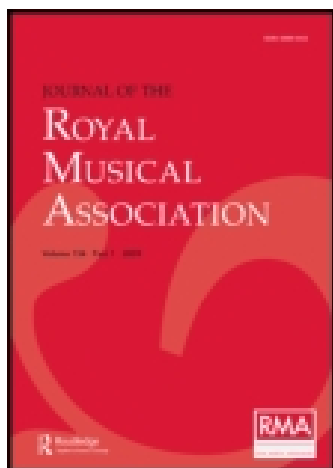


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### Leonardo Leo

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FEBRUARY 19, 1906

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IN THE CHAIR.

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*LEONARDO LEO.*

BY EDWARD J. DENT, M.A., MUS.B.,  
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WHEN I last had the honour of reading a paper before this Association, I tried to show you how Alessandro Scarlatti gathered up the results of all the musical experiments which Italian composers had made during the seventeenth century, and wove these various threads into that smooth and supple texture which formed the foundation of what we call classical music. He was of course not alone in the accomplishment of this great task, but we may certainly regard him as by far the most important and the most influential of the musicians who were at work upon it. Historians have sometimes refused to accept him as the real founder of the Neapolitan School of the eighteenth century. Certainly there were composers and teachers at Naples before Alessandro Scarlatti, but it was not until Scarlatti had established himself there that Naples became the musical centre of Italy and therefore of Europe. Nevertheless, I do not wish to maintain that it was the spirit of Scarlatti which animated the teaching of that school of composition, although the Neapolitans always regarded him as their figurehead; indeed I shall have occasion to point out to you this afternoon how soon his immediate influence was forgotten. But the generation that followed him did include a few composers whose work was inspired by ideals almost as lofty as his; and of these the man who has most claims on our respect is Leonardo Leo.

The birth and parentage of Leonardo Leo have been the subject of some dispute among musical historians. The

latest authority on the subject is Cavaliere Giacomo Leo, a descendant of the composer's brother, who not only has made very careful researches at Naples and elsewhere, but is also in possession of family traditions to which we may justly attach considerable authority. According to Cav. Giacomo Leo, the composer was born on August 5, 1694, at S. Vito degli Sclavi, now called S. Vito degli Normanni, in the province of Lecce. There were several families of the name of Leo at S. Vito, some being known as Leo and others as de Leo; our composer's father was Leonardo de Leo, and he appears to have been a small proprietor in very humble circumstances. He had three sons; the youngest, born two months after his death, received the name of Leonardo, in memory of his father, Oronzo, after an ancestor whose name is still perpetuated in the Leo family, and Salvatore, because he came into the world poor like the Saviour of mankind. His education was undertaken by the monks of a neighbouring Dominican monastery. They soon discovered his musical talent, and persuaded his mother and uncles to send him to the Conservatorio della Pietà de' Turchini at Naples. The Neapolitan Conservatori, as their name implies, were originally not schools of music, but orphanages, in which children without means were received between the ages of seven and fifteen. Leonardo Leo entered the Conservatorio in 1703 at the age of nine, and remained there until the age of twenty-one. This account of Leo's early years does not agree with that given by Francesco Florimo in his history of the Neapolitan School of music, which was the principal authority for the article in the first edition of Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians." The confusion of dates is due to the fact that there was another Leonardo Leo, son of one Corrado Leo, and apparently cousin of the composer; he established himself at Naples in 1709, in a house which was the property of the Conservatorio de' Turchini, married, and had a son who was eventually admitted to the Conservatorio as a student. For a detailed discussion of the documents relating to these two Leonardo Leos, and the establishment of their separate identities, I must refer you to the published works of Cav. Giacomo Leo.\* I shall not make any further reference to Leonardo Leo the son of Corrado Leo, and henceforward shall speak of the composer simply as Leo.

It has generally been supposed that Leo was a pupil of Alessandro Scarlatti at Naples and of Giuseppe Ottavio Pitoni at Rome. There can of course be no doubt that he was influenced by the work of Scarlatti, and his sacred music

\* G. Leo—Leonardo Leo, musicista del secolo xviii. e le sue opere musicali, Naples, 1905. Leonardo Leo e il suo omonimo, Naples, 1901. S. Vito de' Normanni, Naples, 1904.

bears a decided affinity to that of Pitoni; but it is impossible that he could have gone to Rome for tuition under Pitoni whilst a student at a Neapolitan Conservatorio, dependent on the charity of the institution for his board and lodging. Moreover, Alessandro Scarlatti, as I have shown elsewhere, was absent from Naples from 1702 to the end of 1708, and on his return there was teaching at a Conservatorio other than that in which Leo was receiving instruction. His actual teachers were Francesco Provenzale, and Nicola Fago, known as Il Tarentino, a man of no fame as a composer but worthy of remembrance as an excellent teacher.

Of his first important composition, a sacred drama entitled "*L'infedeltà abbattuta*," neither the score nor the libretto has survived. It was performed by the students of the Conservatorio in 1712 and apparently met with success, as it was repeated by the command of the Viceroy at the royal palace. Two years later he produced his first secular opera, "*Pisistrato*," at the Teatro di San Bartolomeo. "This new opera," says a contemporary, "was much applauded and admired, having been set to music by the young Leonardo Leo, and it is the first opera that he has written." The score, which was unknown to Florimo, is at Montecassino, and, as we should naturally expect, shows the young composer imitating the style of Scarlatti. The imitation is not free from awkwardness, and the phraseology is modelled rather on Scarlatti's earlier work (in the manner of "*Eraclea*," 1700) than on his new style introduced after his return to Naples in 1708. The rhythmical mannerisms of the later generation do not appear at all, and there is curiously little florid vocalization. The following year, his minority being at an end, he was made second master at the Pietà de' Turchini, and also obtained the appointment of organist at the Cathedral. In 1716 he became supernumerary organist of the royal chapel, and in 1717, when Alessandro Scarlatti left Naples again and all his subordinates at the royal chapel received some sort of promotion, Leo became organist. He also held the directorship of the music at a church belonging to some Spanish nuns. His next opera, "*Sofonisba*," was produced in 1718, and this work, following upon two serenatas composed for Court functions, established Leo's reputation in Naples as a composer for the stage. His early career as a composer of opera is, however, difficult to trace, since the scores of most of his operas of this period have disappeared. No doubt many of them could be to some extent reconstructed, since several libretti exist, and detached airs by Leo are scattered over all the principal libraries; but the cataloguing and arranging of them is a labour requiring more time and patience than I have yet been able to devote to it. It is however a task that ought to be carried out, since it will

materially assist historians of music in tracing the successive stages of development of the sonata form.

It is in 1722 that we first hear of Leo as a composer of comic opera, a branch of musical art in which he is one of the most important figures of the eighteenth century. It will be remembered that for many years it had been considered necessary to add comic scenes to all operas by outside composers which appeared on the Neapolitan stage. Handel's "Agrippina" was one of those "improved" in this way. Gasparini's opera "Tamerlano," produced at Venice in 1710, was given at Naples in 1722 under the name of "Bajazette," and for this performance comic *intermezzi* were written by one Bernardo Sabdumene, and set to music by Leo. It is possible, however, that Leo had already done work of the same kind in 1717, when he made additions (of what kind is not known) to the opera "Sesostri," also by Gasparini. In 1723 Leo produced his first entire comic opera, "La mpeca scoperta" ("L'imbroglio scoperto"). As is obvious from the title, this is in Neapolitan dialect, and was produced at the Teatro dei Fiorentini. The public, it is recorded, were very much pleased both with the music of the celebrated Leonardo Leo, organist of the chapel royal, and with the singers who took part in it.

It is not necessary to mention here all the operas of Leo in turn. There is a complete bibliography of them both in Cavaliere Leo's biography, and in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary. It will be more convenient merely to relate the principal events of the composer's life, and then proceed to a critical survey of his music.

On the death of Alessandro Scarlatti in 1725, Leo became first organist of the chapel royal. It was probably at this time that he became master at the Conservatorio di S. Onofrio. In 1732 he succeeded Vinci as Pro-vice-maestro of the chapel royal, and in this capacity produced his two celebrated oratorios "La Morte di Abele" and "Sant' Elena al Calvario." The most celebrated of all his serious operas, "Demofonte," appeared in 1735: "Farnace" (1737) has a certain interest as being the last opera given at the old Teatro di S. Bartolomeo. This theatre, which had seen all Scarlatti's Neapolitan triumphs, was in this year converted into a church, being superseded as court theatre by the newly-built San Carlo. In 1738 Leo was engaged on another opera, "Demetrio," but interrupted it to compose a sort of serenata in honour of the marriage of Charles III. He was thus unable to finish "Demetrio" by the time required, although he was confined to his house and a guard of soldiers placed opposite in order to ensure his working. The opera was finished by other composers, and Leo had to content himself with only a portion of the total sum paid for the opera. The celebrated

"Miserere" and the best of all his comic operas, "Amor vuol sofferenze," date from 1739. The following year Leo paid short visits to Turin and Milan; in 1741 he succeeded his old teacher Nicola Fago as first master at the Pietà de' Turchini. He died in 1744 from apoplexy, while seated at his harpsichord. Florimo, who always had an eye for an anecdote, stated that he was engaged at the moment on the composition of the opera "La finta Frascatana." This is obviously untrue, as the opera in question was produced five years earlier.

Leo's compositions fall into three principal divisions: serious opera, comic opera, and sacred music. Besides these, there is a small amount of instrumental music, which makes up for its deficiency in quantity by its excellence in quality. The concerto for four violins is too well known to need further remark: there are also six violoncello concertos composed in 1737 and 1738 which deserve the highest praise.

The disappearance of many of Leo's scores makes it impossible to offer an adequate judgment on him as a composer of serious opera. "Demofonte," "Ciro Riconosciuto," and "L'Olimpiade" appear to have been regarded as his masterpieces in this line. Piccinni considered the air "Misero pargoletto," in "Demofonte," to be a model of dramatic expression; it is certainly one of the most beautiful specimens of the period. But we are obliged to confess that for poignancy and vividness of expression Alessandro Scarlatti remained unsurpassed by any of the generation that followed him. The contribution of Leo and his contemporaries to the history of music does not consist in an advance in poetic expression; the advance which they made was more purely technical, and its importance is therefore easily underrated. In serious opera Leo reminds us rather of Cherubini. Severe, dignified, and cold, he is a composer whom all can admire, but whom only those will love who have in their own souls that fiery enthusiasm which kindles all that it meets.

In the department of comic opera Leo holds a very important place. It may be well to recapitulate here the main outlines of the history of *opera buffa*. The essential thing to remember is that the *opera buffa* did not grow out of the *intermezzo*, as so many writers have been led to suppose. The *intermezzo*, as I have pointed out elsewhere, is derived originally from the old Italian comedy of masks. The Venetian composers who adapted to popular needs the first experimental ideas of the literary Florentines, introduced comic characters into their operas, not indeed with the traditional masks of Arlecchino and Brighella, but with parts in the development of the drama very similar to those taken on the popular stage by those two immortal types of domestic servants. In Alessandro Scarlatti's early operas, the comic

characters—sometimes one, sometimes two—appear at any time in the play, generally at the most inopportune moments. Later they settle down into the conventional soprano and bass, and occupy the concluding scenes of the first two acts and the penultimate scene of the third. Their relation to the comedy of masks is well seen in Scarlatti's "Caduta dei Decemviri," where Flacco, the comic servant of Appius Claudius, informs us that he is a native of Bologna, and his companion Servilia, nurse to Virginia, announces herself as a Bergamask. There are indeed several scenes of this kind in various operas where the comic bass masquerades as the Dottor Graziano, and the soprano appears as a sort of female counterpart of Brighella. Already before Scarlatti's death these comic scenes had come to be regarded as detachable and interchangeable between one opera and another; and in Leo's time they had become definite *intermezzi*, of that type of which "La Serva Padrona" is the classical example.

The *opera buffa* or *commedia per musica*, however, is not on this small scale, but is a full-blown three-act opera. Dr. Hugo Goldschmidt has traced the Roman comic operas of the seventeenth century to a Spanish origin; this would account for their taking root easily in Naples at a later date. Scarlatti's early operas include one or two which belong more or less to the Roman type: "Dal Male il Bene" is a good example. These, however, were in pure Italian, and preserved the courtly Spanish character, though some interesting examples of dialect opera were produced at Rome, and are discussed in detail by Dr. Goldschmidt's "Studien zur Geschichte der italienischen Oper im 17. Jahrhundert." The essentially Neapolitan comic opera arose in 1709, and was evidently derived from the half-serious, half-comic opera of Scarlatti's early years; "La Rosaura," and "Il Figlio delle Selve," are other examples. Since the first known Neapolitan dialect opera was produced with the apologies of the management, apparently as a stop-gap, it seems likely that it was sung mainly in dialect because there was no time to turn the rough draft into literary Italian. We know that with even so classical an author as Metastasio, the turning the play into polished literary Italian was a very important part of his method, according to his own description. The experiment being successful, it naturally was repeated, and so a definite style grew up, depending for its interest on the lively presentation of popular local types, and later introducing an occasional parody of the *baroque* style of *opera seria*. In the early comic operas all the characters talk Neapolitan except those who are held up to ridicule as Romans or North Italians; in the same way we find the Florentine's pedantically pure Italian ridiculed in the Venetian comedies of Goldoni. This, however, was not kept up for very long;

no doubt it was not always possible to secure the services of a sufficient number of good Neapolitan singers, and the later type of comic opera does not present us with more than four or five characters who speak the dialect. Scarlatti's one attempt at comic opera, it will be remembered, is in Italian all through. After the reduction in the number of dialect parts, the local characters, as might be expected, are generally servants, or at any rate people in the humbler ranks of society, and we see a regular tendency to keep up the old-fashioned arrangement of comic scenes in serious opera. Thus in Scarlatti's opera, *Rodimarte* and *Rosina*, the two servants, have just the same sort of scenes at the end of each act as, for example, *Orcone* and *Dorilla* in his "*Tigrane*"; and in Leo's comic operas we find the same thing. We see, therefore, that so far from the comic opera being derived from the *intermezzo*, the *intermezzo* might have been derived from the comic opera as easily as from the serious opera. The attempts to parody the style of grand opera are often extremely amusing, even to a foreign reader who, like myself, has only the very slightest acquaintance with the Neapolitan dialect, and who has no means of understanding the innumerable allusions that there may be to things of purely local and momentary interest. The form of parody that is most obvious to the historian is the introduction, generally towards the end, of a young lady who gives the company a short autobiography in elaborately elegant Italian, sometimes punctuated, like the Prologue's speech in the "*Midsummer Night's Dream*," so as to convey a sense different from that which she might be supposed to intend. She has generally been discovered unexpectedly, and informs us that she belongs to a noble Roman or Florentine family, that her father was taking her by sea to Genoa or Leghorn, as the case may be, that they were seized by pirates, her father killed and herself made prisoner. Further questioning elicits the fact that she is a singer, upon which she is requested to oblige with a song. A harpsichord is brought on to the stage, and she sings the last new fashionable aria, no doubt giving a humorous imitation of the airs and graces of the last new fashionable *prima donna* or *primo uomo*. This takes place in Leo's comic opera "*La Somiglianza di chi l'ha fatta*," and in this case *Merlinda*, the young person whose sad history has been related above, chooses to sing a song from Leo's own serious opera "*Il Trionfo di Camilla*," produced the same year.

The *opera buffa* probably contributed more or less to the downfall of that characteristic figure of eighteenth century musical life, the male soprano. Comic opera was not suited to his style. Probably his deportment on the stage was too artificial and stilted to be endurable in a part which demanded

lively and natural acting. The force of habit was, however, too strong. Audiences had grown so accustomed to hearing the representatives of Scipios and Cæsars sing florid airs in a high soprano voice that not even in *opera buffa* could they allow their heroes to descend to a tenor or a bass. For one evil another was substituted: the second was a lesser one, certainly, but none the less an evil, and an evil perpetuated down to our own day, in spite of would-be reformers. The hero's parts were sung by women, and so it is to the Neapolitan comic opera that we must trace the origin of the "principal boy" of our pantomimes and burlesques.

A second important development which owed much to the comedies of Leo and his contemporaries was the tendency to gather up the characters at the end of an act into something like a chain of movements working up to a dramatic and musical climax at the fall of the curtain. The invention of the concerted *finale*, as it is called, has hitherto been ascribed to Nicola Logroscino, and its development to Piccinni. About Piccinni's share in the work I am not yet able to give a decided opinion; as to Logroscino, the few examples of his *finales* that remain to us do not warrant the supposition. His concerted *finales* are certainly an advance upon his predecessors in the humorous treatment of voices and instruments, but they are in no way ahead of Leo's so far as structure is concerned. The practice of extending the *finale* to a chain of several movements was probably introduced by Galuppi, though I have found one *finale* of Leo in two movements, the first slow, the second quick. This is in the opera "Lo Matrimonio annascuso," and it is unfortunate that we have no means of deciding its date. It is not necessary to repeat here what I have already said in my Life of Alessandro Scarlatti about the early origin of the concerted *finale*. Scarlatti, as we know, did not realize anything like the full possibilities of the form; Leo and Vinci appear to have been the first to systematize it in their comic operas. But both Leo and Vinci are bitterly disappointing even in their longest examples. The tendency, as we should naturally expect at this date, is towards some sort of sonata-form; but there appears to be singularly little sense of climax, either dramatic or musical. We constantly find that instead of the characters joining in one by one and ending with a sort of chorus, as in the second act of "Figaro," to take a classical example, they leave off gradually, and most of these *finales* end with a solitary character on the stage, who seems, if we can judge from the score, to have enough to sing to make an anti-climax and not enough to place him in a position of dramatic importance. Nevertheless, we are bound to remember that the score of an opera, especially an old one, is often misleading; and we must make considerable allowances for the stage

business which must often have played a more important part than our imaginations are capable of reproducing.

A third important item in the Neapolitan comic opera is its treatment of folk-song, a subject which is of the greatest interest to us all at the present day. Italian folk-song is a very much neglected field of research, and the amount of work done by modern Italian historians for the traditional melodies of their country compares very unfavourably with what has been collected in the United Kingdom, in Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, and other states. The Italians are too much absorbed in producing new music to care much for the preservation of the old. Every year the Neapolitans celebrate the festival of the Virgin by a pilgrimage to her shrine at Piedigrotta, which finds its artistic expression in a profusion of popular songs, some of which have become permanent favourites with all English visitors to Naples, though Neapolitans would consider them very much out of date. Every year produces its new specimens, good, bad, and indifferent, and it is remarkable how little the type has changed in the course of two centuries. Almost every comic opera of Leo's period has one or more songs of this kind, and for the historians of folk-song they ought to prove very valuable material. (Illustration: "*Amai na mpesa*," from "*Amor vuol sofferenze*.")

I have thought it better to speak of the comic opera generally than to describe Leo's operas separately in detail. They are, of course, all in manuscript, and most of them are at Montecassino. The most famous of all is to be found at Paris as well, and a copy of the first act only is at Naples. This is "*Amor vuol sofferenze*," from which the song just sung is taken. The opera was extraordinarily popular, and, as sometimes happened in those days, was known under two other titles, "*La Finta Frascatana*" and "*Il Cioè*." Florimo, with his usual carelessness, supposed them to be three separate works; indeed, the single act in the library of the Naples Conservatoire is catalogued as "*Camilla ed Emilio*," these being the first two characters mentioned. Cavaliere Leo identified this with "*Amor vuol sofferenze*" by comparing it with the complete libretto in the same library, and I was fortunate enough to find the opera complete at Montecassino. A study of the score and libretto showed us that the opera was very probably the same as that mentioned as "*La Finta Frascatana*," since the plot turns on the fact that the heroine, Eugenia, disguises herself as a native of Frascati. All doubt was removed by the well-known passage in the letter of President des Brosses to M. de Neuilly. Writing on November 24, 1739, he says, "We have had four operas at the same time at four different theatres. After having tried each in turn, I soon left three

of them in order not to miss a single performance of the 'Frascatana,' a comedy in dialect, of which the music is by Leo. What invention! what harmony! what excellent musical jesting! I shall bring it to France." It is clear from this that this opera, which was produced in 1739, was if not officially at any rate commonly known by the more convenient title of "La Frascatana," or "La Finta Frascatana," under which name it was revived later. The opera was also called "Il Cioè," from the absurd character Fazio Tonti, of Lucca, a muddle-headed person who is perpetually explaining and contradicting himself by means of this word. He has two fine scenes in the course of the opera, one of which you shall now hear. The accompaniment is for strings. You will notice the elaborate accompanied recitative that precedes the air, and the skill with which Leo has employed the form for comic purposes. In the air itself, the orchestra is divided into two similar groups, playing alternately, like a double chorus. The composition is evidently a parody on Leo's own ecclesiastical style, perhaps to illustrate the pompous and self-sufficient character of Fazio. (Illustration: "Io non so dove mi sto.")

This song brings us conveniently to the remaining side of Leo's work—his compositions for the church, which are better known than any of his secular works. The "Dixit Dominus" in C major, for eight voices and orchestra, is of course too well known to need further comment here, as it is published by Messrs. Novello, edited by Sir Charles Stanford from the autograph in the Fitzwilliam Museum. The Fitzwilliam Museum also possesses a "Dixit Dominus" in D, for ten voices and orchestra, which is quite as fine, if not finer. I have already mentioned his two celebrated oratorios, "La Morte di Abele," and "Sant' Elena al Calvario," the latter of which contains some remarkably beautiful music. In the more severe style there is the nine-part motet "Heu nos miseros," the well known "Miserere" for eight voices, and a very interesting collection of little motets for the Sundays of Lent, of which the autograph score is in the British Museum. All Leo's best church music seems to belong to his later years; the "Miserere" is dated 1739, the "Dixit" in D was composed in 1742, and the motets for Lent in the year of his death, 1744.

Leo's church music is always characterized by the three qualities which I venture to think are the most important in this class of music—beauty, dignity, and solidity of workmanship. He is at his best in massive fugal movements; a good example has been printed by Professor Prout in his book on Fugal Analysis. His aria movements are of course of the conventional shape, with a good deal of florid vocal writing; but that does not make them any the less beautiful

or the less dignified. It is interesting to compare Leo's church music with that of his contemporary Durante, who had a very high reputation for this branch of art, probably because he devoted himself to it almost exclusively, and never ventured upon opera. It is easy to see why Durante was more popular as a church composer than Leo. Durante is sentimental; Leo is not. Durante's technical skill was no doubt quite as great as Leo's in the matter of counterpoint. But he has no great love for massive contrapuntal effects. His parts weave in and out on purely conventional lines; the same sequences and imitations are perpetually recurring, and his most individual moments are to be found in his somewhat sugary solos. When he is at his very best, he is most touchingly beautiful, and seems to foreshadow Mozart. But Durante could not keep his style up to a high level for any length of time, and soon sinks back to the commonplace. Leo hardly ever attempts the pathetic, and if he has a fault, it is dryness. But his sense of tonality and form is strong; his fugues may be devoid of sentimentality, but they are vigorous, and he knows how to make his subjects contrast and stand out clearly. He writes his music in the truly classical spirit, knowing—as Scarlatti knew, as Mozart and Beethoven and Brahms knew—that a composition must develop organically out of its own musical ideas, and not depend upon the suggestion of things purely external to music. (Illustration: "Lamentations."—Lam. ii. 12.)

This difference of temperament between Leo and Durante caused the next generation of Neapolitan composers to fall into two groups, the "Leisti" and "Durantisti." The disciples of Leo aimed at richness of harmony, at part-writing and counterpoint—in short, at scientific composition, in the best sense of the word. Durante's disciples were all for clearness and facility. We see at once the virtues and the vices of both methods. Both styles are of course necessary to all good music; we find both in Scarlatti, both in Mozart. It would be unjust, indeed, to deny to Leo all beauty and clearness of melodic style; still, he is always too intellectual to catch the public ear as did Pergolesi.

It is not altogether easy to sum up Leo's position in the history of music. The music of his day is more obsolete to us than that of Scarlatti. We certainly could not revive his operas, serious or comic, and given the mediævalizing tendency of church music at the present day, even his Masses are not likely to be heard again. He claims our attention on a variety of small technical details. He went a step farther than Scarlatti in the development of sonata-form, that is, in the binary form used for nearly all operatic arias. He continued Scarlatti's work in the direction of the operatic *finale*; he greatly improved upon

Scarlatti's treatment of the modern harmonic counterpoint, especially in the composition of double and triple fugues; and he is probably to be considered as one of the founders of modern counterpoint as an educational implement. Considering him as a poet, viewing his work as a whole, he is a composer for his own period rather than for eternity. The best that we can say of him, and it is what anybody might be proud to have said of himself, is that he consistently upheld the highest possible ideal of beauty, dignity, and solid scientific writing in an age that has generally been regarded as one of the most decadent periods through which the art of music has passed.

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The illustrations were sung by Mr. F. C. S. Carey.

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## DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—We must first have the pleasure of thanking Mr. Dent for his very interesting paper, and then Mr. Carey for his rendering of the illustrations. (Votes of thanks passed unanimously.) It struck me with regard to the songs which were sung, especially the second song, that the accompaniments exhibited a wonderful completeness of design worthy even of Mozart. As to Leo's Church music, of course all those who have any acquaintance with it know that his vocal part-writing exhibits a very high order of contrapuntal merit. Mr. Dent remarked that Leo's Masses were *never likely to be heard again*. Many years ago I conducted a performance of one of them at an amateur concert in the old Hanover Square Rooms which proved to be an interesting revival: but the chief obstacle to their use in a present-day church service is inherent in their structural design, for when we speak of Leo's Masses (and I might add the Masses of Pergolesi and Clari and other writers of the time, of which specimens are to be found in the Fitzwilliam Museum) we must remember that, generally, they are not complete Masses. It seems to have been the custom of that time to compose elaborate music in many sections for the Kyrie and Gloria without any for the Credo or Sanctus or Agnus Dei. Thinking this very strange, I asked for an explanation from one who knew a good deal about such subjects, and he told me it was the practice of that time, while the Priest said the words of the Mass throughout, for the choir to sing these elaborate settings of the Kyrie and Gloria as motets irrespective

of what the Priest happened to be singing or saying. I think this is the correct explanation; for such elaborate and lengthy compositions cannot possibly be classed as specimens of the so-called "Hunting Mass," *i.e.*, a Mass specially intended for use when the members of the "hunt attended a preliminary Service, but did not wish to be kept from the day's sport longer than was absolutely necessary." Leo and his contemporaries seem to have had the command of tolerably large choral resources, as they almost invariably wrote in at least five parts; but it must be remembered that the choirs of those days consisted entirely of first-rate singers with first-rate voices, and could afford to be numerically smaller in proportion to the orchestral accompaniments than we are accustomed to nowadays. Probably some of you will remember that when the original parts of Handel's "Messiah" used in the performances at the Foundling Hospital were discovered a few years ago, it was found that there were twenty-eight voices against thirty-two instruments, which is a very different proportion from that now considered necessary.

Mr. DENT.—I have only to thank the members of the Association for listening to my paper so patiently, and I should like to express my thanks to Mr. Carey for taking so much trouble in the preparation of his very difficult illustrations.

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