds will admit of, which cannot be done in music. Even the Enharmonic admitted of no less than quarters of tones. The above-cited passage of Bryennius teaches us not only how the Melopœia that consisted of a simple declamation was composed, but likewise informs us how it could be written with notes. Before we enter upon this discussion, it will not be improper to give a passage of Bœtius, which positively assures us that they noted their declamation as well as their musical song.

" The antient musicians, says Bœtious, to spare themselves the " trouble of writing the name of every note at length, contrived " characters which should each of them denote a particular sound, " and divided these monograms into kinds and modes. Wherefore " when a composer has a mind to write a piece of music on verses " whose measure is already regulated by the value of the long or short " syllables of which the feet are formed, he hath only one thing to " do, that is, to place his note above his verses. Thus it is that hu- " man industry has found a method of writing not only the words " and the declamation, but likewise that of instructing posterity, by " means of these characters, in all kinds of singing."

Bœtius



Boetius commends therefore the musicians of former times, for having discovered two inventions; the first was writing the words and that kind of song called carmen, which, as we shall see hereafter, was only a simple declamation; the second was writing every kind of song, that is, even the musical one, of which Boetius is going to give the notes, at the end of the abovementioned passage. Thus the declamation was noted as well as the musical song. To judge by the manner in which Boetius expresses himself, the ancients found out the art of writing the simple declamation in notes, before that of noting their music. The first, as we shall see presently, was easier than the other, and 'tis reasonable to suppose of two arts which have pretty near the same object, that whose practice is the easiest, was discovered the first. Let us now see in what manner the notes of the declamation, as well as of the musical song, were written; by this means we shall better understand the sense of the above-cited passage of Boetius.

According to Bryennius, the declamation was composed with accents, and consequently it was necessary, in order to note it, to make use of the same characters which marked those accents. Now the ancients had eight or ten accents and as many different characters to distinguish them.

Sergius an ancient latin grammarian reckons eight accents, which he defines to be marks of the inflexion of the voice, and calls them the helpers or assistants in singing.

Priscian, another latin grammarian, and who flourished towards the close of the fifth century, says in his treatise of accents: "that the accent is the law, and a certain rule which teaches how to raise and depress the voice in the pronunciation of each syllable." Our author says afterwards, that there are ten accents in the latin tongue, and gives at the same time the name of each accent, and the figure by which it was marked. Their names are: acute, grave, circumflex, a long line, a short line, a hyphen, diastole, apostrophos, dashæa, and pyle. The proper figure of each accent may be seen in the abovementioned book. Isidorus of Seville writes the same thing. As the latins originally had only three accents, the acute, the grave and the circumflex; and as the rest were found at different times and some of the new ones were not perhaps generally received, we ought not to be surprized that some grammarians reckoned only eight, and others ten. But these authors are all agreed with respect to their use, Isidorus of Seville says in his origins, that the accents were called in latin tones or tenors, because they marked an increase of the voice and the pauses.



Unfortunately that work of Priscian is lost, in which he proposed treating at length of all the uses the accents might be applied to. This work would have probably taught us the use they were of to the composers of declamation. That which Isidorus has wrote in his origins on the ten-roman accents, does not supply the loss of Priscian's treatise. I apprehend that all a composer of declamation did, was to mark on the syllables, which according to the rules of grammar were to be accented, the acute, grave, or circumflex accent that properly belonged to them by virtue of their letters; and that with relation to the expression, he marked on the vacant syllables, by the help of other accents, the tone he thought proper to give them, in order to conform to the sense of the discourse. What could all those accents denote, except the different elevations and depressions of the voice? The ancients applied those accents to the same uses pretty near as the present jews do their musical accents in singing after their manner, or, more properly declaiming these psalms.

There is scarce any declamation but may be noted with ten different characters, each of which should mark a particular inflexion of voice; and as the intonation of those accents was learnt at the same time they were taught to read, there was hardly any body but what understood this kind of notes. In this supposition there was nothing easier to comprehend than the mechanic part of the composition and execution of the ancient declamation. St. Austin was in the right to say that he would not treat of them, as they were things sufficiently understood even by the meanest comedian. The measure was inherent, in a manner, in the verses. The composers business was only to accent them and prescribe the movement of the measure, after having furnished the instrumental performer who was to accompany them, with some part that was simplest and easiest to execute.

With regard to that melody which was properly a musical song, we are very well informed how it was written. The general system, or as Bœtius calls it, the constitution of the music of the ancients, was divided, according to Martianus Capella, into eighteen sounds, whereof each had its particular name. We have no occasion to explain here that some of these sounds might be in reality the same. One was called Proslambanomenos, &c. In order, as Bœtius observes, to avoid writing the name of each sound in full length on the top of the words, which would have been even impracticable, they invented characters or kinds of figures which marked each tone. These figures were called semeia or signs. The word semeia signifies all sorts of signs, but it had been particularly adapted to signify the notes or figures here in question. All these figures were composed of a monogram formed of the first letter of the particular name of each of the eighteen sounds in the general system. Though some of these eighteen initial letters were the same, yet they were drawn in such a manner



manner as to form monograms, that could not be taken one for the other. Boetius has given us the figures of those monograms.

ISAAC VOSSIUS points out in a treatise already mentioned, several works of the ancients, which shew how the musical songs were noted in their time. Meibomius treats likewise of this subject in different parts of his collection of ancient authors who wrote of music, and especially in his preface, where he gives the music of the *Te Deum*, written according to the ancient tablature, and in modern notes: wherefore I shall be satisfied with observing, that the Semeia, or signs, which were used in vocal as well as instrumental music, were written on the top of the words, and ranged on two lines, whereof the upper one was for the singing, and the lower one for the accompanying. These two lines were not much thicker than those of ordinary writing. There are still some Greek manuscripts extant in which these two kinds of notes are written in the manner above-mentioned. From hence the hymns to Calliope, Nemesis, and Apollo have been extracted, as well as the strophe of one of Pindar's odes, which M. Burette has given us with the ancient and modern notes.

The characters invented by the ancients were used in writing music till the eleventh century, when Guido of Arezzo found out the present method of writing with notes placed on different lines, so that the position of the note marked its intonation. Those notes were nothing else but points which had nothing to mark their duration; but John de Meurs, who was born at Paris, and lived under the reign of king John, discovered the method of giving those points an unequal value by the different figures of semi-breves, crotchets, quavers, semi-quavers, which have been since adopted by all the musicians in Europe. Thus we are indebted to France as well as Italy for the present method of writing music.

It follows therefore, from what has been hitherto explained, that of the three kinds of Melopœia, there was one, namely, the Dithyrambic, or Mœsodes, which composed musical songs; but that the other two, to wit, the Tragic, generally speaking, and the Nomic, composed the declamation.

I shall wave treating here of the Dithyrambic melody, though more bordering on the simple declamation than our present music, and shall refer the reader to what has been said concerning it by a learned gentleman who has exhausted the subject.

To come now to that kind of melody which was only a composed declamation, I have no more to say in relation to the part of it called Nomic or Legal, than what I have already mentioned. In relation



to the Tragic melody, I intend to treat more particularly and diffusively thereof, in order to confirm what I have said concerning its existence, by facts which will put it out of all dispute, shewing that, notwithstanding the theatrical melody of the ancients was composed and written with notes, yet it was not properly a song. It is for want of having a right notion of the theatrical melody, by taking it for a musical modulation, as likewise by not understanding that the Saltation was not a dance after our manner, but a simple Gesticulation; that the commentators have given us so bad an explication of the ancient authors who have spoke of their theatre. Wherefore I cannot produce too many proofs in support of a new opinion concerning the Tragic Melopœia and Melody. I shall proceed in the same manner with regard to my sentiment (which is also a new one) on the Saltation of the ancients, when I come to treat of the hypocritical music.



## C H A P. VIII.

Explication of several passages of the sixth chapter of ARISTOTLE'S poetics. Of the Carmen, or the singing of Latin verses.

THE best way, methinks, to confirm what I have advanced concerning the Melopœia and the tragic melody of the ancients, is to shew, that by following my opinion, it is easy to understand the meaning of one of the most important passages of Aristotle's poetics, which the remarks of commentators have hitherto contributed to render unintelligible. Nothing can be a better argument of the truth of a principle, than to see it clear up such passages as are extremely obscure without its assistance. The passage is as follows: "Tragedy is the imitation of an action which is intire and of some extent. This imitation is made without the assistance of narration, and in a proper language for pleasing, whose various graces arise from different sources. Tragedy exhibits to our eyes the objects it intends to make use of in order to excite terror and compassion, sentiments so proper for purging the passions. By a language proper for pleasing, I mean phrases reduced and divided by measures, subject to a rhythmus, and productive of harmony. I said that the different graces of the language of tragedy flowed from different sources, because

" there



“ there are some beauties that result only from the metre, and others  
 “ from the melody. As the tragic imitation is executed on the stage,  
 “ we must likewise add foreign embellishments to the diction of the  
 “ Melopœia. It is plain that I understand here by diction the verses  
 “ themselves. With respect to the Melopœia every one knows its  
 “ power.”

Let us examine from whence those beauties above-mentioned proceeded, and we shall find that they were not the work of one, but of several musical arts; and consequently that it is not so difficult to understand rightly that part of this passage, which says, that they flowed from different sources. Let us begin with the metre and rhythmus which should accompany a language adapted to please us.

Every body knows that the ancients had no dramatic pieces written in prose, but all in verse. Aristotle therefore means nothing more by saying that the diction ought to be divided by measures, than that the measure of the verse, which was the work of the poetic art, ought to serve for measure in the declamation. With regard to the rhythmus, the feet directed the movement of the measure in the recitation of verses. It is for this reason that Aristotle says in the fourth chapter of his poetics, that the metres are the parts of the rhythmus, that is, the measure resulting from the species of the verse ought to regulate the movement during the recitation. No body can be ignorant, that the ancients, on several occasions, employed verses of different species in their dramatic pieces. Wherefore the person who used to beat the measure on the stage, was obliged to mark the time in the declamation, pursuant to the species of the verses recited, as he accelerated or retarded the movement of this measure according to the sense expressed in those verses, that is, pursuant to the principles taught by the rhythmical art. Aristotle was therefore in the right to say, that the beauty of the rhythmus did not arise from the same cause which produced the beauties of the harmony and Melopœia. The beauty or agreement of measure, and consequently of rhythmus, was the result of the choice which the poet made of the feet with respect to the subject expressed in his verses.

With regard to the harmony, the ancient actors were, as we shall presently see, accompanied by an instrument in the declamation; and as harmony arises from the combination of sounds of different parts, it was necessary that the melody they recited, and the thorough-bass which accompanied them, should perfectly agree. Now it was neither the metrical nor rhythmical music, but the harmonica, which taught the knowledge of concords. Our author had therefore reason to say, that the harmony, one of the beauties of a language adapted to please us, did not flow from the same sources as the beauty arising  
 from



from the principles of the poetico, as well as from those of the metrical and rhythmical arts; whereas the beauty resulting from harmony was owing to the principles of the harmonic music. The beauties of melody flowed likewise from a particular source, that is, from the choice of accents, or such tones as are suitable to the words, and consequently proper for moving the spectator. The beauties therefore of a language adapted to please us, proceeded from different sources. Hence Aristotle was in the right to say, that these beauties had a separate origin.

There are some other passages of the sixth chapter of Aristotle's poetics, which will throw a greater light on our present explication. A few lines lower than the passage here in question, he says, "There are six things necessary to compose a tragedy; the fable or the action, the manners, the maxims, the diction, the Melopœia, and decorations. Here our author mentions the cause for the effect, by using the word Melopœia instead of Melody. He says likewise at the end of this chapter, after having given a summary account of the fable, manners, maxims, diction, and melody of tragedy: "Of these five parts, the most effectual is the Melopœia. The decorations form also a pleasing spectacle; but it is not so difficult to succeed therein as in the composition. Besides, the tragedy has its essence and merit independent of the comedians and the stage." To which he adds: "Moreover, the decorator has generally a greater share than the poet, in ordering the apparatus of the scenes."

Authors were therefore obliged; as orators, to invent the fable or action of their pieces; as philosophers, to give suitable manners and characters to their personages, and to make them advance none but good maxims; as poets, to give a just measure to their verses, to prescribe the velocity or slowness of their movement, and to compose the melody on which a great part of the success of the tragedy depended. To be surprized at what Aristotle says in relation to the importance of the Melopœia, one must never have seen a tragedy acted; and to be astonished that he charges the poet with the composition of the melody, one must have forgot what we have already observed and promised hereafter to prove, namely, that the Greek poets composed the declamation of their pieces themselves, whereas the Roman poets flung that trouble upon artists, who, though neither authors nor comedians, made profession notwithstanding of bringing dramatic pieces upon the stage. We have likewise taken notice that Porphyry for this reason made the composing of verses and melody only one art, which he called the poetic taken in its full extent, because he considered it with respect to the practice of the Greeks; whereas Aristides Quintilianus, who had a regard to the Roman customs, supposed in his enumeration the art of writing verses, and that of composing the melody, to be two separate arts.

But



But he says, in answer to this question, “ That these two tones are  
 “ for expressing the violent passions of men of courage, or of heroes  
 “ who generally act the principal parts in tragedies; whereas the act-  
 “ ors who compose the chorus, are supposed to be men of a low situ-  
 “ ation in life, whose passions ought not to have the same character  
 “ upon the stage as those of heroes. In the second place, continues  
 “ Aristotle, as the actors of the chorus are not so much engaged as the  
 “ principal personages in the events of the piece, it follows therefore  
 “ that the singing of the chorus ought to be less animated and more  
 “ melodious than that of the principal actors. For this very reason,  
 “ he concludes, the chorus’s do not sing in the Hypodorian or Hy-  
 “ pophygian modes?”

I refer the reader to Brossard’s musical dictionary for an explication  
 of the modes of the antient music. ’Tis impossible to affirm in more  
 express terms than Aristotle does in the last passage, that whatever was  
 recited on the theatre, was subject to a composed melody, and that  
 the ancient actors had not the same liberty as ours, of pronouncing the  
 verses in their several parts with such tones and inflexions of voice as  
 they judged proper.

I allow indeed that ’tis questioned whether Aristotle wrote these  
 problems himself: but ’tis sufficient for our purpose that this work  
 was composed by his disciples, and that was always considered as  
 one of the monuments of antiquity, and as being composed of course  
 when the Greek and Roman theatres were yet open.

Since the tones in which we declaim are as different from one ano-  
 ther as those in which we compose our music; the composed declama-  
 tion must consequently have been made in different modes. ’Tis plain  
 their declamation had some modes which were fitter than others for  
 the expression of certain passions, as our music has modes that are  
 better suited than others to this very expression,

That which among the Greeks had the name of Tragic melody,  
 was by the Romans called Carmen. Ovid, who was a Latin poet,  
 and consequently was not himself the composer of the declamation of  
 his dramatic pieces, makes use of the phrase, “ our Carmen and my  
 “ verses,” where he speaks of one of his pieces which was acted on the  
 stage with applause.

Ovid says, “ nostra carmina,” because there was only the rythmus  
 and metre of the declamation that belonged to him; the melody being  
 the work of another person. But he says “ my verses, meos versus,”  
 by reason that the thoughts, the expression, and, in short, the verses  
 belonged intirely to him.



We can produce a passage from Quintilian, a writer of the greatest authority on this subject, which will sufficiently demonstrate that the carmen included beside the verse, something written on the top of it, to direct the inflexions of the voice which were to be observed in the recitation. He says positively that the ancient verses of the Salians had a carmen. But I had better give his own words. "The verses of the Salian priests have a proper modulation with which they are sung; and as their institution is derived from king Numa, this modulation shews that the Romans, notwithstanding their ferocity in those days, had some knowledge of music." Now how was it possible for this modulation to have been handed down from Numa's time to that of Quintilian, if it was not written in notes? And on the other hand if it was a musical modulation, why should Quintilian call it carmen? He could not have been ignorant that his contemporaries were accustomed to give every day, though improperly, the name of carmen to verses which were not sung, whose declamation was arbitrary, and whose recitation was by the ancients called reading, because the person that recited them was obliged only to follow the quantity, and was at liberty to use such inflexions of the voice as he thought proper. To cite one of Quintilian's contemporaries, Juvenal says to a friend of his whom he invites to sup with him, "that during the time of repast he shall hear some fine passages read from the Iliad and the Æneid. The person that is to read them, continues Juvenal, is not one of the cleverest at his business; but that does not signify, the verses are such as will always bear hearing with pleasure.

" But my poor entertainment is designed,  
 " T'afford you pleasures of another kind;  
 " Yet with your taste your hearing shall be fed,  
 " And Homer's sacred lines and Virgil's read:  
 " Either of whom does all mankind excel,  
 " Tho' which exceeds the other none can tell.  
 " It matters not with what ill tone they're sung,  
 " Verse so sublimely good no voice can wrong.

CONGREVE.

In another passage, Juvenal gives likewise the name of carmina to the simple recitation of the hexameter verses of Statius's Thebaid, which the latter poet used to read and pronounce himself as he pleased.

" All Rome is pleas'd, when Statius will rehearse,  
 " And longing crowds expect the promis'd verse:  
 " His lofty numbers with so great a gust  
 " They hear, and swallow with such eager lust.

DRYDEN.



Now as Quintilian explains himself dogmatically in the above-cited passage, undoubtedly he would not have used the word *carmen* to express a musical song, nor applied it in a sense so opposite to the improper signification it had received from custom. — But *carmen* originally imported quite a different thing, and besides it was the proper word for signifying the declamation, and determined likewise to its primary and true acception, by the very passage in which it was used. In fine the expression ‘*versus habent carmen*’ leaves no manner of doubt with respect to the signification which the word *carmen* should have in the passage of Quintilian, and the above-cited verses of Ovid?

The moderns imagining that the word *carmen* had always the improper signification it bears in those verses of Juvenal, where he means nothing more than verses, have mistaken the proper meaning of this word; and this mistake is the cause of their not knowing that the ancients had a composed declamation, which, though written in notes, was not a musical song. The misunderstanding of another word has very much contributed to conceal this declamation from the moderns. The word I mean is *cantus*, with all its derivatives. The modern critics have understood this word, as if it always implied a musical singing, though in several passages it imports only a singing in general, or a recitation subject to the direction of a noted melody. They have understood the word *canere*, as if it always implied what we properly call to sing. This has been the principal cause of the error they have committed in supposing the singing of the dramatic pieces of the ancients to be a proper singing, because the ancient writers generally make use of the words *cantus* and *canere*, when they speak of the execution of those pieces. Wherefore, before I corroborate my opinion with new proofs drawn from the manner in which the composed declamation was executed on the ancient Stage, it will not be amiss, methinks, to shew that the word *cantus* signified not only a musical singing, but likewise all sorts of declamation, and even simple recitation; and consequently, that when the ancient authors say that the actors sung, this must not however be understood by taking the word singing in the signification we generally give it. The reputation of the modern authors, with whom I differ in opinion, requires good authority for my singularity upon this point. I have no reason therefore to apprehend being censured for the multitude of passages I am going to alledge, in order to demonstrate a fact which two or three of them perhaps would have sufficiently evinced.

C H A P.



## C H A P. IX.

That in the writings of the ancients the word canere signified sometimes to declaim, and even sometimes to speak.

**S**TRABO, who flourished under the reign of Augustus, informs us concerning the cause of the improper signification which the word  $\alpha\delta\eta$  and  $\alpha\delta\eta\sigma$ , that is, cantus and canere, with their derivatives had at that time. He says, that in the first ages, whatever was composed was in verse, and that as verses used to be sung in those days, people were accustomed to say  $\alpha\delta\eta\sigma$  or to sing, instead of generally saying to recite a composition. After the practice of singing all sorts of poems was laid aside, and the custom introduced of simply reciting some kinds of verses, still they continued to give the name of  $\alpha\delta\eta$  or singing to the recitation of every sort of poems. But there is something more than this, continues Strabo; for they went on with using the word singing instead of that of reciting even after they began to write in prose. Thus they carried it so far at length as to use the expression of singing prose, instead of reciting it.

As we have not a general word in our language which corresponds to that of canere, the reader, I hope, will be so good as to excuse the frequent circumlocutions which I have already made and shall still be obliged to make in translating it, in order to avoid the ambiguities into which I should fall, were I to use absolutely the word singing, sometimes to express the execution of a musical song, and other times to signify in general the reciting of a noted declamation.

Let us produce at present those passages of the ancient authors which demonstrate, that though the Greeks and Latins gave the appellation of singing to the declamation of their theatrical pieces, yet this declamation was not a musical singing.

IN Cicero's dialogues de Oratore, Crassus, one of the personages, after mentioning that Lælia his mother-in-law pronounced in a plain and simple manner, tho' with too frequent and remarkable accents in her voice, says, "When I hear Lælia speak, methinks I am listening to some of Plautus or Nævius's pieces." The passage of Cicero, which I have only cited here, shall be given intire upon another occasion. Now it



is plain that Lælia did not sing in her ordinary conversation; consequently those who recited the plays of Plautus or Nævius, did not sing them. Cicero observes likewise in another work, that “the comic poets rendered the number and rhythmus of their verses scarcely perceptible, to the end they might bear a greater resemblance to ordinary conversation.” This attention to imitate common conversation would have been thrown away, if those verses were to be sung.

And yet the ancient authors make use of the word singing, when they mention the recitation of comedies, as well as in speaking of that of tragedies. Donatus and Euthemius, who flourished under the reign of Constantine the Great, affirm in a treatise intitled: *De Tragedia & Comædia commentatiunculæ*, that tragedy and comedy consisted at first of verses set to music, which were sung by a chorus accompanied with wind-instruments. Isidorus of Seville gives indiscriminately the name of singers, to those who acted tragedies, or comedies. Horace, before he explains in his art of poetry what is requisite to compose a good comedy, defines it to be that which entertain the spectators till the singer says to them, clap your hands. *Donec cantor, vos plaudite, dicat.* Who was this singer? who, but one of the comedians? The actor who played in comedy, as we shall see hereafter. It was common to say of either of them; that he sung.

Quintilian complains that the orators in his time pleaded at the bar in the same manner as the actors recited on the stage. We have already given what he says concerning it. Is it to be imagined that those orators sung in the same manner as is practised in our operas? In another passage he forbids his pupil to pronounce such verses as he reads in private in order to study the pronunciation, with the same emphasis as the Cantica were sung on the stage. We shall see presently, that the Cantica were those scenes in the play whose declamation was most harmonious. Now it would have been of no manner of use to Quintilian, to debar his pupil from imitating the singing of the Cantica in the circumstances in which he forbids it, had this been a real singing pursuant to our manner of speaking.

This same author affirms likewise in a passage which I have already cited, that those who acted in comedies, did not deviate from nature in their pronunciation, at least not so as to disguise her in their language; but that they embellished the usual manner of pronouncing in ordinary conversation with such ornaments as are allowed by the art. Now I leave the reader to judge whether this be singing. In fine, Quintilian after having forbidden the orator, in a passage already cited, to sing like the comedians, adds, that his intention is not to prohibit a sustained declamation, or the singing suitable to the eloquence of the bar. Cicero himself, he says, has acknowledged the reasonableness of this kind of disguised singing. When Juvenal gives an elogium of Quintilian in his seventh satyr, he says among other things that this orator sung



when he thought proper to take the care and precautions used by the Romans to cleanse the organs of the voice, a practice of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

“ Good fortune grac’d his action, and his tongue,  
“ His colds became him, and when hoarse he sung

Mr. CHARLES DRYDEN.

Is it to be supposed that Quintilian sung, when he spoke in public, taking the word singing in the signification it bears with us?

But, some will say, when the chorus’s of the ancients sung, this was a real music: and when the actors sung, their singing was like that of the chorus’s. “ Do not you see, says Seneca, how many different sounds are heard in the chorus’s; such as the treble, the tenor, and the bass? The wind instruments are mixt there with men and women’s voices, And yet there results but one concert from all this mixture; which is because all these sounds are heard together, without distinguishing any one of them in particular.” This same passage with the alteration only of a few terms occurs also in Macrobius; who adds this reflection to it, a Concord arises here from a dissonance: All these different sounds form one single concert.

My answer is in the first place, that it ’tis not absolutely certain from this passage, that the chorus sung musically after our manner, I acknowledge it appears at first sight impossible that several persons should declaim together in chorus, supposing even their declamation to have been concerted. We cannot conceive that those chorus’s could have been any thing else but a confused multitude. But tho’ the thing seems impossible at first view, it does not follow from thence that ’tis really so. It would be even presumptuous to give credit so easily to our imagination with respect to possibilities; for we are generally ready to presume a thing impossible when we can find no means of executing it; and most people are satisfied with giving half a quarter of an hour’s attention to the inquiry after these means. Perhaps after a month’s meditation we should find this very thing feasible in speculation, and six months application would render it absolutely practicable. Besides another person would, very likely be able to discover ways and means which are beyond the reach of our capacity. But this discussion would lead us too far: wherefore I suppose that the chorus sung some of their part in harmonic music, but it does not ensue from thence that the actors sung also.

We ourselves have several dramatic pieces in which the actors only declaim, tho’ the chorus’s sing. Such are the Esther and Athalia of Racine; such also is Psyche a tragedy composed by the great Corneille, and Moliere. We have even comedies of this sort, and are very sen-



able why we have not a greater number of them; 'tis not because this is a bad manner of representing dramatic pieces.

I shall corroborate this answer with one reflection. 'Tis that the ancients made use of different instruments to accompany the chorus, from those they employed in accompanying the recitations. This custom of accompanying with different instruments, proves something in our favour. "When the chorus sung, says Diomedes, the Musician accompanied them with choral flutes; but in the cantics or soliloquies another musician answered them with Pythian flutes." Supposing however that we are to understand the word Singing in its proper sense, when treating of the singing of the chorus, it does not follow, that we are to take it in the same signification when speaking of recitations; nor are our proofs and arguments therefore less convincing.



## C H A P. X.

Other arguments to prove that the theatrical declamation of the Ancients was composed, and written with notes. A proof drawn from this, that the actor who recited was accompanied with instruments.

**T**IS therefore evident, methinks, that the singing of dramatic pieces, recited at the ancient theatres, had neither passages, nor Ports de voix with cadences, nor sustained quaverings, nor the other characters of our musical singing; in short, it was a declamation like ours. This recitation was composed, since it was accompanied with a thorough bass, the sound of which was proportioned in all probability to the sound made by the person that declaimed. For the sound made in declaiming is neither so strong nor so resounding as that which is made by the very same person in singing. In the first place, we do not shake or agitate the air so much when we declaim, as when we sing. Secondly, in declaiming, we do not always impel the air against parts that have so much elasticity, and that break it so much, as those against which we impel it in singing. Now the air resounds more or less, according as it is broken. This is, to mention it by the way, what renders the voice of Italian singers easier to be heard than that of the French. The Italians from several sounds intirely with

the



the cartilages near the throat, which the French fingers cannot completely form but with the help of the inside of the cheeks.

I am therefore of opinion that the thorough bass, which accompanied the declamation of the actors, produced only a very weak sound. We must not form an idea of it from the thorough bass of our operas; this would only contribute to raise groundless difficulties on a thing that is absolutely decided by the testimony of the most respectable authors of antiquity, who were every day spectators of what they committed to writing.

Cicero says, " that those who were skilled in music, could tell, as soon as they heard the first notes of the prelude of the instruments, whether they were to see Antiope or Andromache; while the rest of the spectators knew nothing of the matter " Antiope and Andromache are two tragedies, of which Cicero makes mention in many parts of his works.

What follows will shew that the instruments did not give over after having played the prelude, but that they continued, and accompanied the actor. Cicero after having spoken of Greek verses, the metre of which was almost imperceptible, adds, that the Latins have also verses which are hardly distinguishable as such, but when the recitation of them is accompanied. He gives for example some verses of the tragedy of Thyestes, which might be taken, he says, for prose, when they are not heard with an accompanied recitation.

The tragedy of Thyestes, was that which he frequently quotes as written by the poet Ennius, and not that which Varius composed on the same subject.

Cicero in the first book of his Tusculan questions, after giving a passage from a tragedy where the ghost of polydorus begs that his body may be interred, in order to put an end to the miseries he endures, adds, " I cannot conceive how this ghost could be so tormented as he says, when I heard him recite dramatic verses so vastly correct, and find he joins so well in concert with the instruments. " I refer the reader to Diomedes, for the reason why I render Septenarios by dramatic verses.

The ghost of Polydorus was therefore accompanied in his recitation. But I shall produce two more passages from the same writer, which are, methinks, so very decisive that I am afraid the reader will censure me for transcribing any others.

This author, after saying that an orator who grows old may slacken his recitation, adds what follows; " Let us cite here Roscius, that

" great



“ great comedian, whom I have so often quoted as a model from whom our orators may copy several parts of their art. Roscius says, that he intends to be much slower in his declamation, when he finds he grows old, and that he will oblige the fingers to pronounce more slowly, and the instruments to slacken the movement of their measure. If a comedian, who is obliged to follow a regular measure, continues Cicero, can ease himself in his old age by slackening the movement; by a much stronger reason an orator is capable of taking this advantage when he is advanced in years. The orator is not only master of the rhythmus, or movement of his pronunciation; but moreover, as he speaks in prose, and is not under the constraint of keeping time with any body else, he is at liberty to change the measure of his phrases as he has a mind; so that he never pronounces at one breath but as many syllables as he can utter conveniently.”

Every body knows that Roscius, Cicero's cotemporary and friend, was a person of some consideration on account of his talents and probity. People were so much prejudiced in his favour, that when he happened not to act so well as usual, they were apt to say either that he neglected his action, or that he was troubled with an indigestion; a complaint to which good actors are very subject. In fine, the greatest commendation which could be given to men who excelled in their art, was to say, they were Roscius's in their way.

The same author acquaints us in another part of his works, that Roscius kept his word when he grew old. He then ordered those who accompanied him, as well as those who pronounced some parts of the play for him (this is a point we shall explain hereafter) to permit the movement of the measure which they were all obliged to follow, to be slackened. “ 'Tis thus your friend Roscius (says Atticus to Cicero in this author's first book of laws) acted in his old age; he made the measures last longer, and obliged the actor who recited to speak more slowly; so that the instruments which accompanied them, were under a necessity of following this new movement.”

Quintilian, after speaking against those orators who declaimed at the bar as if they were reciting upon the stage, says, “ If this custom must prevail, our orators will be obliged to support themselves in their declamation with lyres and flutes.” What he means here is, that the theatrical declamation is so varied, and there is so great a difficulty in entering with exactness into its different tones, that it is necessary, when a person wants to declaim as they do upon the stage, to



be accompanied by one who can help him to take these tones exactly, and hinder him from making false inflexions of the voice.

This is an expression which Quintilian makes use of, to shew that an orator ought not to declaim like a comedian, because of the ill consequence that follows from declaiming in that manner. According to the idea which the ancients had of the dignity of an orator, it was so improper for him to be accompanied, (a thing which was absolutely necessary to those who declaimed on the stage) that Cicero, when he spoke in public, would never suffer a musician to play upon his instrument behind his back in order to give him the proper tones, tho' this precaution had been authorized at Rome by the example of C. Gracchus. "It is beneath an orator, says Cicero, to have occasion for such an assistance in order to enter with justness into the several tones he is to use in declaiming."

In fact, Quintilian relates, that this Gracchus, who was one of the most celebrated orators of his time, used to order a musician to stand behind him when he harangued, whose business it was to give him, from time to time, the proper tone with a wind-instrument. It must be supposed that other orators followed the example of Gracchus, since the flute that was employed for the use abovementioned, was called by a particular name *τρούβιον*. We must not after all this, think it so very surprizing, that the comedians were accompanied, though they did not sing after our manner, but recited only a composed declamation.

In fine, we find in one of Lucian's treatises, that Solon, after having spoke to Anacharsis the Scythian, concerning the actors of tragedies and comedies, asks him whether he had not also observed the flutes and instruments which accompanied them in their recitations, and (to render it literally) which sung with them. We have likewise quoted a passage of Diomedes, which shews that the Centica, or Monologues, were accompanied.

My conjectures with respect to the composition played by the thorough bass, which accompanied the actors in declaiming are, that this composition was different for the Dialogues and the Monologues. We shall see presently that the Monologues were executed at that time in a different manner from the Dialogues. Wherefore I fancy, that in the execution of the Dialogues, the thorough bass played only now and then some long notes, which were heard in those passages where the actor was to take up such tones as it was very difficult to enter into with exactness. The sound of the instruments was not therefore a continued sound during the Dialogues, as it is in our accom-



accompanyings; but only was heard now and then in order to be of the same use to the actor as the flute was to C. Gracchus. This famous orator used this delicate precaution, when he pronounced those terrible harangues which were designed to set his fellow citizens together by the ears, and which armed against himself the most formidable party of the city of Rome.

With regard to the thorough bass which accompanied the Monologues or the Cantica, (which were both the same thing, as we shall shew hereafter,) I fancy it was more laboured than the other. It seems that it even imitated, and to make use of this expression, that it rival'd the subject. My opinion is founded on two passages, the first of which is from Donatus. This author says, (in a passage already cited, that it was the poet, and not the professed musician who composed the singing of the Monologues. The other is taken from a treatise against public spectacles, which we find among the works of St. Cyprian. This author says of the players on instruments who belonged to the theatre: "One draws mournful sounds from his flute; another contends with the chorus who shall best be heard; or else he vies with the actors voice, endeavouring to articulate his blowing by the help of the suppleness of his fingers."

I am not ignorant, that, in the opinion of the most judicious critics the above-mentioned treatise on public spectacles does not belong to St. Cyprian; wherefore a quotation from it would not be of any great authority, were we disputing upon a theological question. But, with relation to the subject here in debate, the testimony of this writer is of sufficient weight for my purpose. All that is requisite for this end is, that the author of this treatise, which has been read and known for many ages, was living when the theatres of the ancients were still open. Now, whoever this writer was, he composed this work only to shew that a Christian should not assist at the shews or spectacles of those times; that he ought not, as St. Austin says, partake of the infamies of the theatre, of the extravagant impieties of the circus, or the cruelties of the amphitheatre. What I have said here concerning the treatise against spectacles attributed to St. Cyprian, may also be applied, (to avoid repeating it elsewhere) to some writings which go under the name of St. Justin Martyr, though the critics do not allow them to be his. It is sufficient, that those writings, which are very ancient, were composed whilst the theatres were yet open, to ascertain the facts which I endeavour to support by their authority.

This refined study of the several artifices capable of throwing strength and ornament into the declamation, and these delicacies in the art of displaying the voice, will not be esteemed as whimsical  
extra-



extravagancies by such as are acquainted with ancient Greece and Rome. Eloquence in those days, was not only the road towards making one's fortune, but was likewise, if I may so express myself, the fashionable merit. A young nobleman of the highest rank, one whom in a jocular style we may call the fine flower of the court, valued himself as much for haranguing well, and for pleading with applause in his friend's defence, as the nobility of our days pique themselves for a spruce equipage and a smart fashionable dress. His talent of pleading used to be extolled even in verses of gallantry. Horace speaking to Venus of one of those gentlemen of a smart air, says,

*Namque & nobilis & decens*

*Et pro sollicitis non tacitus reis;*

*Et centum puer artium.*

*Latè signa feret militiæ tuæ.*

HOR. CAR. LIB. 4. OD. I.

“For he is great in charms,

“The chiefest honour of the bar,

“He'll make successful war,

“And spread the glory of thy arms.”

CREECH.

We may easily form an idea of the great esteem the ancients had for this profession, by reflecting, that the public, whom young people are so desirous of pleasing, shewed as much regard and veneration for a young gentleman celebrated for his eloquence, as for a person famous for the military art. In fine, it was fashionable in those days even for the sovereigns to speak in public. They piqued themselves upon composing their own discourses; and it is remarkable, that Nero was the first Roman emperor who had his harangues made by another hand.

Suetonius and Dion inform us, that this prince was so well versed in the art of declamation, that he acted the very principal parts in the tragedies of Canacea, Orestes, Oedipus, and Hercules Furens. The first of these authors relates an adventure that happened at a representation of Hercules Furens, which must have entertained the assembly as much as any comic scene. “A soldier of the guards, who had not been long in the service, and was then sentinel upon the stage, undertook to defend his emperor against the other actors who were going to chain him, in that part of the play in which Hercules is handcuffed.”

I shall produce here another example, which is of far greater weight. Tacitus relates, that Thrasea Pætus (that illustrious Roman senator,



Senator, whom Nero put to death, when after massacring such a number of eminent men he wanted to extirpate even virtue itself) played a part in a tragedy acted at the theatre of the city of Padua where he was born.

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## CH A P. XI.

### Of the Force and effects of Music.

**O**N viewing this art in its foundation, we shall find, that by the constitution of men it is of mighty efficacy in working both on his imagination and his passions: a full chord struck, or a beautiful succession of single sounds produced, is no less ravishing to the ear, than just symmetry or exquisite colours to the eye; for, in the pleasures arising from our internal sense of harmony, there is no prior uneasiness necessary in order to our tasting them in their full perfection; neither is the enjoyment of them attended either with langour or disgust. It is their peculiar and essential property, to divest the soul of every unquiet passion, to pour in upon the mind, a silent and serene joy, beyond the power of words to express, and to fix the heart in a rational, benevolent, and happy tranquility. But though this be the natural effect of harmony on the imagination, when simply considered, yet when to these is added the force of musical expression, the effect is greatly increased; for then they assume the power of exciting all the most agreeable passions of the soul. The force of sound in alarming the passions is prodigious. Thus the noise of thunder, the shouts of war, the uproar of an enraged ocean strike us with terror: so again there are certain sounds natural to joy, others to grief or despondency, others to tenderness and love: and by hearing these, we naturally sympathize with those who either enjoy or suffer. Thus music, by the help of words, does naturally raise a variety of passions in the human breast, similar to the sounds which are expressed: and thus, by the musicians art, we are often carried into the fury of a battle, or a tempest, we are by turns elated with joy, or sunk in pleasing sorrow, roused



to courage, or quelled by grateful terrors, melted into pity, tenderness and love, or transported to the regions of bliss, in an extasy of divine praise.

But beyond this, I think we may venture to assert, that it is the peculiar quality of music to raise the sociable and happy passions, and to subdue the contrary ones. I know it has been generally believed, and affirmed, that its power extends alike to every affection of the mind; but this I look upon to be a general and fundamental error. I would appeal to any man, whether ever he found himself urged to acts of selfishness, cruelty, treachery, revenge, or malevolence by the power of musical sounds? I believe no instance of this nature can be alledged with truth. It must be owned, indeed, that the force of music may urge the passions to an excess, or it may fix them on false and improper objects, and thus be pernicious in its effects: but still the passions which it raises, though they may be misled or excessive, are of the benevolent and social kind, and in their intent at least are disinterested and noble.

As I take this to be the truth of the case, so it seems to me no difficult matter to assign a sufficient reason for it: we have already seen that it is the natural effect of air or harmony, to throw the mind into a pleasurable state: and when it hath obtained this state, it will of course exert those powers, and be susceptible of passions which are the most natural and agreeable to it. Now these are altogether of the benevolent specie inasmuch as we know that the contrary affections, such as anger, revenge, jealousy, and hatred, are always attended with anxiety and pain: whereas all the modifications of love, whether human or divine, are but so many kinds of immediate happiness.

From this view of things therefore, it necessarily follows, that every species of musical sound must tend to dispell the malevolent passions, because they are painful; and nourish those which are benevolent, because they are pleasing.

CHAP.



## C H A P. XII.

## On the Analogies between Music and Painting.

**T**HE chief analogies or resemblances that I have observed between those two noble arts are as follow :

1st. They are both founded in geometry, and have proportion for their subject. And though the undulations of air, which are the immediate cause of sound, be of so subtle a nature, as to escape our examination; yet the vibrations of musical strings or chords, from whence these undulations proceed, are as capable of mensuration, as any of those visible objects about which painting is conversant.

2dly. As the excellence of a picture depends on three circumstances, design, colouring, expression; so in music the perfection of composition arises from MELODY, HARMONY, and EXPRESSION. Melody, or air, is the work of invention, and therefore the foundation of the other two, are directly analogous to design in painting. Harmony gives beauty and strength to the established melodies, in the same manner as colouring adds life to a just design. And in both cases, the expression arises from a combination of the other, and is no more than a strong and proper application of them to the intended subject.

3dly. As the proper mixture of light and shade (called by the Italians *Chiaro Oscuro*) has a noble effect in painting, and is indeed, essential to the composition of a good picture; so the judicious mixture of concords and discords is equally essential to a musical composition: As shades are necessary to relieve the eye, which is soon tired and disgusted with a level glare of light; so discords are necessary to relieve the ear, which is otherwise immediately fatiated with a continual and unvaried strain of harmony. We may add (for the sake of those who are in any degree acquainted with the theory of music) that the preparations and revolutions of discords, resemble the soft gradations of sight, or from shade to light in painting.

4thly. As in painting there are three various degrees of distances established, viz. the fore ground, the intermediate part, and the off-ship; so in music there are three different parts strictly similar to these, viz. the bass (or foreground,) the tenor (or intermediate,) and the treble (or off-ship.) In consequence of this, a musical composition without its bass is like a landscape without its foreground: without its  
tenor



tenor it resembles a landscape deprived of its intermediate part; without its treble it is analagous to a landscape deprived of its distance, or off-ship. We know how imperfect a picture is, when deprived of any of these parts; and hence we may form a judgment of those who determine on the excellence of any musical composition, without seeing or hearing it in all its parts, and understanding their relation to each other.

5thly. As in painting, especially in the nobler branches of it, and particularly in history painting, there is a principal figure which is most remarkable and conspicuous, and to which all the other figures are referred and subordinate; so, in the greater kinds of musical composition, there is a principal and leading subject, or succession of notes, which ought to prevail and be heard through the whole composition: and to which, both the air and harmony of the other parts ought to be in like manner referred and subordinate.

6thly. So again, as in painting a groupe of figures, care is to be had that there be no deficiency in it; but that a certain fulness or roundness be preserved, such as Titian beautifully compared to a bunch of grapes; so in the nobler kinds of musical composition, there are several inferior subjects, which depend on the principal: and here the several subjects (as in painting the figures do) are, as were, to sustain and support each other: and it is certain, that if any one of these be taken away from a skilful composition, there will be found a deficiency highly disagreeable to an experienced ear. Yet this does not hinder, but there may be perfect composition in two, three, four, or more parts, in the same manner as a groupe may be perfect, though consisting of a smaller, or greater number of figures. In both cases the painter or musician varies his disposition according to the number of parts or figures, which he includes in his plan.

7thly. As in viewing a picture, you ought to be removed to a certain distance, called the point of sight, at which all its parts are seen in their just proportions; so, in concert, there is a certain distance, at which the sounds are melted into each other, and the various parts strike the ear in their proper strength and symmetry. To stand close by a bassoon, or double bass, when you hear a concert, is just as if you should plant your eye close to the foreground when you view a picture; or, as if in surveying a spacious edifice, you should place yourself at the foot of a pillar that supports it.