Syncopation and Emphasis. I

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and proved interesting. More mature in style is the 'Fantasia of Four Parts' which appears in 'Parthenia,' a collection of Virginal music published in 1611. It consisted of works by Byrd (8), Bull (7), and Gibbons (6)—twenty-one in all. The Fantasia is not strongly individualised as instrumental music, but is an interesting work, grave and serious in character, and has very markedly the characteristic just mentioned, viz., that a fresh figure appears near the end, and is worked imitatively to make a *Coda*. Of the other pieces by Gibbons in 'Parthenia,' distinctly the most attractive is 'Lord Salisbury his Pavan.' This appears also in the 'Fitzwilliam Virginal Book,' which contains 297 pieces, and was probably copied out in prison (1608 or 1609-16) as a pastime by the younger Tregian, a Catholic who suffered for his faith. Byrd (59), Bull (36), Farnaby (55), Dowland (3), Morley (9), and others appear; but Gibbons, strangely enough, has only two pieces. The other is 'The Woods so wilde,' which shows traces of the immature instrumental technique of the time. Semiquaver passages of no particular design, above and below the melody, apparently gave pleasure by their mere rapidity. The sound of the instrument seems of itself to have satisfied the hearers. Still, in the quieter portion, there is a noticeable feeling for the sentiment of the title.

It is time that these great men came to occupy their true place in the Kingdom of Art. The England of the time has been aptly called a nest of singing birds, and the phrase is equally true of the musicians as of the poets. Of course there is no Shakespeare—he comes only once in the world's history. But not only did these men lead the musical world of their time, they produced work of high perfection, of a distinct character, and which the world cannot afford to lose—work which is among the richest treasures of art, and should be not only the fruit, but the food, of the human spirit.

A proposal of some novelty was made at a recent meeting of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society. It seems that the system of guest-conductors has not met with unmixed approval, as it involves extra expense in fees, and the conductors have, in the opinion of some, shown a tendency to be autocratic at the expense of the Society's profits. From among the floating discontent arose the suggestion:

(1) That it be advertised in the Musical Press that the Liverpool Philharmonic Society is open to receive applications from conductors willing to offer their services to conduct one or more concerts, and to submit beforehand their programme to the committee; (2) that if the programme be approved the conductor shall be paid only a percentage of the profit after all the expenses have been met; (3) should the programme meet the disapproval of any member he shall be entitled to return his ticket to the secretary for sale, and if such ticket be sold one-half of the proceeds shall go to the credit of the member's subscription of the following season, and the remainder to the Society's funds.

It would have been interesting to watch the strenuous rivalry of our best English conductors, and perhaps many from abroad, for the rewards of this democratic competition, but unfortunately the suggestion was not taken.

SYNCOPIATION AND EMPHASIS.

BY REGINALD GATTY.

I.

In the following articles an attempt has been made to co-ordinate the various scattered explanations with regard to syncopation and emphasis, and to reconcile the discrepancies that exist between them. It has further been sought to show that although vagueness of definition is partly responsible for the confusion, there also prevails a widespread misconception as to the very nature of some of the effects in question.

First of all it must be pointed out that the one essential feature of syncopation and emphasis is that, being concerned with the so-called rhetorical (or oratorical) accents of music, they depend for their very existence on their unambiguous differentiation from the natural (grammatical or metrical) accents. It is only because they are recognised as dependent contrasts to the regular series of accents associated with the bar-lines that they are able to have their proper effect. Once the rhythm, and consequently the music, becomes obscure, by reason of the fact that they can no longer be differentiated from the natural accents, they have lost their *raison d'être*, unless we can be sure that this obscurity was the actual intention of the composer. It may seem superfluous to labour the point, but its importance will be realised later on, when it will be found that it is just here where differences of opinion actually occur.

Coming now to syncopation, I define it with Callcott* and Riemann† as the sustaining of a sound that begins on a weak beat (or the weak portion of a divided beat) and ends on a strong one (or the strong portion of a divided beat). The displacement of the accent on to this weak beat from the following (silent) strong beat is rather an accompanying feature of the device than an essential one,‡ as is shown by the fact that suspensions are also syncopations, although the change of harmony preserves the strong accent on the strong beat. This may be seen in the following example quoted from Pauer ('Musical Forms,' Novello, p. 17):

Syncopations may be divided into two main classes: those that occur within the bar, and those that go 'through the bars' for their completion. Both may occur either singly or in sequence, in

* 'Grammar of Music.' London, T. Hurst. § 86.

† 'Musik-Lexikon.' Article *Syncope*.

‡ 'Grove's Dictionary' (Article *Syncope*) defines the effect as 'An alteration of regular rhythm, produced by placing the strongest emphasis on part of the bar not usually accented,' but in this case,

must also be an example of syncopation, which is thus confused with emphasis.

which case there may be one or more in each bar. The following examples are adduced. (a) Within the bar :

Ex. 2. HANDEL. 'Joshua.' Air, 'Heroes, when with glory.'

Ex. 3. 'Judas Maccabaeus,' Act II.
How vain . . . is man, . . . who

Ex. 4. 'Tristan und Isolde,' Act II.

Ex. 5. TCHAIKOVSKY, Op. 11.

(b) Through the bars :

Ex. 6. HANDEL. 'Athalia,' No. 3. 'The rising world.'

Ex. 7. SCHUMANN. Sonata in G minor, Op. 22.

Ex. 8*. SCHUMANN. Pianoforte Concerto, Op. 54. *Allegro vivace*.

Ex. 9. SCHUMANN. 'Phantasietücke,' Op. 12, No. 4.

Ex. 10. BEETHOVEN. Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 28, 1st movement.

We have now to consider the class of kindred effects, dependent on *emphasis*, as indicated by phrasing slurs and *sforzato*-signs (*sf*, >, ^).

* Franklin Taylor says of this passage ('Technique and Expression in Pianoforte Playing,' Novello, p. 32): 'The length of the bar is doubled, becoming, as it were, a bar of 3-2 instead of 3-4, and shows 'the effect of this change' as follows:

But this conversion should rather be &c. Moreover, the resemblance is an accidental rather than a vital one. On this principle of analysis, is really

'the length of the bar being doubled.' It is perfectly proper to point out the resemblance between the two forms of notation, but it can only lead to confusion to explain all the subtler effects of one time in terms of another, besides ignoring the differences of subjective expression suggested to the player by the particular notation employed.

These are of two main kinds, according as they occur on strong or weak beats, or the weak portions of divided beats. (a) On strong beats :

Ex. 11. SCHUMANN. Fantasie, Op. 17.

Ex. 12. SCHUMANN. Novellate, No. 8, Trio II. (Op. 21).

Ex. 13. SCHUMANN. Op. 26, No. 1 ('Faschingsschwank').

(b) On weak beats, or the weak portions of divided beats :

Ex. 14. HAYDN. Quartet, Op. 54, No. 2 (1st movement).

Ex. 15. SCHUBERT. Quartet in A minor, Op. 29.

Ex. 16. BEETHOVEN. Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 27, No. 1, Finale.

Ex. 17.† BEETHOVEN. 3rd Symphony, Scherzo.

Ex. 18. BEETHOVEN. Pianoforte Trio, Op. 1, No. 2.

It frequently happens, however, that the phrasing accents, instead of being placed on strong or

† This passage is quoted by Corder (Grove's Dictionary, Article *Syncopation*) as an example of syncopation, but see note † on p. 369. C. F. Abdy Williams ('The rhythm of modern music'), Macmillan, 1909, p. 98, also cites as an example of syncopation, and gives (p. 97) the following definition: 'An accented note is cut short, or is represented by a short rest, and the succeeding note, entering before its expected time, is made longer than the shortened accented note or rest.' It will be evident, however, if we compare examples (a), (b) and (c),

Ex. 18a.

that (b) and (c) are much more akin, by reason of the accented notes ending on the strong beat of each bar, than (a) and (c), where we find the note on the strong beat sounded in (a) but silent in (c). This being the case, it seems less confusing to consider (a) merely as an example of emphasis in triple time rather than as a special kind of syncopation in triple time that still has to be differentiated from (b).

weak beats, or on the weak portions of divided beats, as in the above examples, or on a series of strong and weak beats as in Ex. 19 :

are placed on both strong and weak beats at certain definite intervals, and when we examine the thematic construction of such passages we find that in every case the melodic outline would seem to fit more naturally into bars with a different time-signature than that which is assigned to them. This is of course the familiar device known by the names of 'cross-accents' or 'false-accents,' *tempo rubato*, *tempo d'imbroglia*, or *tempo della confusione*.* For the sake of greater clearness I give skeleton phrasing models of the different varieties, and begin with triple time by reason of its greater frequency. (a) *Tempo d'imbroglia* in triple time :

(b) Duple and quadruple time :

* Of these various terms *tempo d'imbroglia* seems the best. *Tempo rubato* is already used in another sense; *tempo della confusione*, 'false accents' and 'cross-accents' seem less happy. The peculiar feature about *tempo d'imbroglia* is that it is the melodic motives that are 'cross' with the natural accents, and it is quite possible to have, by a further nuance, the phrasing-accents 'cross' with the motives (see Ex. 23). Under these circumstances it seems better to term the normal phrasing-accents of *tempo d'imbroglia* 'motive-accents,' and to use the expression 'cross motive-accents' for those phrasing accents that, as in Ex. 23, supplant the expected motive-accents, and in consequence seem generally to synchronise with the natural accents. The melodic motives of *tempo d'imbroglia* will be called 'cross-motives.'

† Strong for 2 beats. ‡ Weak for 2 beats. § Half-strong for 3 beats.

Model 5. In quadruple time the scheme of this will be :

BEETHOVEN. Sonata in F, Op. 5, No 1.

Model 7. In quadruple time the scheme of this will be :

BEETHOVEN. 4th Symphony, 1st movement.

In the following example we have yet another nuance applicable to this whole class of effects—the nuance of cross motive-accents already mentioned. The music suggests the phrasing scheme just quoted (Model 8), and the accents are made to contradict it, in this case synchronising with the natural accents. It must also be pointed out that as no phrasing-accents are appended to Exs. 20, 21 and 22, it rests with the interpreter whether he adopts what are here termed motive-accents, given above each example, or elects to contradict the implied phrasing scheme by the use of cross motive-accents, such as is expressly called for in Ex. 23. The normal motive-accents are appended in brackets :

|| In quadruple time, $\overset{>}{S} 6$, $\overset{>}{h-S} 6$, &c.

¶ Prout says of this example ('Musical Form,' Augener, § 291): 'Here the first six bars are in reality four bars of $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and might be written :

As this is the beginning of the song, there can be no feeling of cross-accent here, because the regular accent of $\frac{3}{4}$ time has never been established. The position of the cadences in the second and fifth bars would also be wrong were the time here really duple. But see note on p. 370.

Model 9. $\overset{>}{h-S} 6. \overset{>}{S} 6. \text{ (or } \overset{>}{W} 3. \overset{>}{S} 3.)$

In compound duple ($\frac{6}{4}$) the phrasing accents admit of a three-fold treatment, owing to the fact that the six crochets are susceptible to a dual grouping:

and

In the first place (corresponding with Model 8 in simple duple time) we get:

and

Model 11. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

Then, corresponding with (b) above, we get:

Model 13. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

and

Model 14. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

Finally, corresponding with (a) above, we get:

Ex. 24*. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

Variants of this type will be, of course:

Model 16. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

and

Model 17. $\frac{6}{4}$ |

A parallel grouping of the six half-beats in triple time gives the following varieties of phrasing effects:

and

Hence we get the further models for *tempo d'imbroglio* in triple time:

Model 18. $\frac{3}{2}$ |

Model 19. $\frac{3}{2}$ |

Model 20. $\frac{3}{2}$ |

Model 21. $\frac{3}{2}$ |

Model 22. $\frac{3}{2}$ |

The above list is by no means exhaustive of the possibilities of emphasis in the service of *tempo d'imbroglio*, but the theorist is well-advised not to cite too many theoretic schemes without the corresponding musical examples. There is, however, still one more recognised variety of *tempo d'imbroglio* to be mentioned—that obtained by a combination of syncopation and emphasis. Three examples in triple time are appended:

SCHUMANN. Op. 21, No. 4.

BEETHOVEN. 3rd Symphony, 1st movement.

SCHUMANN. 'Carnaval,' Op. 9.

STEFFANI.

In the next article we will consider the mental effect intended by the employment of *tempo d'imbroglio*.

(To be continued.)

* Prout remarks of this effect ('Musical Form,' Augener, § 290), that it is 'analogous to the introduction of triplets in common time, e.g., instead of

Model 15 will make it clear that the grouping of the crochets actually does amount to the division of compound duple time into triplets.

* It will be clear on a moment's consideration that the effect of syncopation will also be obtained, if a note instead of being sustained throughout, under the conditions proper to syncopation, is shortened of its length and a corresponding rest is substituted.