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A FIFTEENTH CENTURY MS. BOOK OF VOCAL MUSIC IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD

SIR John Stainer M.A., MUS. DOC.,
D.C.L.

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NOTE.—By the kindness of Sir John Stainer copies of the illustrations distributed and played at his lecture are presented to members with this volume.

NOVEMBER 12, 1895.

W. H. CUMMINGS, Esq., F.S.A., VICE-PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR.

**A FIFTEENTH CENTURY MS. BOOK OF VOCAL
MUSIC IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD.**

BY SIR JOHN STAINER, M.A., MUS. DOC., D.C.L.,
PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

THE important book to which I desire to call your attention to-day belongs to a collection of upwards of 2,000 MSS., formed by a Venetian Jesuit of the name of Canonici, in the latter part of the last century. The Bodleian purchased this collection in its entirety in the year 1818. The liturgical MSS. which it contains are well known and have often been cited; and the whole of these Canonici MSS., as they are still called, have been carefully catalogued in the various classes to which they belong, such as Greek, Latin, Italian, miscellaneous, &c. But for some reason or other this particular MS. of music appears to have entirely escaped observation. It was in the "Miscellaneous" catalogue, under the following entry: "213. Codex Chartaceus, in folio, ff. 145. Saec. XV. *Canticorum liber, precipue sacrorum, notis musicalibus necnon auctorum nominibus instructorum. Nomina scriptorum sunt.*" Then follows a long list of names,* amongst which those of Binchois and Dufay at once arrested my attention.

The manuscript, when carefully examined, I found to contain a large proportion of secular songs in French and Italian, mostly composed by Dufay and Binchois. Of Dufay alone there are thirty-eight French songs, in three or four parts (all of which my son has carefully transcribed), besides Italian songs and sacred music. But as Dufay was admittedly the greatest master of his age, and as his secular compositions are but little known, I have chosen these as the subject of my paper this evening; hoping for and looking forward to the time when someone will in the same way publish the music of John Dunstable.

* See Appendix to this paper.

Before I go on to speak of the manuscript itself, I should like to say a few words about the composers, other than Dufay and Binchois, whose compositions are represented in it.

Some fifteen or sixteen of these names will be found in the short paper published by Coussemaker in 1869 under the title of "*Les Harmonistes du Quatorzième Siècle.*" This paper formed part of the preface to a work on the harmonists of the fourteenth century which Coussemaker then had in hand, but the publication of which was unfortunately prevented by the author's death in 1876.

A name of particular interest is that of Brasart, who, in 1431, was a singer in the Pope's chapel. Brasart is known to have been a composer of great repute during this period—indeed, Gafori, in his treatise "*De Musica Utriusque Cantus practica*" (1496), cites Brasart, together with Dunstable, Binchois, and Dufay, as an authority for the use of a particular discord, and it certainly seems strange that so few of Brasart's compositions should have survived. There is another composer also largely represented in this Bodleian MS. who bears the curious name of Ciconia de Leodio; or, the Stork of Liège. A treatise, "*De proportionibus*," by Ciconia, exists in the library of Ferrara, and a MS. in the Vatican library contains three-part songs by Dufay, Dunstable, Binchois, and Ciconia.

Three other names—those of Johannes Tapissier, Johannes Carmen, and Johannes Césarís—are of interest because they are cited by a contemporary French poet, Martin le Franc (who wrote between 1436 and 1439), as the most popular composers in Paris of the period immediately preceding that of Dufay and Binchois. The passage in question occurs in the third book of his poem, entitled "*Le Champion des Dames*," and is given by Fétis as follows:—

Tapissier, Carmen, Césarís,
N'a pas longtemps si bien chantèrent
Qu'ilz esbahirent tout Paris
Et tous ceulx qui les frequentèrent ;
Mais onques jour ne deschantèrent
En mélodie de tels choís
(Ce m'ont dit ceulx qui les hantèrent)*
Que Guillaume Dufay et Binchoís.
Car ilz ont nouvelle pratique
De faire frisque concordance
En haulte et en basse musique
En fainte en pause et en muance
Et ont prins de la contenance
Angloise et ensuy Dunstable
Pour quoy merueilleuse playsance
Rend leur chant joyeux et stable.†

* Ce m'ont dit qui les escoutèrent (Haberl).

† Notable (Haberl).

which may be freely translated thus :—

Not long ago Tapissier, Carmen, and Césarís made such sweet music that all Paris, and all those who flocked to hear them, were filled with amazement; but none of their compositions (so I am told by those who heard them) were ever so exquisitely melodious as those of Dufay and Binchois. For these latter have introduced new harmonies in their part-writing, and have made improvements in the use of accidentals,* of rests, and of mutations,† and they have adopted the English style and taken Dunstable as their pattern. Consequently their music is marvellously bright and attractive, and will stand the test of time.

Martin le Franc, so far as I am aware, is the only author who gives the names of these three composers, Tapissier, Carmen, and Césarís. Fétis, writing in 1866, says that they are not known to any historian of music, and I suppose it is for this reason that, though he quotes the verses of Martin le Franc, he does not find a place for either Tapissier or Carmen in his "*Biographie Universelle*," and only inserts the name of Césarís for the purpose of attempting to identify him with a certain Maistre Henri Césarís, of Rome, who flourished in the latter part of the fifteenth century. Since that date, however, specimens of the compositions of Tapissier and Carmen have been found in a MS. in the Liceo Filarmonico at Bologna (see Ambros, "*Geschichte der Musik*," iii., 18).

The absence of Dunstable's name from the Bodleian MS. is very remarkable.

The list of singing men in the Pope's chapel, published by Haberl ("*Bausteine für Musikgeschichte*," i., 65) includes the following names from our list of composers :—

Nicolas Zacharie, 1420-1422.

Petrus de Fonte, 1420-1426.

Nicolas Grenon, 1425-1428.

Gualterus Libert, 1428.

Arnoldo de Latinis, 1431.

Johannes Brasart, 1431.

Guillermus de Malbecque, 1431-1435.

From Houdoy's "*Histoire Artistique de la Cathédrale de Cambrai*" it appears that Nicolas Grenon, before going to Rome, had been choirmaster at Cambrai from 1421-1424, and that R. de Loqueville (another name in our list) had occupied the same post from 1412 to 1418.

The Bodleian manuscript consists of 141 folios, or 282 pages of vocal music, with a contemporary index, beginning at the letter E. It is written on a five-lined stave throughout, and is ascribed to the first half of the fifteenth century—a date which is borne out by the character of the musical notation, and also by the names of the composers; for in the whole list

* See Rousseau's Dictionary of Music. s.v., "*Feinte*."

† See Ambros, "*Geschichte der Musik*," ii., 177 seq. and 503 seq.

of sixty names there is not one which is known to belong to the generation which immediately succeeded that of Dufay and Binchois. Dates are occasionally given at the head of a composition together with the composer's name: the earliest I have found is 1422 and the latest 1436. Dufay's song for three alto voices, "Je me complains piteusement," is dated 1425, and his "Adieu ces bons vins," 1426.

The dates of two other songs of Dufay are fixed by historical allusions. One of these is in honour of the marriage of the great Charles Malatesti, lord of Rimini, with Vittoria di Lorenzo Colonna, niece of the Pope Martin V. Charles Malatesti was born in 1364, and died in 1429; the date of this, his second marriage, I have not been able definitely to fix; but as Dufay first came to Rome only in 1428, it probably took place very shortly before the death of Malatesti.

The other song is in honour of Nicholas the Third of Ferrara, born 1393, died 1441; it contains a reference to the peace between Florence and Venice on the one side and the Duke of Milan on the other, which was brought about by his mediation in 1433.

Seven pages only, containing compositions by Antonius Romanus, Ubertus de Psalms, Nicolaus Zacharie, and Magister Johannes Ciconia de Leodio are written in the old black notation, which before 1400 was practically universally in vogue; but with this exception the whole of the MS. is written in the white or open note notation, black notes being used only to reduce the value of a note by one-third—*i.e.*, to enable the composer to write three against two. In the old black notation this had been effected by using either open notes or notes coloured red (*notæ evacuatæ sive coloratæ*); examples of the white notation occur occasionally before Dufay's time, but to him is due the credit of bringing it into general use.

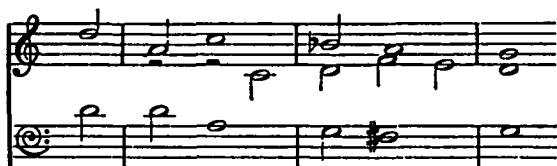
The notes used in our MS. are the long, breve, semibreve, minim, and semiminim, with the corresponding blackheaded notes; the blackheaded minim, besides being used in the manner indicated above—*i.e.*, "in proportione sesquialterâ"—is also occasionally used "in proportione duplici," and then corresponds in value as well as in form to our modern crotchet. This may have been one of the experimental changes in notation which Dufay is said to have introduced, for it is not noticed in the fifteenth century treatises before Tinctor—see his short treatise "De notis et pausis," cap. vii., in Coussemaker's "Scriptores," iv., 42b.

The clefs used are the C clef on the first four lines and the F clef on the third and fourth lines of the stave.

The accidentals employed are the *b* and *♯*. The latter does duty for both the sharp and natural of our modern notation,

and when placed before a note which would otherwise be sung sharp in accordance with the rules of *musica ficta*, indicates that it is *not* to be sharpened—or, in other words, that the laws of *musica ficta* are *not* to be applied.

Here is a good example from “Belle, vueillies votre mercy donner” :—



Of course, had he lived now, Dufay would have used a *natural* for his tenor F. But this useful accidental not having been then dreamt of, he had no alternative but to use a sharp.

These signs, which he uses in order to forbid and prevent the use of *musica ficta*, are a most valuable piece of evidence, or rather are an absolute proof that Dufay fully expected the laws of *musica ficta* to be applied in general.

But notwithstanding, some caution is required in dealing with *musica ficta*. In transcribing, it is most important to see whether the composer is trying to modulate. If he is doing so, the laws have to be temporarily suspended. I cannot give you a better example than in bars 1, 2, and 3 of the middle stave of p. 2 of the examples of Dufay in your hands. An inexperienced transcriber would have made the note B of the second tenor in bar 2 into B flat; but this would entirely overthrow Dufay's wish to have a cadence on E in bar 3.

Sharps are never placed in the signature, nor are more than two flats. And here I may mention a curious feature which is not, however, peculiar to this MS.—namely, that a flat often occurs in the signature of the tenor and contratenor parts when none is placed in that of the upper part. It is, in fact, a rule (to which there are only four or five exceptions* among the thirty-eight songs that my son has transcribed) that the upper part of three, or the two upper parts of four, should have one flat less in the signature than the two lower parts, and this even when the compass of all the parts is the same. What the reason for this arrangement may have been it is difficult now to say. The parts are, of course, unbarred;

* Exceptions: One flat in all the parts, “Pour ce que veoir,” f. 18 v.; “Je donne à tous,” f. 77 v.; and “Bon jour, bon mois,” f. 44 v. No flat in cantus, two in tenor, and two in contratenor, “Belle vueillies,” f. 50 v. No flat in cantus, one in tenor, and two in contratenor, “Hélas, madame,” f. 33 v.

they are not written under each other, but the whole of the cantus part is written out, then the whole of the tenor, and so on, a custom which it took centuries to eradicate. The contratenor part is always written last, even though the tenor be below it in pitch. In a four-part song for three altos of even compass (A to D) and a baritone—"Ma belle dame souveraine"—the parts are called respectively "Cantus," "Tenor," "Triplus," and "Contratenor"; in a song for three altos of even compass (A to C) they are called simply "Primus," "Secundus," and "Triplus."

The words and the syllables of the words of the first verse of each song are always written under the corresponding notes of the music—at least in the cantus part, and sometimes in all the parts; a favourite device is to carry on the last syllable of a line of poetry over a long succession of notes, without any regard to rests that may happen to intervene.

From the fact that it is rather the exception than the rule that the words should begin with the music, and also from the fact that a long series of notes often occurs in the middle or at the end of a song, without any words being written under them, I think it may safely be inferred that instruments of the viol family were employed throughout; they would be in unison with the voices when the words were being sung, and, when the voices were silent, they would supply short symphonies. The existence of these preliminary and final instrumental symphonies in Dufay's compositions is of considerable interest. M. Gevaert, in his recent work, "*Les origines du chant Liturgique de l'église Latine*," traces,* as you may remember, the transplanting and adoption of the Greek citharody, or songs sung to a portable lyre, by the Romans as part of the luxury they borrowed from their more civilised but then rapidly declining neighbours. At a banquet the player "ran" his fingers over the strings (as we say), chanted his lyric, and then closed with another short "flourish." M. Gevaert sees in these preliminary and closing symphonies the real origin of the antiphon of the Christian Church. The selected Psalm was the lyric; but, having no instrument, they were forced in place of the introductory and final symphonies to *sing* something. The Psalm became thus enclosed between the antiphon sung before it and sung after it. If the antiquity ascribed to Alleluiatic Antiphons (that is, Antiphons sung to no other words but Alleluia) is well founded, M. Gevaert's argument is a strong one. We find such symphonies still customary in Dufay's time, and no doubt we here have the true source of similar introductions and closes in the songs of Handel and Bach, a form of construction still rigidly observed in the modern drawing-room or St. James's Hall ballad.

* See pp. 11, 15, 27.

But to return to our manuscript and its system of musical notation.

First, let me say a few words in the hope of simplifying the study for any of you who may be disposed to try and transcribe the enigmatical and mysterious MSS. of this period.

In our modern time-system, whether I choose to take a breve as my unit (that is, my bar-length) and divide it into two semibreves, or whether I take a semibreve as my unit and divide it into minims, or a minim divided into crotchets, each and all of these come under the general head and term *Time*.

Not so in the fifteenth century. When a long was taken as the unit and divided into two breves, the time-measurement was called Mood (*Modus*); when a breve was the unit, divided into semibreves, it was called Time (*Tempus*); and when a semibreve was the unit, divided into minims, it was termed Prolation (*Prolatio*). It will be seen then that the three terms *Modus*, *Tempus*, *Prolatio* merely refer to the unit of measurement. Having no bars at that time, the distinction between them was very important, and not so pedantic as it seems to us who group our notes in a series of little boxes called bars.

The early founders of the notation of Mensurable Music made, however, one effort in the direction of extreme simplicity, which, unfortunately, had an opposite effect, and led to the greater part of the difficulties which surround the modern transcriber.

Our ancestors considered the division of a note into three parts as more perfect than when divided into two. So they said: Let it be a rule that in perfect Mood, each Long is equal *not to two* but to three breves; in perfect Time, let each breve be equal to three semibreves; in major Prolation (they called this major, not perfect) let each semibreve be equal to three minims.

This would be much the same as if we were to lay down a law in our modern system that in three-two time a semibreve is equal to three minims; and in three-four time, a minim is equal to three crotchets.

On the other hand, the division of a unit into *two* portions was held to be "imperfect"; but such a division was none the less freely used on this account; and it was, in fact, by a combination of perfect and imperfect time measurements that compound times were arrived at—for instance, by a combination of imperfect *tempus* with perfect or major *prolatio*, six-two time was obtained (as in the first example in your hands); or, again, by a combination of imperfect *modus*, imperfect *tempus*, and perfect *prolatio* twelve-two time would be obtained.

The difficulty of transcribing mensurable music arises from the fact that notes are made imperfect not only in accordance with the time of the composition in which they occur, but also by notes of lower value preceding or following them. I do not propose here to review in detail the values governing such "imperfection by context," if I may so term it, or in any way to give you a lecture upon the art of mensurable music (for which I would refer you to the treatises contained in Coussemaker's "*Scriptores*"); but I should like to draw your attention to one peculiar device by which, under certain circumstances, the value of a note has to be *doubled* in performance. This is termed "*alteratio*" and it is a principle which has to be constantly kept in mind in transcribing mediæval into modern barred music; it occurs only when two notes of the same value are followed by a note of the next higher denomination—for instance, in three-one time, when two semibreves are followed by a breve, and it has the effect of doubling the value of the second note. It may be asked, why cannot the second note, if it is to have the length of two semibreves, be written as a breve, which would be made imperfect by the semibreve preceding it? The answer is, that to write it in this way would be to offend against the rule "*Similis ante similem non potest imperfecti*"; if, therefore, the second of these notes were written as a breve, any singer would unhesitatingly give it the value of *three* semibreves, because he saw another breve immediately following it; whereas the composer really wished it to be held for only *two* semibreves.

It will be seen that "*alteratio*" can only take place in a perfect or triple measure, the note "*altered*" falling on the second of the three beats; a breve, therefore, can only be "*altered*" when the *modus* is perfect, a semibreve when the *tempus* is perfect, and a minim when the *prolatio* is major. This being so it will often happen that a dot of division (of which hereafter) occurs immediately *before* the two notes, the second of which is to be "*altered*"; but it must not be supposed that the "*alteratio*" is due to any virtue in the preceding dot. I mention this because it is an error which has crept into nearly all modern books on the subject, even into Grove's Dictionary in the article on "*Notation*." It is true that there is one passage in Johannes de Muris which might seem to support such a theory, but it is inconsistent with other statements by the same writer and entirely opposed to the general current of authority. Two facts ought to be decisive on this point—one is that the theorists without exception treat of "*alteratio*" quite apart from dots, and the other is that in transcribing mensurable music into modern notation *alteratio* constantly has to be applied where there is no dot at all within effective range, if I may so say. The song, "*Par*

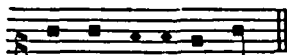
droit je puis," which I have engraved intentionally without the transcription, will be found a good illustration of what I have said above.

The dots used are of three kinds :

1. The "punctus augmentationis," which corresponds exactly to our modern dot, and can therefore only occur in imperfect mood or time or in the lesser prolation.

2. The "punctus perfectionis," which, when placed after a note which might otherwise be imperfect, restores its perfection. Thus in three-one time if a breve is followed by a semibreve, the breve will generally be made imperfect by position and the two notes will together complete a "tempus," or, as we say, occupy the space of one bar; but if a dot be placed between the breve and the semibreve, the breve must be reckoned as three semibreves—i.e., must occupy the whole of one bar—and the semibreve will occupy the first beat of the succeeding "tempus" or bar. Observe that a dot so placed cannot be a dot of augmentation, because the time is perfect.

3. The "punctus divisionis," which resembles our modern "bar" in that it "divides" measures, whether of mood, time, or prolation. It can best be explained by an example. Thus, if in three-one time two semibreves are found between two breves,



and the first breve is not preceded, nor the last followed by any note or notes which could interfere with their perfection, the two breves will have to be reckoned as each equal to three semibreves, and the second of the two intervening semibreves will be doubled by "alteratio" in order to complete the intervening "tempus" or bar—the *four notes thus occupying three bars*; but if a dot is placed between the two semibreves, it shows that the first semibreve is to be reckoned with the preceding "tempus," and the second with the "tempus" following. Both of the breves will therefore be made imperfect, the first, in technical parlance, "a parte post" and the second "a parte ante," and *the four notes will occupy only two bars*.

The use of one sign—the dot—for three different purposes might be expected to lead to confusion, but this will not be found to be so in fact, as the context seldom leaves room for doubt as to the meaning in each case.

The rules applicable to the formation and interpretation of ligatures (which are freely employed in our MS.) had already become stereotyped by Dufay's time, and underwent no further alteration; consequently the rules given in much later books—for instance, in the first part of Morley's "Plaine

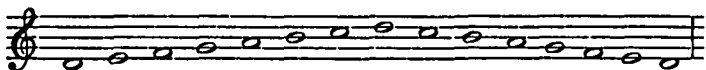
and Easy Introduction," will be found entirely applicable, if it be remembered that *alteratio* applies to notes, whether in or out of ligature. Thus, in three-one time, where a ligature occurs representing two semibreves followed by a breve, the second semibreve will, more often than not, have to be doubled in value.

Time signatures are but rarely used in our MS., but when used they are of the following kinds : \odot for nine-two time, in which the breve, *tempus*, or bar contains three semibreves (without dots, but of course which in these days we should dot) equal to nine minims. \circ for three-one time, when the breve, *tempus*, or bar contains three semibreves equal to six minims. C for six-two time, when the breve, *tempus*, or bar contains two semibreves equal to six minims. C for four-two time, when the breve, *tempus*, or bar contains two semibreves equal to four minims.

A small 2 placed before a series of notes halves their value ; a small 3 similarly placed reduces their value by one-third.

By the period of Dufay the breve had come to be the unit of time measurement (not the Long or double breve)—at any rate, for secular music of the class now before us—"brevis" and "tempus" being interchangeable terms* and corresponding to our "bar"—thus, the time signatures that I have given above, as used in these French songs of Dufay's, show only time and prolation, the complete or broken circle signifying respectively perfect or imperfect time, and the presence or absence of a dot in the centre signifying greater or lesser prolation.

Now as to scales used by Dufay, they are first the pure church Doric :—



But it must at once be observed that the free use of the rules of *musica ficta*† often entirely changes its character. Thus :—



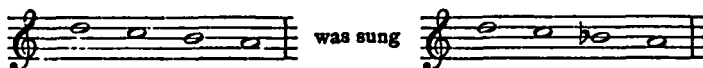
* See, for instance, the commencement of Prosdocimus de Beldemandis' treatise "De musica mensurabili," written in 1408 and printed in the third volume of Coussemaker's "Scriptores."

† No better account of *musica ficta* can be found than Prof. Niecks' paper on "The sharp, flat, and natural," read before this Association in March, 1890.

and :—



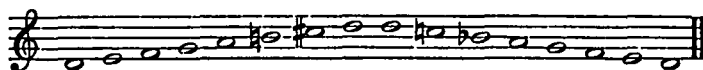
Also, in descending passages



and not unfrequently :—



The result of all this is that we get, in practice, though not theoretically or even on paper, the modern form :—



It was undoubtedly the bold use of this scale which won for Dufay the high praise of his contemporaries.

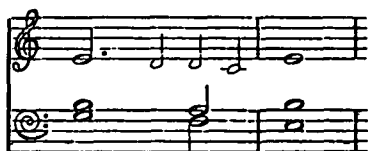
When Dufay seems to be writing in G minor the scale follows that given above, except of course that it commences on G and not on D. It is, therefore, practically a transposed Doric similarly influenced by *musica ficta*.

When he tries to write in, or modulate into what we should call A minor his tonality is often exceedingly indefinite. For example, in the song "Bon jour, bon mois," he clearly wishes in one place to make a cadence in A minor, but he diverts it thus :—



being clearly unable to reach the desired key. This frequent avoidance of definite cadences in keys into which he evidently would be glad to modulate is a sign of the peculiar and unsettled state of key-tonality in his time.

The attempt to modulate into the key of E minor seems to present equal difficulties: the following occurs in the song "Adieu ces bons vins"—



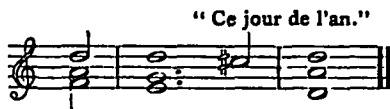
No application of the laws of *musica ficta*, as far as I can see, will convert this into a definite cadence.

Roughly speaking, he writes chiefly in D minor and G minor. Sometimes he begins in one key and ends in another.* One of the printed examples in your hands, "Se la face ay pale" is a good bold specimen of a piece in C major, with a thoroughly modern final cadence. He tries a considerable number of experiments in cadences. Of course the prevailing cadence of the period was—

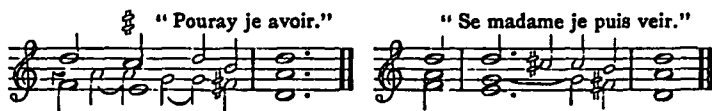


but these appear in many varieties.

Sometimes he uses the plain 7-6 cadence on the supertonic:—



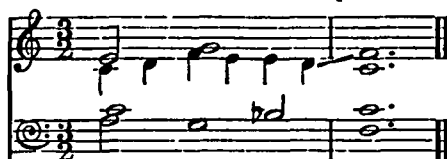
The following experiments are not so pleasant to modern ears:—



* The song "Or, pleust à Dieu," begins in C minor and ends in G minor. The song "Je ne suy plus" begins in D minor and ends in G minor.

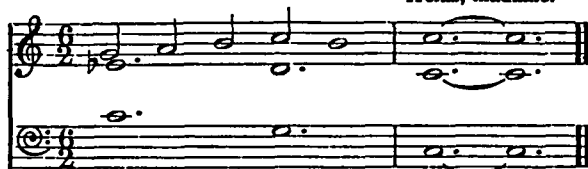
The crossing of the parts in the following four-part cadence does not prevent an unpleasant feeling of consecutive octaves:—

"Mon cuer me fait tous dis penser."



Here is a cadence in octaves with no fifth:—

"Hélas, madame."



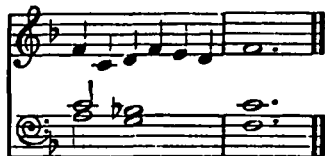
See also the cadence of "Se la face ay pale."

Here are other specimens of cadences:—

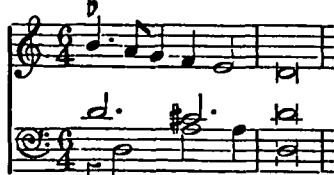
From "Pour l'amour de ma douce."



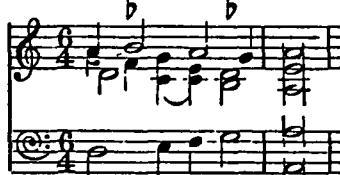
"C'est bien raison," Part 2.



"Mon chier amye."

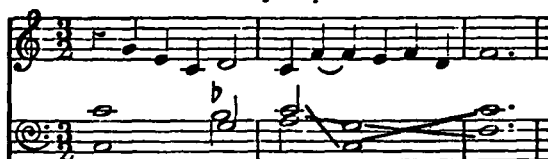
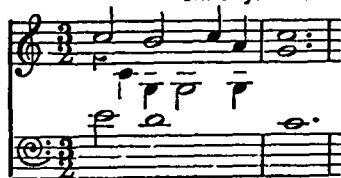
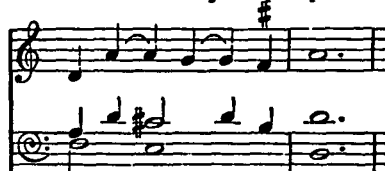
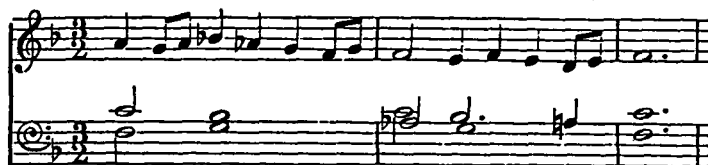
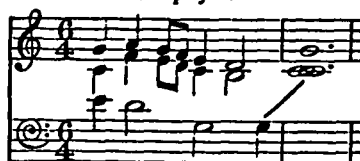
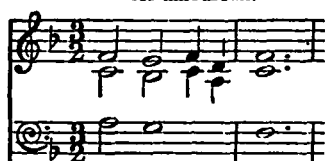


"Ma belle dame souveraine."



"Estrines moy."



"Je requier à tous amoureux."*"Se la face ay pale."**"Navré je suis."**"Je ne puis plus."**(a combination of two others).**"C'est bien raison."**"J'attendray tant quil
vous playra."**"Je donne à tous
les amoureux."*

"Ce jour le doit."

"Belle veullies moy retenir."



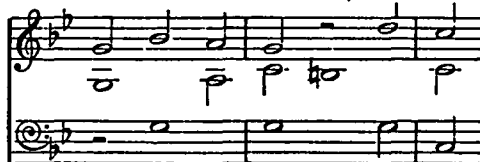
It was quite natural and logical that composers of this early period should close with a simple fifth, without a third. The argument which produced *organum*, or the movement in octaves, fifths, and fourths, was this: these intervals are perfect; how can one improve perfection? Why should I spoil my perfect concord by adding imperfect intervals?*

Dufay not only uses bare fifths in cadences and elsewhere, but he evidently had a genuine liking for what we call "consecutive fifths." He sometimes writes them boldly, but he generally indulges his taste for them by crossing the parts; look at the three examples on page 5 of your copies.

Now let me say a few words on the chords he uses.

The suspension 4-3 is common, but he frequently uses it without preparation, *e.g.*—

"Hélas, madame."



"Par droit je puis."



* We had a continuance of this tradition in England in our church music up to the end of the seventeenth century. Even Mendelssohn ends a portion of his Jubilate with a bare fifth, in order to give it a "Cathedral" character.

He also uses the 6-4 without preparation, *e.g.*—



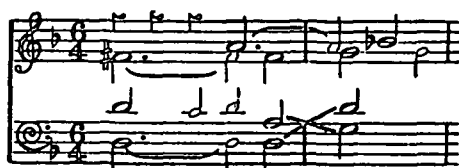
He also uses the seventh on the supertonic without preparation, *e.g.*—



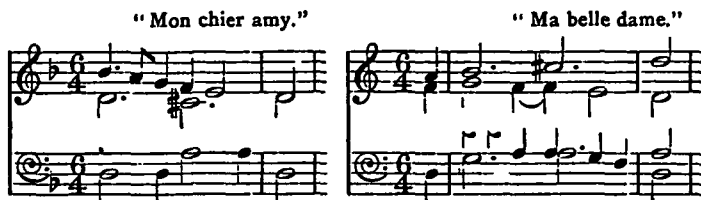
He uses the minor seventh in a manner which sounds quite modern, *e.g.*—



He uses boldly a suspended 2-3, *e.g.*—



But perhaps the most striking instance of Dufay's boldness is seen in his frequent use of the chord of the minor thirteenth (already given as a cadence), *e.g.*—



The next are most striking examples of the use of the same chord :—



I might multiply by scores examples of the progressive, I might almost say modern tendencies of this remarkable man.

One more point of interest. In Dufay's time it is quite clear that voice parts had not been sorted (if I may use the expression). He seems to know of no other voices than a low treble or mezzo-soprano (which rarely extends over more than an octave in compass), and tenors, which, though covering a compass of an octave and a half, are nearly always interchangeable. In short, he has only two voices in use, one for the cantus, another for the contratenor and tenor parts. This proves, I think, that vocal music previous to his time was generally written for equal voices, and that in Dufay's time composers were only just beginning to emerge from the habit. Indeed, the large number of his compositions which are actually written for equal voices shows undoubtedly that this form of composition was still popular in his day.

As regards the form of Dufay's compositions, there are decided symptoms of an effort to produce a series of rhythms, sometimes of equal lengths, sometimes of contrasted lengths. The song "*Je ne puis plus*" consists entirely of six-bar phrases, five consecutively; and in order to give effect to his design, each phrase ends with a sort of cadence, or half-close,

the first on E, the second on D, the third on G, the last two on D. In many of these thirty-eight compositions which my son has transcribed, I can see traces of an attempt at thematic development; it generally takes the form of carrying the melody up to the same height as before, and down to the same lower note, but at the same time varying the position of the accents and the order of the notes as grouped—*e.g.*, compare bars 1, 2, 3 with 10, 11, 12 of the song "*Belle plaisante*."

There are a few instances in which he clearly tries to return to his original motive at the close of the piece, after having made a digression in the central portion. This, of course, was an ancient form of national melodies, and an attempt to follow it in polyphonic music is in no way surprising.

I had great difficulty in finding out how to let you *hear* some of Dufay's compositions. It would have been a hopeless task to try and find three or four good singers who were sufficiently advanced philologists to sing the old French words; it would require a vocal quartet of Max Müllers! But as they were without doubt accompanied by an early form of viol (a fact which may have had an important influence on the compass of the parts), I at last determined to place the music in your hands and have it performed on three or four violas; these instruments will probably give you the nearest approach to the old viol tone which can be found in our modern instruments.

On listening to Dufay, his archaisms and crudities may at first tempt you to laugh. But as the music proceeds I think your interest will be thoroughly roused, and, if I am not mistaken, you will leave this room giving in your hearts honour to this great man, who, 450 years ago, endowed with genius and impelled by the true spirit of an artist, cleared the ground for, and helped to lay the foundations of that splendid fabric of pure polyphonic vocal music which, two centuries later, stood revealed in its beauty and grandeur.*

Please notice in the first illustration, "*Ce jour de l'an*," the three little symphonies, introductory, middle, and final. The first and last are well defined six-bar phrases. The imitation is throughout close and interesting.

The next illustration, "*Se la face ay pale*," is particularly interesting, because Dufay used the melody (that is the tenor) as the tenor of one of his Masses. The Kyrie of this Mass has been published in the Appendix of Kiesewetter's *History of Music*. Parts of this Mass are to be found in Codex 14 of

* The writer desires to express his sincere gratitude to Bodley's Librarian, E. W. B. Nicholson, Esq., M.A., for the facilities afforded him for examining this priceless MS. and also for much valuable advice and assistance in various other ways.

the Library of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, also in Codex 88 of the Cathedral Library of Trent. The words of this belong to the class known as "*Ballade équivoquée*"—that is, a poem in which, instead of the usual rhymes, the same word or syllable is repeated in a different sense. The literal translation is :—

Se la face ay pale
La cause est amer,
C'est la principale,
Et tant m'est amer
Amer qu'en la mer
Me voudroye voir ;
Or, scet bien de voir
La belle à qui suis
Que nul bien avoir
Sans elle ne puis.

If my face is pale (if I have the face pale)
The cause is love.
It is the chief cause,
And so bitter to me is
love, that in the sea
I should like to see myself.
Now, she knows truly (de voir)
—this fair one whose I am,
that without her I can have no good.

The next illustration, "*Pouray j'avoir*," is interesting as having a central symphony, but none at the commencement or end. Please notice the ornamental close of this symphony, line 3, bar 1, page 8.

The next composition you will hear consists of a melody added to a burden formed by two parts in canon. I think you will find much grace and sweetness in the added part. Probably the burden is part of some tune well known in Dufay's time. You will observe that the words of the burden do not vary.

I should like you now to hear two four-part compositions of Dufay from the same book. The first evidently has some well-known tune in the tenor, whether a popular tune of the period or an original song by Dufay I am unable at present to determine. You will observe a certain attempt at Form in the relation of the close of the tune to its first portion.

The last you shall hear is a transcription of the fac-simile in your hands. It is of special ingenuity and interest. The two upper parts are a canon 2 in 1 which can be sung and played by themselves. This is what he calls "*Fuga duorum temporum*"—i.e., a canon at an interval of two bars. Then you will see below "*Contratenor concordans cum fuga*," which means that this can be added to the canon in good harmony. Then below this you will find another "*contratenor concordans cum omnibus*," which means that you can, if you like, add this part also in good harmony. It is therefore a composition which may be used either in two, three, or four parts. The words of this number are given by Signor Guiseppe Lisio in his publication "*Una stanza del Petrarca musicata da Guillaume Du Fay*," a copy of which I have brought here to show you.

LIST OF COMPOSERS.

(The numbers refer to list of books and MS. at the end.

Acourt. ? Identical with Haucourt.

Adam.

Akany (written over the name of Gilet Velut).

? Identical with Acaen. *See* Fétis.

Billart.

Magister Baude Cordier. ^{(1) (7) (8)}

La Beausse.

Benoit. ⁽⁷⁾ ? Identical with the Englishman Jean Benet
or Benenoit. ^{(1) (7) (8)}

François le Bertoul.

Binchois.

Dominus Bartholomeus de Bononia prior. ⁽⁷⁾Presbyter Johannes Brasart de Leodio. ^{(2) (5) (7) (8) (10)}Briquet. ^{(1) (7) (8)}Prepositus Brisiensis. ⁽⁹⁾ ? Identical with Matthew of
Brixia. ^{(1) (8)}Bartolomeus Brolo *or* Broollo *or* Bruolo.Johannes Carmen. ^{(6) (7)}

Cardot.

Johannes Césaris. ^{(6) (8)}

Charite.

Chierisy.

Magister Johannes Ciconia de Leodio. ^{(2) (5) (7) (8) (9)}Fratr Antonius de Civitato *or* de civitate austrie *or* de
civitato ordinis predicatorum. ^{(1) (7) (8) (9)} 1423, 1422.

Coutreman.

Antonius Zachara.

Guillermus du Fay.

Beltrame Feraguti. ^{(1) (7) (8) (9)}

Dominicus de Feraria.

Petrus Fontaine. ^{(1) (7) (8)}Johannes Francois. ^{(7) (8)}

R. Gallo.

Gaultier. ? Identical with Gautier.

Gautier. 1423.

Johannes Le Grain *or* Le Grant. ⁽¹⁰⁾Nicolaus Grenon. ^{(1) (7) (8)}Grossim de Parisius. ^{(1) (7) (8) (9) (10)}Gran Guielmo *or* Le Grant Guillem *or* Guillaume. ^{(7) (8)}
1426.

Hasprois. ⁽¹⁾
Haucourt.

Francus de Insula

Arnoldus de Lantins. ^{(1) (4) (7) (8) (9)} 1428 (*bis*).
Hugbo de Lantins. ^{(1) (7) (8) (9)}
Gualterius Libert. ⁽¹⁰⁾
R. Libert.
Ricardus Loqueville. ^{(1) (7) (8)}
Johannes de Ludo.

Guillermus Malbecque *or* Malebeke. ^{(4) (7)}

Passet. ^{(1) (7) (8)}
Paullet. ⁽¹⁰⁾
Ubertus de Psalms. ^{(1) (7) (8)}

Presbyter Johannes de Quatris. ⁽⁷⁾ 1436.

Rezon. ^{(1) (8) (9)}
Antonius Romanus. ^{(1) (7) (8)}
Randulfus Romanus.
Ar. de Ructis.
P. Rosso *or* Russo.

Presbyter Johannes de Sarto. ^{(1) (7) (8)} 1436.

Johannes Tapssier. ^{(8) (7) (8)}
Bartolomeus Tebolis.

Raulin de Vaux.
Gilet *or* Gillet Velut. ^{(1) (7) (8) (10)}
Jacobus Vide. ^{(7) (8)}

Nicolaus Zacharie.
Presbyter P. del Zocholo de Portu Naonis.

⁽¹⁾ See Coussemaker, "Les Harmonistes du XIV^e Siècle." Paris, 1869.

⁽²⁾ Kiesewetter, "History of Music," pp. 46, 48. (Second German ed. Leipzig, 1846.) Kiesewetter and Fétis, "Verhandelungen over de Vraag" (Amsterdam, 1829), p. 17.

⁽³⁾ Kiesewetter and Fétis, "Verhandelungen over de Vraag" (Amsterdam, 1829), pp. 7, 31. Coussemaker, "Histoire de l'harmonie au moyen âge," p. 219.

⁽⁴⁾ Kiesewetter and Fétis, "Verhandelungen," p. 109

⁽⁵⁾ Fétis, "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens."

⁽⁶⁾ Fétis, s.v., "Dufay," "Binchois."

⁽⁷⁾ Ambros, "Geschichte der Musik." Vols. ii. and iii.

⁽⁸⁾ Cod. Mus., No. 37, in the Liceo Musicale at Bologna.

⁽⁹⁾ Cod. Mus., No. 2216, in the University Library of Bologna.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cod. 87, in the Cathedral Library of Trent.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—We are all under a deep obligation to Sir John for the admirable and interesting paper he has given us to-night, for there was in it a quantity of absolutely new matter, which when printed in the book of Proceedings of the Association will be of immense value to students and writers of musical history. As to the nicknames referred to by our lecturer, I may remark that it was a common habit of musicians, even as late as the time of Charles II., to write under an assumed or an abbreviated name; a practice which often brought about mistakes. As an instance I may mention that the music signed Signor Battista was really the work of the composer Giovanni Battista Draghi. It is exceedingly interesting to have Franc's testimony of the value of the music written by Dunstable, and we cannot but feel that his followers would have done well to have studied it.

A vote of thanks was then unanimously accorded to the lecturer, and to the four gentlemen from the Royal College of Music who had played the illustrations.

Dr. HUBERT PARRY.—It is with the greatest possible pleasure that I find myself present when the members of the Musical Association have the privilege of receiving such a revelation as that brought forward by Sir John. I doubt whether this important member of the Netherlands School has ever before had a chance of being adequately represented. The extraordinary value of the discovery of these works can certainly not be over-estimated, and we owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Sir John for his labours in connection with them, because it opens up a stratum of musical history which has hitherto been inadequately explored. Dufay's, name like Josquin's, is one which echoed down the centuries without people really understanding the why and wherefore. We have sadly wanted to know in substance more of the real work of these great men instead of knowing them simply by the record of their achievements. They need to be collected and studied. The fact that Dufay was in a direct line following after John Dunstable gives the utmost importance to his music, and there is a gap in musical history which required to be filled up between Dunstable and the late Netherlander before the process of evolution could be verified. It is only of late that steps have been taken in the right direction. The discovery and translation of these works of Dufay will seem to throw light upon Dunstable's real position, and also upon the methods of art of the later Netherlanders, such as Okeghem and Josquin. I can only express my very great pleasure at having heard this paper and shall look forward to reading it in print. Sir John is undoubtedly doing a service of the greatest importance to the history of our art by this very interesting revelation of Dufay's work.