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Piano



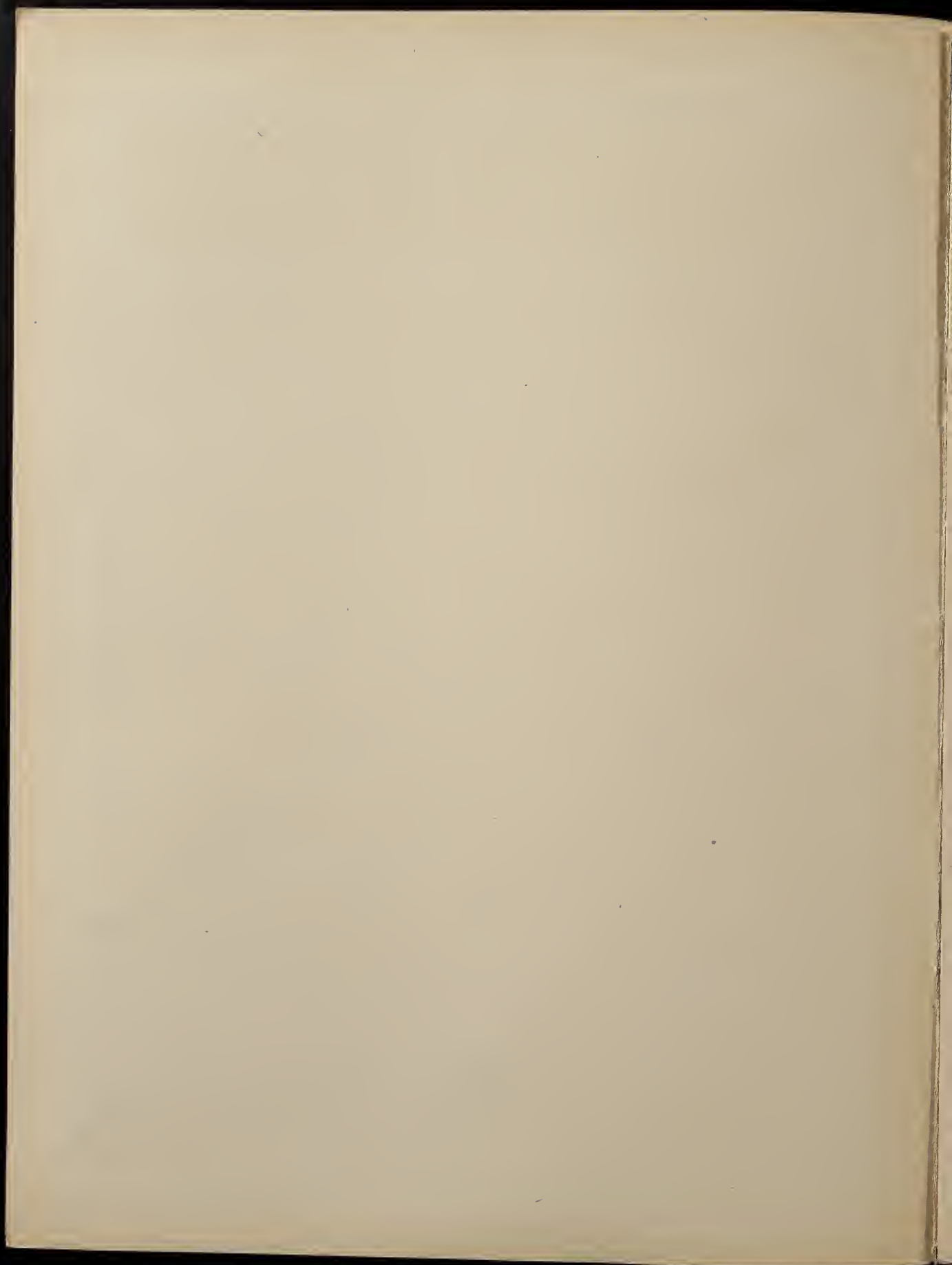
Minuet in G Major

— DUSSEK

GRADE I—B

No. 9





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PIANO

Grade I—B

MINUET IN G MAJOR. Hamilton Conservatory of Music

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—JOHANN LADISLAUS DUSSEK.

Born at Tschaslau, Bohemia, February 9, 1761.
Died at St. Germain, near Paris, March 20, 1812.

DUSSEK (Doo-seek), or, as the name was sometimes spelled, Duschek, was one of the most gifted pianists and composers of the period during which he lived. He first entered the Jesuit College at Iglau, where he studied the ancient languages. He finally received the bachelor's degree in theology at Prague. During this time, however, he had educated himself in music to the extent that he was able to take the position of organist at Meehlín, and, later, a similar position at Amsterdam.

He made a visit to Ph. E. Bach in Hamburg, who received him kindly, and shortly after, he appeared in St. Petersburg as a piano virtuoso. He later visited Paris and Italy, in the former place playing for Marie Antoinette. On account of the Revolution he fled to London where he founded a musical publishing house, which failed, however, and involved him deeply in debt. He returned to Germany, attaching himself first to Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, and after his death to Prince Isenburg, and finally became concert-master to Prince Tallyrand.

Dussek is famous as being one of the first who produced a "singing" tone from the piano. He had a round, full tone, and his playing was very effective on this account. His music is in the style of Mozart's epoch, and it has been asserted by some critics to be in advance of that of either Haydn or Mozart. This shows at least that he was an important personality in his art. Mendelssohn said that he was prodigal with his talents, and might have occupied a much higher place than he did. His personal character was affable and lovable, free from jealousy. He wrote a large number of compositions, Concertos, Trios, Fugues, Sonatas, Variations, etc. His chamber music possessed great merit.

FORM AND STRUCTURE.—By musical form, we mean the order in which the different parts or ideas of a composition are arranged. Form is to music what architecture is to building, as we will elsewhere have occasion to state. Young pupils taking these compositions may derive a great deal of benefit from the formal structure of the compositions they study. The matter is not especially difficult if sufficiently simple illustrations are given, and the proper time to begin the study of form is when taking up easy compositions, because when the large, involved and highly complex works of the great masters are studied, their formal structure will not be so easy to comprehend, unless the student has had some experience and training on easier things. Moreover, by analyzing these pieces the pupil is collecting, gradually, a library of music containing illustrations to which he can turn for examples of all kinds of form structures when he takes up the serious study of this branch of art.

The study of form is generally neglected until after the student has finished harmony and counterpoint. This was the old method, and was based upon the assumption that everyone who studied form did so with the intention of creating musical forms for himself; but this is not a sufficient reason for neglecting the comprehension of these forms at the beginning, and with such pieces as illustrate them clearly.

The form of this piece is what is called *three-part song form*. The three parts in this piece are very clearly set off to the eye. The first part consists of the first eight measures, ending with the double bar at the end of the first staff. The second part consists of the next eight measures, and the third part

consists of the final eight measures. If the student will compare the first eight measures of the Minuet with the final eight measures (not including the variation, which we shall explain presently), he will find that the first and third parts are exactly alike. This is the characteristic of three-part song form. It has three separate strains or periods of which the first and third are alike, or at least, very similar. As just stated, in this piece they are exactly alike. They may be found in some pieces to bear only a similarity, and, usually, in the higher classes of music, the third part is at least much elaborated over what the first part is. We think this is a good time to say that later compositions will show how the dimensions and relationships of these three different parts can vary, but this is a good piece from which to get an idea of the fundamental principles underlying the three-part song form. The pupil will notice that the middle part is quite different in every way from the other two parts, and occurs between them in such a way that it forms a sort of connecting idea, or rather a digression from the first idea to which it again returns.

We now take up the Variation. The word "variation" means, in music, a tune or theme repeated with changes, elaborations, embellishments, etc. This is only a very general, dictionary definition. We shall examine this subject much more carefully later. The only thing we wish to call attention to now is, that the Variation is a repetition of the Minuet, but not a literal repetition of it. It is, as our definition says, embellished, and a comparison of the Minuet with the Variation (which is also a part of the Minuet), measure for measure, will show how the variations are effected. What we are mostly interested in at present is, the form of the Variation. It is precisely the same as that of the Minuet itself, because it is an elaborate repetition of the Minuet, so that the form of the piece is complete in the first twenty-four measures and is only repeated in the second twenty-four.

POETICAL IDEA.—A minuet is a dance in 3/4 measure. The *tempo* of the minuet is moderate, much less rapid than that of the waltz, which has the same measure signature. The minuet was a popular court dance in France in the eighteenth century. The minuet has from time to time somewhat changed its form, but, in common with all other dance music, may be found to have individual treatment by different composers. The word itself is taken from the French word "menu," on account of the smallness of the steps of the dance. From the minuet, Beethoven developed the "scherzo," which must be regarded as an idealization of this dance.

HOW TO STUDY.—The pupil must take this piece up according to the following plan: Play the first right hand measure by itself, then the second right hand measure by itself, then the two measures together. Next, play the two left hand measures. Then combine the two hands, and take up the next two measures working them out for each hand alone and in combination the same way, and so on continue through the piece. While you are making this detailed study of the piece, observe most conscientiously all slurs, *staccato* marks, accents, rests, finger marks, etc. Finally, play the piece through as written, in order to get the connection between all the different parts, because you may be able to play one or two measures when they are taken out and played by themselves, and not be able to play these measures in connection with other measures.

At the beginning of each of the staves of this piece, directly after the clef signs, will be found a sharp. This indicates that every time the letter affected by this sharp is met with in the piece, it must be played sharp instead of natural. The sharp stands on the top line of the treble staff and on the fourth line of the bass staff. Consequently, the letter affected is F. This shows that the piece is written in the key of G.

MINUET

Edited and Annotated by Frederic Lillebridge.

Moderato.

Dussek.

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, key of D major. It is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 24, and the second system contains measures 25 through 48. The score includes fingerings, dynamics (mf, p, cresc., f), and articulation marks.

System 1 (Measures 1-24):

- Measures 1-8: *mf*, measures 1-8.
- Measures 9-15: *p*, measures 9-15. Measure 12 has a *cresc.* marking.
- Measures 16-24: *mf*, measures 16-24. Measure 22 has a *p* marking.

System 2 (Measures 25-48):

- Measures 25-32: *mf*, measures 25-32.
- Measures 33-39: *p*, measures 33-39. Measure 37 has a *cresc.* marking.
- Measures 40-48: *mf*, measures 40-48. Measure 45 has a *p* marking.

