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PROFESSOR E. J. DENT, D.MUS.,
IN THE CHAIR.

ITALIAN MADRIGAL VERSE.

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Translated from the German by A. H. Fox Strangways,
assisted by G. D. H. Pidcock.

INTRODUCTORY : ON METRES.

Early, thirteenth-fourteenth century; *middle*, fourteenth-sixteenth century; *late*, fifteenth and sixteenth century.

EARLY. Dante died 1321, twenty years before Chaucer was born, wrote his *Divina Commedia* in *Capitoli*, stanzas of three lines of which the first and third rhyme, and the last word of the second line determines the first and third of the next stanza, so that each rhyme has three representatives.¹ Another early form of the fourteenth century is the *Caccia*, of which the words were in the form of a madrigal (described below), but the essential point is that the music was in strict canon (at several bars distance) over an independent bass.

MIDDLE. The *Ballata* was a form of popular origin, generally with eleven syllables. In the typical form there are twelve lines :—

2 + 2 || + 4 + 2 + 2

The first two pairs, *Ritornello* (= *Refrain*), rhymes *a b b a*; the following stanza *c d c d, d e, e a*; so always returning to the *Ritornello*. There are four stanzas.

The next are the serious *Canzona* and the light *Canzonetta*. These have free strophic forms with any rhymes, and with lines of seven or of eleven syllables.

Next, the *Ottava*, of which it is enough to say it is the metre of Byron's *Don Juan* and Shelley's *Witch of Atlas*, and the preface to Busoni's *Doktor Faust*.

The *Sestina* is more intricate. It is a six-line stanza, unrhymed, but with the final words recurring, thus :—

First stanza : *a b c d e f*
Second „ *f a b c d e*
Third „ *e f a b c d, etc.*

¹ See Austin Dobson, *The Virgin with the Bells*, for an example of this metre in English.

And this is clinched by a three-line stanza in which the six words, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, and *f* all recur.

The LATE period has two representatives, the *Frottala* and the *Madrigal*.

The *Frottala*, derived from the *Ballata*, has two or more stanzas (nine or ten possibly), of ten lines each, like the *Ballata* but arranged :

$$3 + 3 + 2 + 2$$

and rhyming :—

$$\begin{array}{cccc} a & a & d & d \\ b & b & d & d \\ c & c & d & a \end{array}$$

In effect it is a variant of the *Ottava* with a clinching couplet added to it (*d a*) which picks up the first and last lines.

The *Madrigal* has one stanza only. It is from seven to eleven lines long, and the lines can have seven or eleven syllables each. The rhymes and the numbers of syllables may be arranged in any order.

* * * *

A HISTORY of musical poetry, that is, of words to be set to music, has never yet been written. Such a history as that would form part of general literary history, or more accurately, one part would belong to the history of drama and the other to that of lyrical poetry; and it need hardly be said that neither of these would coincide in its divisions with those of pure literature, nor could they be handled by literary exponents. For the history of musical drama, to wit of the libretto, that is obvious. How could anyone do justice to the dramatic work of Ottavio Rinuccini, the earliest writer of opera, if he did not place it in the framework of operatic origins? And must one not be doubly unjust to the poor librettists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries if one took no account of their dependence on the musicians and on the operatic style of that day? How lopsided and adverse a judgment of Richard Wagner, even, would be—of a man, that is, who presumably subordinated music to drama—if it regarded his libretti merely as verse, and not as a part of his whole art-work!

[A history of Libretto is, I think, one of the most attractive tasks musical history (not literary history) has to offer. As far as I know there have been only two attempts so far: the *Rivoluzioni del teatro musicale italiano* of Stefano Artega, and the *Literary history of Opera Buffa* of Michele Scherillo. Such work as this would go deep into the problem of opera.]²

² Passages in square brackets were not read at the meeting.

Still less is there a history of musical lyric. Except at special times and under special circumstances the musical lyric differs entirely from pure lyric poetry. It runs parallel with that, and maintains a character of its own, even when it apparently takes only an excerpt from a poem. The musician chooses his ditty not from a literary point of view. People have often complained or regretted that Haydn or Mozart chose their ditty with little taste, and have praised Hugo Wolf for his literary appreciation. But behind these judgments there stands a problem which is like, but not so complicated as, the problem of the centre of gravity in opera. As a work of art opera has often been called impossible, because there is no way of smoothing over the conflict between word and tone, between opera and drama, between the tendency of the action to hurry on and of the music to hang back. But the fact is that a history of opera can be treated only as the story of the mutual claims of music and drama, always varying and seldom settled. The history of the song is similarly the story of the battle between music and text. The text was one thing to Haydn and Mozart and another to Wolf: to them it was an excuse for music; with Wolf we are never sure that the music was not an excuse for the poetry, at any rate he heightens the poetry and very variously, in and through the music. Between these extremes stand Schubert and Brahms. Neither of them set, like Haydn and Mozart, insipid or worthless texts; they chose their poems to suit their musical needs and treated them in a musical spirit. Brahms's song-texts have been collected in an anthology, not literary but musical—Brahmsian, in fact. The same might be done on a larger scale for Schubert. The results would belong not to "poetry" but "poetry for music."

In remote times poetry was inconceivable without music; the two were one thing. The Hebrew Psalms were never spoken; they were recited with a resonant voice, such as Gregorian singing has employed from its origin till to-day. Homer sang his hexameters, and it may be confidently asserted that Greek writers of lyrics and panegyrics never spoke their verse. But the further poetry removes from its origin, and the more the seer (*rates*) becomes the maker (*poeta*), the more; it loses connection with music. Horace, splendid as is his clear, refined poesy and just because it is so, and is so little "orphanic," was a *litterateur*. In the Middle Ages among the young nations that broke up the heritage of the ancients, epic and lyric became young again, and poet and musician are united in one and the same person. But we see in the poetry of troubadour, trouvère and minnesinger that it is the poet

who separates himself from the musician, not the musician from the poet; for the poet is master; and the musician is the servant who has to find the suitable tune for his master's verse.

Yet, even if poet and musician are not one man, poem and music are one thing, at any rate for particular poetical forms which cannot be thought of without music. Just as in ancient times poesy could not be conceived except as recitation, so the word that is not sounded but merely read is, of course, an achievement of later centuries, certainly not older than the dissemination of printed books. It is clear that the epic was no longer sung in the Middle Ages, and that Dante's *Divina Commedia* needs to be reinforced by the articulation of words weightily spoken; although the form of the individual songs, the *Capitolo* as it was called, was still adaptable for music—Ottaviano Petrucci printed at the beginning of the sixteenth century some melodic patterns for the *Capitoli*. But the various lyrical forms, madrigal, ballata and so on, were inconceivable without music. The Venetian *Giustiniana*, the Umbrian or Florentine *Lande* was sung. The lyric poets of the fourteenth century wrote their poems for music; it is very interesting to notice how Franco Sacchetti at Florence looks out for musicians to set his *Canzone*, *Madrigale* and *Cacce*. The *Caccia* in particular is a species whose very name loses its meaning without music; for *Caccia* means "canon," and the subject of its text was not by any means confined to the chase, it included such things as a busy fair or a pastoral scene.

Anyhow, the separation of poetry and music had long been complete by the fifteenth century. There were a certain number of musical or—might we say?—"musicable" forms, and one of the least musicable was that aristocrat, the sonnet. The *Canzone*, its aristocratic rival, was always more tunable, its stanzas craved musical or semimusical recitation. But the sonnet, for whose formal composition three lines of melody sufficed—and such melodic patterns are to be found printed in Petrucci's *Frottole*—was, as a musical form, poverty-stricken; also, the greater the load of thought the sonnet carried, the more it rebelled against music and cast in its lot with literature, with declamation and recitation. The *Ballate*, *Cacce* and *Madrigale* of Sacchetti invited music in; the sonnets of Petrarca shot the door in her face. It is not too much to say that it was the fame of Petrarch, great then and still greater in the sixteenth century, that did most to loosen the intimate bonds of poetry and music. For the canzonas, sonnets, sestinas and madrigals in his song-books were, even in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, no longer a living art. They

were heirlooms : they were a country where philologists and commentators might range, something to wonder at and be proud of, but still an heirloom. Such a poem could be decked in precious musical raiment but this raiment did not now match the style of the fourteenth century, the style that the poet had invented and intended. "Perhaps," we must add ; for Petrarch, too, had a sense of literature.

[It is somewhat as if a non-romantic or an anti-romantic composer of to-day were to try to set Shelley or Eichendorff.]

It is time now to turn from these historical preliminaries to the sixteenth century and our actual theme, the madrigal. Here too we must first consider an earlier form of the madrigal, the *Frottola*—or we had better perhaps say the contents of the *Frottola* books that Petrucci and his rivals began to print in 1504 or 1505—to which may be added a few valuable manuscripts.

The collection of *Frottolas* embraces very various contents, but in most of these, in the *Frottola* proper, words and music are *one*. A refrain begins a set of stanzas or a curtailed *Ballate*, and the stanzas, few or many, are strong on an end-rhyme, and return to the refrain. It is a form of *improvisation*, so un-literary, so full of lyric commonplace, of stolen goods, or, to put it more mildly, of reminiscences, that one cannot imagine its having been printed as an independent text. And it hardly ever was. In Poliziano, Lorenzo da Medici and other poets we find a few *Frottola* texts which have received short shrift in Italian literary history as turgid minstrelsy—Tebaldeo, Serafino dell' Aquila, Baldassarre Olimpo de Sasseferrata, Calmeta and others. When one looks into the old edition (and it is never enough to be content with the new only) one soon realises the gist of this motley collection of sonnets, octaves, *Capitoli* and *Frottolas*. We may call them love-letter-writers, intended for the immediate practical use of cavaliers and youthful practitioners, that can easily be imitated and adapted to any amatory situation ; in some of these lyrical prints we find regular prescriptions for a love-letter. It is in fact a notable treasury for the use of a lover of high birth : greeting, farewell, praise of the loved one's charms, reproach, plaint, mockery, scorn ; no genuine feeling, everything a mere toe-ing of the social line. It is highly characteristic that hardly ten *Frottolas* in a thousand could be placed in a women's mouth. The *Frottola* is definitely for a man, a literature of serenades for strictly practical use. That is the case not merely with the *Frottola* proper but with the so called Ode, a shorter structure in four-line stanzas without refrain, a simple daisy chain of stanzas ; the same, too, for the most part with Octaves, which

musically are in the main of an earlier type. Woman gets her chance only in a few retorts, when she replies, for instance, to her lover's reproaches. There are two characteristic examples of this in Dido's farewell from the third book of the *Æneid* and the last distichs of Ovid's seventh Heroid. Whenever it is a question of a great effect, or of deep tragedy, the woman always takes the stage. These two songs are the first of a series which culminates in Monteverde's *Lament of Ariadne*.

It was due to the influence of Pietro Bembo, a leader of the literature of that day, later on a cardinal, a purist in Italian speech, an admirer and imitator of Petrarch, that the *Frottola* was ousted by higher types of poetry and a more literary spirit invaded the *Frottola* books. Just as in the musical form of the *Frottola* homophony was more and more replaced by polyphony with its ferment of contrapuntal imitation, so is its poetical form pushed aside by literary turns of expression. In the first *Frottola*-book there is not a single text with the name of a famous author. In the second and third Poliziano's appears, in the fifth Galeotto del Caretto's; in the seventh we find side by side Petrarch (with two stanzas of a canzone) and Bembo (with one), and in the eleventh, rediscovered a few years ago by J. B. Trend, Petrarch is abundantly represented by sonnets, canzoni and sestet-stanzas. In a collection of *Frottolas* made in 1517 by Andrea Antico there is a sonnet of Baldassarre Castiglione, the celebrated author of the "Cortigiano" or Mirror of all good Education, and he was not the man to admit any plebeian *Frottolas*. In 1520 there appeared, in a print of Petrucci that was discovered a couple of years ago, the first collection in which verses of only one poet were contained—the *Musica de messer Bernardo Pisano sopra le canzone del Petrarca* and the first setting of a stanza from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

* * * *

Petrarch's *Canzone* smooth the way for the madrigal. For the madrigal is, as regards its poetic form, no other than the *Canzone* stanza, which in its easy changes of verse-lengths, in its brevity and its pointed epigram, is as if made for music. Madrigal-writing begins at the moment at which musicians began to be tired of the song-form winding its way through interminable stanzas, and to look out for something more artistic in which imitation can play a decisive part and the voices attain equality. The newly born madrigal does not seriously conflict with the new polyphonically composed motet. It still wants to exhibit the poetic form, but plays at least with the thought of polyphony. It is, as it were, suddenly

lifted into a higher sphere of art without losing its mundanity, or what the eighteenth century called its "gallant" character.

The chief poet of this springtime of the madrigal is Luigi Cassola, a quite obscure writer who is not even honoured with a place in the great new *Enciclopedia Italiana*, although national poetry is adequately treated there. But there is no measuring the *poeta par musica* by the literary footrule. Cassola appears first in a collection of 1534. It was to him that the text of Archadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno* was attributed (though the real author is Giovanni Guidiccioni), and it must be confessed that in the fame accorded to this the century showed no bad taste: true contemporary expression has here clothed an old motive with a noble sentiment. Cassola and his imitators changed nothing in this musical poesy. It was still a poesy of serenades: over and over again Madonna is addressed, only in a more aristocratic form than before, and instead of the phantasmagoria of images that the *Frottola* displayed, a single image or simile is now consistently carried through. To this type the madrigal conformed for nearly a century. The madrigal writers of the age of Guarini, Tasso and Marino are livelier in their proportions, they are fond of recondite motive, sharpen the point of epigram, and strain antithesis and oxymoron to the utmost limit (and we shall presently see why), but the general character remains the same.

I will give just one example of this poesy of serenades. It is of interest because the lady's name is given in full, and is very famous. She is Tullia of Aragon, the most celebrated Roman courtesan in the time of Pope Clement VII. Verdelot extolled her in 1538, in five parts:—

Non mai donna più bella
 Vidi nel mond' o vedrà mai persona,
 Che Tullia d'Aragona,
 Vaga, cortese, leggiadretta e snella.
 Gli occhi ch'oscurar fann' il ciel e'l sole,
 E'l bel candido viso,
 Le benigne parole,
 I bei sembiant 'e l'angelico riso
 Del ben che 'n paradiso
 Fan fed' in terr' a chi mirar gli vole.
 O grazie rar' e sola,
 Per voi quella mia stella
 Fra l'altre donna bell' è la più bella.

That this was commissioned by a noble lover there is no doubt: it is hardly to be supposed that Verdelot's purse would have allowed him to be himself among her favourites.

A decade had hardly gone by when the literary tendency of the madrigal had grown so strong that the fact of Cassola's raising the standard—conferring a title on it, as it were—seems no longer to suffice. The serenade-poesy develops into an art practised only in a closed circle, and there arises the *Accademia*. It must not be thought that the madrigal ever lost sight of its practical object. Nearly all of it was dedicatory, arising out of a definite occasion and serving a special purpose. There are books of madrigals containing only table-music and wedding-songs: when Aristo's stanzas, for example, extol the personal charms of Alcina, they and their like were intended for use at some wedding festivity in high life; and when certain of Petrarch's sonnets—*Padre del ciel, dopo i perduti giorni* or *I vo piangendo i miei passati tempi*—are set to music, they are pieces for domestic use during Passion week. But from now on music steps directly into this literary-musical circle, as art for art's sake, and every caprice, adventure, experiment is allowed, welcomed, and applauded. The nobleman—Alessandro Striggio, perhaps—and the prince, such as Guglielmo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, becomes himself the composer; and the famous and infamous Prince of Venosa chooses his ditty in accordance with his own sovereign will—he, chiefly, set Torquato Tasso—and, just because he is prince Carlo Gesualdo his music stops at nothing.

The madrigal wins possession of the whole territory of good literature. Two examples may here be given of the transition stage, 1531-40. In Verdelot's first book of madrigals à 4 (published 1537), a very famous and influential collection, there is only one sonnet of Petrarch—*Quand' Amor i begh occhi a terra inchina*—and the rest are madrigals, one on a text of Antonio Dragonetto, and another on that of the notorious Pietro Aretino, who was opposed to the sentimental and extravagant tendencies of the madrigal. On the other hand in Cipriano Rore's first book of madrigals à 5 (1542), a work in which the use of programme can be compared only with the *Nuove Musiche* of the Italian *Camerata* or Gluck's *Alceste*, all the pieces are of literary origin, all are sonnets and none madrigals; the majority are by Petrarch, though some by Claudio Tolomei, Nicolo Amanio, Tarquinio Molza, and the subjects of them are passionate and pathetic. Adrian Willaert, finally, filled his *Musicanova* (published 1559, but written certainly twenty years earlier) with one exception (a dialogue of Pamfilo Sasso) with sonnets of Petrarch. As to sonnets we may remind ourselves that Goethe was quite right when he wrote to Zelter (11 March, 1816) that the sonnet is unsuitable for singing. That they were conscious, however,

in the sixteenth century, in spite of the composer's inclination to set any and every text to music, of a distinction between literary and musical poetry, may be gathered from the poet Ludovico Dolce. In the preface to his tragedy *Le Troiane* (performed in Venice, 1566) he excuses himself for printing the texts of Claudio Merulo's intermezzi—"because they were only made to be sung, and not to be read."

Petrarch's poems were set to music more than those of any other poet of the Cinquecento. There is hardly a sonnet, *sestina*, *canzone*, or madrigal by him that has not been set—many of them dozens of times. Even fragments from the *Trionfi* have been set. These poems, then, had their renaissance in music two hundred years after they were written, a fact that cannot be explained off-hand. It is not enough to say that Pietro Bembo had revived the literary fame of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, and had held up his sonnets and *canzonas* as models of their kind. Moreover, the sonnet, by reason of its reason of its length, was a difficult and troublesome form for the musician to deal with, and after a few attempts at composing it throughout in an unbroken setting, composers soon adopted the expedient of splitting it up and composing the two halves of the octave and the sestet separately. The true explanation is that the madrigal is the ideal, the only adequate, musical raiment for the inner content (*Haltung*) of Petrarch's poems. This vacillation between the sensual and the ascetic, between worldly pleasures and penitence, between adoration of the beloved and of God, cannot be more faithfully symbolised than by the madrigal, in which passion was as yet confined to the impersonal, and in whose pure tones and flowing rhythm we seem to discern at once the antagonism and the union of heaven and earth. If it were possible for a collection—a *Canzoniere* of madrigals—to be published, called say, *Petrarch in Music*, we should be amazed at the wealth and versatility of these lyrics. No great poet, neither Shakespeare nor Goethe, Shelley nor Moerike, has ever been so apotheosized in music as Petrarch.

During the century, however, a characteristic change took place in the type of poem selected for musical setting. Round about 1540 the more sentimental pieces from the first half of his *Canzoniere* received preference. Then composers turned to the more serious and melancholy lyrics, in which the poet laments the death of the beloved and tries to find peace in the thought of heaven. And finally they favoured the light, graceful motives, with playful, pastoral echoes. But always they gave preference to those pieces in which contrasts are most marked and so give the musician the greatest scope for tonal painting, for description of verbal expression,

for "imitation." And this fashion—or mannerism—Marinism, as we may call it, already foreshadowed in Petrarch, is intensified in his innumerable imitators. We need hardly name them, the Bembos, the della Casas, the poetesses Gambara and Stampa, Bernardo Tasso, and even his greater son, Torquato Tasso. In these days, literary renown was always a guarantee of popularity among the musicians.

And Dante? In the sixteenth century Dante enjoyed less fame than Petrarch; or at least he was far less printed, reprinted, and read. It was a long time before composers began to heed him. A few passages from the *Inferno*, in particular the entrance of Virgil and the poet into Hell, and the word-picture of the shrieks and lamentation of the damned, prompted a few to experiment in bold harmonies and chromatics; and Vincenzo Galilei, and after him Luca Marenzio, set some of Dante's famous *Canzoni pietrosi*. That is all. Vincenzo Galilei is said to have set the terrible episode of Ugolino's death by starvation (from the thirty-third Canto of the *Inferno*) as a monody; but this was not a success. Boccaccio fared no better than Dante, only a few ballads from the *Decameron* finding favour in the eyes of composers; though among them, it is true, is one of the most famous pieces of the time: Ferrabosco's *Io mi son giovinetta*. Nor did it fare any better with Dante's spiritual relative, Michael Angelo, whose *Rime* were indeed only published in 1623 by his nephew. Of these only a few individual madrigals were set—some by Arcadelt—at his own commission.

The case of Ariosto, the greatest poet of the century, is another matter. His *Canzoniere* is small and unimportant, and only a few of his sonnets have been set at all frequently. But his *Orlando Furioso* was a very mine of riches for composers, who delved in it for precious metal of divers kinds. *Orlando Furioso* was published in 1516, and already in 1520 there appeared, in a collection of *Frottolas* made by Andrea Antico, a setting by Bartolomeo Tromboncino of the stanza *Queste non son più lagrime che fuora*, one of the most passionate verses in all poetry. Certain strophes from the epic have acquired a peculiar significance in the history of the madrigal. Ariosto's *Orlando* was sung in all the streets not only of Venice but also of Florence and Naples; and so there grew up in different places local variants of the tune—the *Arie di Firenze*, the *Arie di Genova*, the *Ruggiero*—from which their origin could be traced. Wherever one comes across a stanza of Ariosto set to music in which these tunes (*Melodiegut*) are used, one may be sure of finding a popular and fanciful piece of music. We find, also, all kinds of ingenious contrivances:

thus, Francesco Corteccia, the Florentine Court Composer, gives some of these tunes to the soprano, while in the lower parts he supplies a "commentary" consisting of tonal painting. The publisher Gardáno issued a book with nearly a hundred stanzas set by a Venetian master, Giachet Berchem. Selection was made in two different directions. First and foremost, composers preferred to set stanzas full of that gay worldly wisdom with which Ariosto was fond of beginning his songs. That of the second:—

Ingiustissimo Amor, perche sì raro
Corrispondenti fai nostri desiri ?

was certainly set fifty times, while that of the nineteenth:

Alcun non può saper da chi sia amato,
Quando felice in su la ruota siede ;
Però ch'ha i veri e i finti amici a lato,
Che mostran tutti una medesima fede.
Se poi si cangia in tristo il lieto stato,
Volta la turba adulatrice il piede ;
E quel che di cor ama, riman forte,
Et ama il suo Signor dopo la morte

was much used as a dedicatory piece—and it must be remarked that as such it is the most delicate and charming in the world. He who only looks for harmonic and rhythmic details in a madrigal will undoubtedly never understand the meaning and spirit of these works.

The other direction was in that of songs of action: of Bradamente's magnificent pledge of faith: *Ruggier, qual sempre fui, tal esser voglio*, and of outbursts of passion. It is from Ariosto that the madrigal first learnt how to express passion and ardour.

To another poet, Jacopo Sannazzaro of Naples, is due the development of the madrigal in a different direction. Sannazzaro, for me one of the most amiable and attractive figures in the world of poetry, was never given his rightful place in the history of literature, because he never quite succeeded in getting away from the classical prototype; his inspiration was derived too directly from the humanities. His *Eclógia*, it was said, were only inferior imitations, his *Arcadia*—a kind of idyllic romance with verses interspersed—the origin of the pastoral mode. Maybe. Musicians, at any rate, have not bothered their heads about the question, but have set the monologues and dialogues from his *Arcadia* with genuine enthusiasm. His *Canzoniere*, published in 1530, was less popular. Although he was older than Ariosto and died before him, and his *Arcadia* had already made its first appearance in 1502, it was some time before it began to attract the attention

of composers. When, around about 1550, it at last did so, its popularity made up for lost time. Of all poets Sannazzaro is one from whom musicians learnt to do justice to the pastoral style—that of playful grace and gentle melancholy. It is significant that he was the favourite poet of Luca Marenzio.

The first eclogue of the *Arcadia*—a dialogue—is, indeed, a dramatic cantata. All the ingredients are there: the varying metre, the shepherd Ergasto's story of his first meeting with his Pastorella (*Menando un giorno*, in hendecasyllables with internal rhymes), ending with the Aria: *La pastorella mia spietata e rigida*. For a time composers could do nothing with the shepherd's story, but they often set the Aria.

He was supplanted by two things—by a successor of greater virtuosity, and by a philological discovery. The successor was Giambattista Guarini, with his *Pastor Fido*, which his contemporaries found far more charming than a similar pastoral play, the *Aminta* of Torquato Tasso, which, though simpler and written with less virtuosity, was a greater work of art. From the latter some of the more outstanding lyrical pieces, including in particular the love-plaints, were frequently set, though not half so often as Guarini's verses. These we might call "pre-existent Arias"—Arias before the invention of monody. *Pastor Fido* was for musicians the harbinger of opera. And Guarini's madrigals enjoyed as great popularity with musicians as this pastoral play of his. They were shorter than the madrigals of the first half of the sixteenth century; they allowed less scope to the oxymoron, and gave to the last line a still sharper point. In the last third of the century, through Guarini's influence, sonnets were very much less frequently set. And although Guarini was a *littérateur* pure and simple, and even his erotic-epigrammatic verses in madrigal form were intended only as literature, yet they are something akin to *poesia per musica*. At least in their play of sharp contrast they go a good part of the way to meet the musician's new-found preference for two-fold themes, that is to say for themes in contrast; not, as in the motet, in succession, but simultaneous or contrapuntal. In style and tendency, poetry and music have gradually become united again.

Beside Guarini stands Torquato Tasso. The most important thing for the history of music that Tasso wrote is not his *Aminta*—although from this play came a remarkable madrigal-dialogue (1594, by Simone Balsamino)—nor his lyrics—although they were set hundreds of times, principally by a few composers who were closely connected with him, such as the Prince of Venosa, Giaches Wert, and Monteverdi,

and although one of his madrigals *Ardo sì, ma non t'amo* became a popular favourite. It was none of these, but his epic *Gerusalemme liberata*. This supplanted the *Orlando Furioso* because it had no humour (a thing which was not understood in the days of the counter-reformation), and was far more pathetic. Scenes like the fight between Tancredi and Clordine, and the moving death of the heroine, were set as madrigal cycles long before Monteverdi's *Combattimento* and *Gerusalemme liberata* became for musicians an arsenal in which weapons for the opera were forged.

One cannot help being surprised, however, that Tasso ever concerned himself with madrigal form, which he rated very low. In his dialogue *La Cavalletta ovvero della Poesia toscana* he describes the sonnet as the only true vehicle for the noble style, but for commonplace matter the madrigal is more suitable. It is not, however, to be assumed that he regarded his own madrigals as non-literary; but he certainly wrote them for the direct purpose of music and his musical friends.

The philological discovery to which I referred was that of the anacreontic, or rather the pseudo-anacreontic, lyric. Hitherto nothing had been known of Anacreon but his name; but in the year 1554 Henry Estienne, the French philologist, published fifty-three spurious odes. These made a strong impression first on Ronsard and his school, the *Pléiade*, and then on Tasso, Goselini, Alberti, and others in Italy. They introduced a new note, a new "content" into poetry. But for this discovery the new *Canzonetta* would never have come into existence. It is not my intention in this lecture to go into details of the different species of Italian choral lyrics apart from the madrigal: the *Villanella* and all its varieties, the *Mascherata*, the *Canzonetta*; to do so would, moreover, extend it far beyond the limits of the time available. The *Canzoni alla Villanella* had developed directly from the *Frottola*, and had retained the strophic form with the refrain, and had formed, with their popular note, a counterpart to the more exalted madrigal. The latter was only rendered tolerable by the frequent application of the "corrective" of laughter—laughter at that high-falutin' world of pathos and sentimentality. And no chance was lost to make merry over it by such means as burlesquing its words and music, or rewriting its text in dialect—the most amusing of all being by Antonio Molino, a Levant merchant and Venetian *mæcenas* and poet, who therewith created the whole race of the modern Greek. But now, in place of all this wealth appeared the new, graceful anacreontic *Canzonetta*, the poet chiefly responsible for it being Gabriello Chiabrera of Savona. Chiabrera (1552–

1638) was in high favour at the musically progressive courts of Italy—the Medici, Savoy, and Gonzaga at Mantua. His *Canzonettas*, well known since 1586, when they were printed, wrought a change in the *Canzone*, raising its musical status. It was no longer parodic, robust (*derb*), popular, but dance-like (*tanzerisch*) and literary. From it are derived the *Canzone da Ballo* (the *Balletto*) and the *Aria*. Of the texts of the *Scherzi musicali* of Monteverdi (1607) it is significant that there is still one included from Sannazzaro's *Arcadia*; but eight are from Chiabrera, and the rest from his imitators, Ansaldo Cebà among others. It may perhaps be of interest to trace the literary sources of the madrigals of Monteverdi, the champion of all that was new. In the first Book (1587) of madrigals à 5 there are still Guarini and Tasso, together with a frequently set text of Antonio Allegretti. More than half of the second Book (1590), i.e., eleven out of twenty-one pieces, is devoted to Torquato Tasso—but only to his lyrics. In the third Book (1592) there is a setting of a scene from *Gerusalemme liberata* (canto XVI, lines 58–62). In the fourth Book (1603) *Pastor Fido* appears for the first time, but is more frequently represented in the fifth Book (1605). In Book 6 the following are represented together: Ottavio Rinuccini, the author of *Arianna*; Petrarch, with a "pastoral" sonnet; Scipione Agnelli, another contemporary; and Cavaliere Marino, from whom the extravagant style of the poetry of those days has taken its name. In the seventh and last Book only the triumvirate Guarini, Chiabrera, and Marino are represented.

It was the last flicker of a literary tendency. The Florentine Camerata wanted to make music again the handmaid of poetry; and so Petrarch and the sonnet form still enjoyed a short heyday, side by side with the fashionable poets, with (*bei*) Caccini, Sigismondo d'India, Domenico Belli and others setting his words to music. Dominico Mazzochi, about 1640, set a sonnet by della Casa, which had already attracted Cipriano di Rore's attention, and which was reminiscent of Petrarch and Tasso. But these are exceptions. During the first few decades of the seventeenth century, poetry—so far as it can be called poetry—was once more completely at the service of music. The cantata was born: the combination of recitative and aria—or, from the literary point of view, a framework consisting of a tale in free verse (*Rahmen-Erzählung in lockeren Versen*), from which, like a lyrical blossom, a more strictly metrical strophe grows. The birth of the cantata had been long in preparation. Its deepest roots lay in antiquity—in the idylls and eclogues of Theocritus and

Virgil, which were so sedulously imitated by the humanists. Such tales, whose culminating point is a monologue or a dialogue, already occurred in Poliziano—in *capitoli*, in madrigals, and in *canzonettas*. The most famous piece, and one that plays a special part in the history of the madrigal, is a pastoral dialogue of Guarini's, set over and over again: *Tirsi morir volea*, in which lie hidden a recitative and two arias. At the beginning of the seventeenth century music demanded of poetry merely that it should be a poetic foundation for its fixed (*feste*) musical form. For more than two hundred years literary poetry is again divorced from "poetry for music"; and the "poet for music," including even Zeno and Metastasio, is but a hack writer of doggerel verse. The musician no longer disports himself in the garden of true poetry. An epoch is closed.

DISCUSSION

THE CHAIRMAN (Professor E. J. Dent): We must thank Dr. Einstein for an extremely learned lecture which has been admirably translated by Mr. Fox Strangways. Dr. Einstein has made a minute study of the Italian madrigals of the sixteenth century and he has discovered much that is new about them. We in England sing very few of them, though lately some Madrigal Societies have taken to singing Italian madrigals. Not many people in England, however, have any conception of the enormous wealth of music in the Italian madrigals, and of the way in which they represent the whole history of the Renaissance. But they require intimate study such as Dr. Einstein has given to them, and above all a study of the poetry to which they are set, because that dominates them and shows their relation to the whole culture of the time.

Professor TREND: I am filled with admiration for Dr. Einstein's paper. Italian madrigals are really not my department; the country in which I am interested rejected them. Spain, from the early part of the sixteenth century, preferred lute songs; there were fewer madrigal settings, but they are interesting and very characteristic. One thing that was mentioned had great importance in Spanish poetry and English poetry too, and I think in most Renaissance poetry. That was the inequality of the length of the lines; that mixture of lines of eleven and seven syllables. The late Professor W. P. Ker called it one of the great Italian discoveries, that mixture of eleven and seven syllables, as in Milton's *Lycidas* and in Keats's odes; and that fundamental of modern poetry

seems also fundamental in the madrigals. Various forms of madrigal are mentioned, but the typical form was the short poem of lines of eleven and seven syllables with a rhymed couplet at the end. It is the form in which some of the greatest European poetry was written. Dr. Einstein adds a new interest to Professor Ker's words, for he shows that it was also a form that led to some of the greatest music.

Mr. ROYLE SHORE: Does the lecturer regard the word madrigal as being derived from *madonna*?

The CHAIRMAN: *Madonna* in sixteenth century Italian is the ordinary address to a lady, and more especially so to a lady who is—not quite a lady. It is not exclusively reserved for the Virgin Mary.

Mr. ROYLE SHORE: I think the popular idea is that the term has been derived from *madrigali*.

The CHAIRMAN: Dr. Fellowes disposed of that suggestion some time ago. He brought that forward in his book on English madrigals, but I should be interested to hear Dr. Einstein's views on the subject.

The LECTURER: I share the opinion of Dr. Fellowes that *madrigale* is derived from *matricalia*, i. e., poems in the mother-tongue. Had it come from *mandra* (a flock), it would suggest that all madrigal poetry were pastoral, which is not the case. The madrigal of the fourteenth century is of much stricter form than that of the sixteenth century which is completely free. When Professor Wolf, of Berlin, read a paper⁶ on the music of the *Trecento* he discussed the poetry of the *ballata* and other forms in Italy during the fourteenth century.

Dr. E. H. MEYER: Dr. Einstein pointed out that on the whole the Counter-Reformation had no influence on the development of madrigals. But on the musical style of church music the Counter-Reformation had a certain influence. The passionate endeavour of the Counter-Reformation to re-establish the firm belief of the old church was clearly expressed in the extremism and emotion of many sacred works of Lasso as well as of the Italians round Giovanni Gabrieli. So we can trace some connection between Counter-Reformation and music in general; I do not know, however, what was the *official attitude* of the Counter-Reformation to the madrigals.

⁶ *Proceedings*, 1931-32. Vol. LVIII, p. 15.

The LECTURER: The Counter-Reformation had little influence on the madrigal. The classical example is contained in Palestrina's preface to his motets from the *Song of Solomon*, in which he expressed repentance for having composed music to profane and worldly madrigals. This is sheer hypocrisy, because in Palestrina's madrigals there is nothing like the lasciviousness of other composers. The Counter-Reformation did exercise a certain influence on the choice of words and encouraged the setting of words by Petrarch. From a musical point of view there was not the least difference between a "spiritual madrigal" and a profane one: the "spiritual madrigals" were sung in Lent and Holy Week and the profane madrigals at other times. The technique of human expression was developed in the madrigal and passed on to the motet; sacred music always follows in the wake of profane music.

Professor TREND: The Counter-Reformation also led to the spiritual parodies which Professor Dent once referred to here in a paper on the *Laudi spirituali*.⁷ There is a collection of madrigals printed at Seville, by Guerrero, in which the music remains as it was in the manuscript parts (which I found in Madrid) but the printed words have been parodied. Thus for a Spanish equivalent of *Gather ye rosebuds while ye may, O praise the Lord all while ye may* was substituted. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: It now only remains to pass a vote of thanks to Dr. Einstein for his learned and interesting paper and to express our great pleasure in seeing him here this evening. (Applause.)

⁷ *Proceedings*, 1916-17. XLIII, p. 63.