Elízabethan Vírgínal Composers

JOHN BULL

1562-1628

VOLUME I.

EDITEDFORTHEPIANOFORTEFROMTHEMSS.

BY

MARGARET H. GLYN

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EDITED FOR THE PIANOFORTE FROM THE MSS.

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MARGARET H. GLYN

Author of "The Rhythmic Conception of Music," "The Evolution of Musical Form," and Editor of "Simple English Classics for Pianoforte," etc.

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INTRODUCTION.

I N the 16th century English virginal music was not only ahead of its own time, but ahead of anything that was done abroad until the arrival of Scarlatti. Its general character is melodic with a setting more or less contrapuntal, but not uniformly so. Parts are not rigidly adhered to; they die into one another, coming and going with a freedom unknown to the later counterpoint. Octave passages are non-existent, but the technique is frequently of a modern type, and staccato may be used occasionally with good effect. It is, however, mainly as a study of legato playing that virginal music will be found invaluable, and its charming melodies are most attractive. It needs a light touch in playing, having been written for an instrument of delicate tone.

The present edition aims at bringing this work within the reach of all, and should sufficient support be forthcoming, it is hoped to issue further volumes, graded, containing the complete virginal works of Gibbons which are mostly unpublished, and large selections from Bull and others. The varied repeats of a melody, if dull, will sometimes be omitted. In the case of Gibbons, it appears that contemporary copyists have already made the omissions.

The text is practical and non-antiquarian, finished with the accuracy of a scholars' edition. As regards corrections of imperfect MSS., it follows a new line. *A revised text is given*. All single wrong notes, accidentals omitted or superfluous, and ties omitted in the MS. will be noted eventually in an Appendix with reference to page, line, and bar, so that any student can ascertain these corrections. Of anything beyond this, the MS. reading will be given above or below the text. Composers' autographs being mostly non-existent, we are dealing with copyists' errors. When a piece is found in more than one version, no single MS. has been necessarily adhered to throughout; the object being to arrive as near as may be to the missing autograph of the composer.

Pieces are exceptionally found transposed a fourth higher in one MS. than in another; in the case of a piece rather too low for the pianoforte such transposition can sometimes be made with advantage, provided the usual virginal compass (A above the treble stave) is not exceeded. It is undesirable to place sections of a piece an octave higher. The music has its own character, which would be destroyed by substituting modern pianistic effects.

This being a performing edition, the entire omission of ornaments has been decided on for the following reasons :---

1. The music is complete without ornaments, unlike that of a later period.

2. Their interpretation is uncertain, experts disagreeing.

3. They may be frequently the irresponsible addition of copyists.

4. They were a speciality of virginal technique, a convention of the 16th century, now meaningless.

5. They double the difficulty of the music, and so stand in the way of popularising it.

6. In whatever way performed, they are over-obtrusive on the pianoforte, and distract attention from fine melody.

Insufficient evidence exists to enable anyone to discover with certainty the 16th century use of these ornaments. For those few who wish to play the music on a harpsichord, it is impossible to arrive at the precise original rendering. Even from the antiquarian point of view, it would seem better to have no ornaments than wrong ones.

Virginal books contain the bare notes only on six-lined staves, with obsolete time-signatures and numerous changes of clef, including C clefs on any line. It is necessary to grasp the character of the piece first—the composer having scant means of indicating this—in order to find its counterpart in modern notation. The method of translation here adopted is that of the crotchet beat. Phrasing and marks of expression are added. Pedal effects are not inserted, but can be used in moderation, and short pieces may be repeated if desired. Repeat marks occur in some MSS., but the term "Rep." in the text means a varied repeat of the melody.

Double bars, strewn throughout virginal books, divide the strains and repeats of the variations, which are always numbered, the theme counting as 1. This will be found a great assistance to young students in the study of form. Elizabethan form is always clear and intelligible, though of much greater freedom than that of succeeding centuries. Chromatic modulation was frequent, and dissonance was the rule rather than the exception in all advanced compositions.

Virginal music is not confined to the Church modes. There is seldom a major without some suggestion of minor, and there is never a minor without the major close. Beautiful and original effects are introduced by this mingling of major and minor. It is as though the scale rose in the major and fell in the minor with an inflection like that of the melodic minor scale. This occurs frequently in the popular music of the period, by which virginal music was very largely influenced. A number of folktunes were used by composers as the basis for variations.



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J. W. 15968.

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PREFACE.

THE Keyboard works of John Bull number 151, of which 59 are published, *i.e.*, 49 in the Fitzwilliam Book, 7 in Parthenia, and 3 elsewhere. In this volume are 5 pieces not previously published, and better versions of several already known. An anonymous Coranto is included, which is very probably by Bull because it contains the augmented sixth. He is the only composer of the period known to have used it.

I desire to express my most sincere thanks for the use of pieces numbered 1, 2, 6, 7, published by kind permission of the Governing Body of Christ Church College, Oxford, from MSS. in their possession, of which pieces they reserve the rights, including all rights of reproduction by any other person than the present publishers.

M. H. G.

May, 1922.

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Alman.

II.











III. Doctor Bulles Greefe.







Doctor Bulles Jewel.

Allegretto cantabile. (Repeats omitted.)













V. *Faire and Sweet.



* Probably a folk tune. Also called The Duchess of Brunswicks Toye. J. W. 15968.





































VIII. Alman.











*Alto added in this bar.

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IX. The Duke of Brunswicks Alman.













X. *Coranto.















* A run is omitted in the last bar of each strain, and also in bar 7 of the Galliard. Time-values diminished from o to \bullet in both pieces.

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