

Bar-Lines

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The Church and Cathedral Choristers' Singing Method. Dr. Keeton has not only worthily upheld all the best traditions of English cathedral music during his long reign at Peterborough, but he can point to a large number of former pupils who are carrying on the traditions of his thoroughness and artistic ideals in various places, and who bear strong testimony to the esteem in which he is held as a teacher, a musician, and a friend.

For kind help rendered in the preparation of the foregoing chit-chat, the writer desires to thank Mr. William Fickling, B.A., St. Peter's College, Peterborough; Mr. A. C. Taylor, Secretary of the Infirmary, Peterborough, for the use of his excellent photographs, some of which he has kindly taken specially for this article; and Dr. Haydn Keeton, Organist and Master of the Choristers.

DOTTED CROTCHET.

BAR-LINES.

By DR. WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS, F.S.A.

The history of the use and introduction of these indispensable adjuncts to the accurate display of visible music, written or printed, has not hitherto received as much attention as the importance of the subject demands. Turning to Grove's Dictionary of Music we find the statement that 'the object of the bar appears to have been in the first place to facilitate the reading of compositions written in score, by keeping the different parts properly under each other, rather than to mark the rhythmic divisions. One of the earliest instances of the use of the bar is found in Agricola's "*Musica Instrumentalis*," 1529, in which the examples are written on a single staff of ten lines, the various parts being placed above each other in the same staff; the introduction of the bar into separate voice-parts is of much later date. The works of Tallis, Bird, and Gibbons were all published without them.' This is very erroneous and misleading. Agricola's book was published in 1528; it is now lying before me, and I find in addition to the ten-line staff there are eight bars of a three-part score—treble, alto, and bass—on a five-line staff; the bars are just as regular as they are in any modern music.

That the published music of Byrd and Gibbons was barred is proved by the beautifully-printed book '*Parthenia*,' which was published in or about 1611, with the following title:—

Parthenia, or the Maydenhead of the first musicke that ever was printed for the Virginalls. Composed by three famous masters, William Byrd, Dr. John Bull, & Orlando Gibbons, Gentlemen of his Maties most illustrious Chappell. Dedicated to all the Masters and Lovers of Musick.

'*Parthenia*' was printed from copper plates engraved by William Hole; the barring is carried through both treble and bass staves, each of six lines, and is uniform and accurate.

I will now cite some early examples of barring: the first comes from the *twelfth century*, and is to be found in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; it is

contained in a book of a treatise on law. I possess a photographed facsimile, and can vouch for the fact that the bar-lines, notes, and five-line staves are all of the same period. The music is a two-part composition, and this doubtless suggested the use of bars, to enable the singers to keep together. I have a facsimile of another composition preserved in the British Museum which dates from the twelfth or perhaps early thirteenth century; the music is again for two voices, and the bar-lines are drawn from the top of the upper four-line staff to the bottom of the lower four-line staff. This latter MS. is the more interesting from having belonged to Thame Abbey, Oxfordshire. I have a fourteenth-century manuscript copy of the celebrated treatise '*Tractatus super musicam mensuratam*'; this was composed by John de Muris about 1321, and here we find many of the examples barred. This work contains the earliest mention of the *minim* note.

Another interesting autograph manuscript in my possession, entitled '*Incipiunt præludium diversarum*,' was written in 1448 by Adam Ileborgh of Stendall. It contains instructions for the organ, and is not only barred, but is also notable as being the earliest known example of music for the pedals. An example of a book containing single voice parts barred is '*Modus legendi et accentuandi Epistolas et Evangelia*,' which was printed in Padua about 1490.

The well-known '*Musica getutscht*,' by Virdung, printed at Basel in 1511, contains barred music for the lute partly on five-line staves and partly in tablature. Bar-lines were almost indispensable for lute music written in tablature; on the other hand, vocal music having the assistance of the note values over the words could, on occasion, be made fairly easy to read without the use of bar-lines, and we find printed books which exemplify this practice. There is a splendid book, printed in 1584, written by Emanuel Hadriani, entitled '*Pratum Musicum*'; it is a large folio volume, and on opposite pages there are voice parts and words for soprano and bass voices, both unbarred; whilst the accompaniments for the lute are barred throughout.

I have traced chronologically thus far the use of bar-lines, and now I bring forward the earliest use of the word *bar* known to me. It is to be found in Thomas Morley's '*A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*,' published in 1597. On page 92 he says—referring to a music-type example in the text—'Here they set downe certain observations which they termed Inductions, as here you see in the first two *barres*. . . . In the third *barre* you have broken Sesquialtera.' This quotation shows that at that time the use of the word was generally accepted and its meaning well understood. I need scarcely add that many of the examples given in Morley's book are barred.

It is somewhat curious that subsequent to the before-mentioned time there are to be found numerous instances of unbarred music, both manuscript and printed. It appears that during the first half of the seventeenth century composers had

not adopted an uniform plan. Take the Brothers Lawes for instance; we find published in 1637—

A Paraphrase upon the Psalmes of David. By G. S. [George Sandys]. Set to new Tunes for private Devotion: and a thorow Base, for Voice, or Instrument. By Henry Lawes, Gentleman of His Majesties Chappell Royall.

This is a folio volume with the tunes barred throughout. The same work was printed in an octavo volume in 1648. I have also an autograph volume of music by William Lawes, who was killed at the siege of Chester in 1645, which is systematically barred; and yet in 1648 we find the following work published without bars:—

Choice Psalmes put into Musick. For three Voices. The most of which may properly enough be sung by any three, with a Thorough Base. Compos'd by Henry and William Lawes, Brothers; and Servants to His Majestie.

This work is printed in separate part-books, Cantus primus, Cantus secundus, Bassus, and Thorow Base.

A little later, in 1653, Henry Lawes published his 'Ayres and Dialogues for One Two and Three Voices,' marking the bar-lines continuously throughout the music; this plan he consistently carried out in the subsequent publications of 1655 and 1658. Reference has been made to the necessity of bars for producing a clear and readable score; it may therefore be of interest to note that Morley (1597) does not use the word score, but the more expressive term *Partition*, which we have now abandoned, but which is still retained by the French. Morley, on page 97, says 'Here it is set downe in *partition*, because you should the more easilie perceive the conveyance [conveyance, or movement] of the parts'; and again on page 103 'and therefore I have set it down in *partition*.'

DR. CHARLES BURNEY

(1726—1814).

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

(Concluded from page 515.)

Although Dr. Burney made no mark as a composer, reference may be made to one or two of his creative efforts. He claims to have been the first to compose pianoforte duets. This he does in a publication bearing the following title:—

Four | Sonatas, or Duets | for two performers on one | Piano Forte | or | Harpsichord | composed by | CHAS BURNEY, Mus.D., | Price 10. 6. |

London. Printed for the author, and sold by R. Bremner in the Strand, | and at all the Music Shops. [1777.]

The Preface to this quartet of duet sonatas reads thus:—

As the following pieces are the first that have appeared in print of this kind, it may be necessary to say something concerning their utility, and the manner of performing them.

That great and varied effects may be produced by *Duets upon Two keyed-instruments*, has been proved by several ingenious compositions—some of which have been published in Germany; but the inconvenience of having two Harpsichords, or two Piano-Fortes, in the same room, and the short time they remain exactly in tune together, have prevented frequent trials, and even the cultivation of this species of music, notwithstanding all the advantages which, in other respects, it offers to

musical students. The playing of Duets by *two persons upon one instrument*, is, however, attended with nearly as many advantages, without the inconvenience of crowding a room, or of frequent or double tuning: and so extensive is the compass of keyed-instruments, that the most full and elaborate compositions must, if played by one person, leave many parts of the scale unemployed; which, perhaps, first suggested the idea of applying pedals to the organ. And though, at first, the near approach of the hands of the different performers may seem awkward and embarrassing, a little use and contrivance with respect to the manner of placing them, and the choice of fingers, will soon remove that difficulty. Indeed, it frequently happens, that when there are two students upon the same keyed-instrument, in one house, they are in each other's way; however, by compositions of the following kind, they become reciprocally useful, and necessary companions in their musical exercises.

Besides the *Amusement* which such experiments will afford, they may be made subservient to two very useful purposes of *improvement*, as they will require a particular attention to *Time*, and to that clair-obscur which is produced by different degrees of *Piano* and *Forte*. Errors committed in the *Measure*, by either of the performers of these pieces, who may accelerate, retard, or otherwise break its proportions, will be sooner discovered, and consequently attended with more disagreeable effects, than if such errors were committed by a single player, unaccompanied; as the harmony, and consent of parts will be totally destroyed by the least deviation from strict Time of either player, unless the other give way, and conform to the mistakes that are made. And with respect to the *Pianos* and *Fortes*, each Performer should try to discover when he has the Principal Melody given to him, or when he is only to *accompany* that Melody; in order, either to make it more conspicuous, or merely to enrich its harmony. There is no fault in accompanying so destructive of good melody, taste, and expression, as the vanity with which young and ignorant Performers are too frequently possessed, of becoming *Principals*, when they are only *Subalterns*; and of being heard, when they have nothing to say that merits particular attention. If the part which would afford the greatest pleasure to the hearer be suffocated, and rendered inaudible, by too full, and too loud an accompaniment, it is like throwing the capital figure of a picture into the back-ground, or degrading the master into a servant.

It is hoped, however, that the great strides which the executive part of Music, at least, makes towards perfection in this metropolis, abounding at present in a greater number of capital performers, of almost every kind, than any other in Europe, will soon render such remarks as these useless; and that something analogous to *Perspective*, *Transparency*, and *Contrast* will be generally adopted in music, and be thought of nearly as much importance and make as great a progress among its students as they have lately done in the other art.

St. Martin's Street, Jan. 1777.

These duet sonatas are printed oblong folio size, with both parts, placed one above the other, printed on the same page, with the indications *Cembalo 1^{mo.}*, *Cembalo 2^{do.}*

Two quaint titles of other works may be given, of which the first is:—

PRELUDES, | FUGUES AND INTERLUDES, | FOR THE | ORGAN. | Alphabetically arranged in all the keys that are most perfectly in | tune upon that Instrument, and printed in a Pocket size for the | convenience of YOUNG ORGANISTS, | for whose use this book is particularly calculated & Published | by | CHAS BURNEY MUS. D. | Book I. | Price 5s. |

London, Printed for the Author & sold at the Music Shops.

This, a publication of forty-four pages, starts with a composition in the key of A minor, followed by others in 'A# [major], B flat, C, and D.' As to