Heading this collection of fifteen monophonic pieces is the designation *istanpitta,* which evidently applies to the first eight dances. The term is not repeated, but a note on fol. 58 indicates the continuation of "this *istanpita"* (the fifth dance) on fol. 60. After the eighth dance, the collection continues with seven pieces including four *saltarelli,* one *trotto,* and two entitled *Lamento di Tristano* and *La Manfredina.*[36] An interesting aspect of the collection is its similar use of titles for the eight estampies: Some appear to be names (Ghaetta, Isabella, Belicha), others are phrases such as *Chominciamento di gioia* (Beginning of joy) and *Principio di virtu* (Source of virtue). Whatever connection there may have been between these titles and the music is now unknown, but they foreshadow the fanciful titles in dance suites of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

All fifteen dances in the collection follow the structural principles of the earlier French dances in the *Chansonnier du Roy.* Each consists of a series of puncta, usually four to six, that have different opening phrases but close by repeating some or all of the first punctum, with its open and closed endings. There are significant differences, however, between the Italian istanpitte and the earlier French estampies and also between the two groups of Italian dances. Indeed, the istanpitte stand alone in having long and complex puncta. These characteristics make them seem unsuitable for dancing, and they should probably be regarded as pieces to be played for a listening audience. The other seven Italian pieces have much shorter and simpler puncta and could well have served as music for dancing. Although the trotto is the only dance of its kind, it is typical of the group as a whole in both form and style (AMM, No. 58). The dance consists of five puncta or *partes* (sing. *pars*), the last four of which provide new introductions to repeats of part or all of the *prima pars* (first part). The third part expands the introduction of the second, and both lead into the third measure of the first. Similarly, the fifth part expands the beginning of the fourth, but these two lead to repetitions of the complete first part. Each part, of course is to be played twice, with open and closed endings.[37]

One further aspect of the Italian dances should not pass unnoticed. Instead of being single pieces, the *Lamento di Tristano* and *La Manfredina* are pairs of related dances. The opening dance in each pair consists of three partes that are followed by a second set of three entitled *La Rotta* and *La Rotta della Manfredina* respectively. The meaning of the designation *rotta* is unclear, but it is certain that each one belongs with and completes the dance it follows. Thus the fourteenth century introduced the pairing of related dances that became common in the Renaissance and created a nucleus for the development of the Baroque dance suite.

36. For the *Lamento* and a saltarello, see HAM, No. 59a and b. Another saltarello is available in GMB, No. 28.

37. Wolf and, following him, Gleason (EM, p. 57) ignored the explicit indications of partes in the manuscript.

CHAPTER XV

The Ars Nova in France

Cultural historians often speak of the thirteenth century as the high point, or the classic period, of medieval life and art. They emphasize its stability, its reconciliation of divine revelation and human reason, its religion-centered unity of spirit. To these and other factors we owe magnificent achievements in architecture, literature, and music. But the classic spirit is essentially static, and the dynamic forces that reject classicism lead inevitably to new and different achievements. In the realm of music, the early fourteenth-century Frenchmen implied their scorn of the outmoded and old-fashioned music of the previous century when they called their own music an *ars nova,* a new art. The term has since come to signify, somewhat unjustifiably, the music of western Europe in the fourteenth century. Looking back over six and a half centuries, we may find this music less novel than its creators did. Yet the same spirit that produced the Ars Nova animated the Italian creators of the Nuove Musiche in the early seventeenth century and the creators of the more obviously "new music" of the twentieth century. As always, that innovative spirit opened up new horizons and gave a new direction to the art of music.

Evidence that musicians recognized the novelty of early fourteenth-century music appears around 1320 in the form of two treatises: the *Ars nove musice* (Art of New Music) by Johannes de Muris, and the *Ars nova* of Philippe de Vitry. The *Ars nove musice* is probably the older of the two, but Vitry's work gave its name to the music of the fourteenth century. This fact and our scanty knowledge about Johannes de Muris have tended to obscure his greater importance and influence as a musical theorist.[1] He apparently spent his young manhood in Paris, first as a student and then as a teacher, and it was at this time that he produced "a body of theoretical writings far more substantial and distinguished than Philippe's."[2] He does not seem to have been active as a composer of music, and later in life he devoted himself primarily to studies in mathe-

1. For information about J. de Muris, see L. Gushee, "New Sources for the Biography of Johannes de Muris," JAMS, 22 (1969), pp. 3–26.

2. Ibid., p. 3.

matics and astronomy. Nevertheless, his treatises on music formed an essential part of the university curriculum in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and even as late as 1528 at the University of Prague.[3] Philippe de Vitry, on the other hand, was celebrated in his own time as a poet and musician, "the flower and gem of singers," and "the flower of all the world of music."[4] Despite the high esteem of his contemporaries, few of his compositions have been preserved. Of fourteen motets ascribed to him by modern scholars, four can be authenticated with reasonable certainty. Various reasons account for the belief in his authorship of the other ten, but documentary proof is lacking.[5] Whether Vitry was in reality a more prolific composer we shall probably never know. Yet these few pieces, together with his epoch-making treatise, confirm the judgement of his contemporaries and justify the high position accorded to him by posterity.

THE INNOVATIONS OF PHILIPPE DE VITRY

Before turning to the music of the fourteenth century, then, we should examine what it was that the theorists regarded as new. Strangely enough, the novelty of the Ars Nova proved to be almost entirely a matter of notational principles. The motets of Pierre de la Croix, with their groups of from two to nine semibreves, had clearly shown the need for some means of organizing and distinguishing smaller note values. This Philippe de Vitry accomplished by providing rules for determining which of the semibreve shapes were truly semibreves, which were minims, and even which were semiminims. In so doing, he extended the Franconian rules that governed the relationships between longs and breves by applying them to the relationships between breves and semibreves and between semibreves and minims in triple mensurations. An even more far-reaching innovation, however, was the establishment of duple mensurations on a par with triple. Occasional examples of duple meter appear in the thirteenth century, but with the treatises of Vitry and Muris duple meters become fully acceptable. Moreover, duple and triple mensurations at different levels may now be combined to produce a variety of meters that would have been inconceivable to an ars antiqua musician brought up in the Franconian system of notating the rhythmic modes.

The effect of combining mensurations at different levels of organization is most easily understood in the terms used by fourteenth-century theorists themselves. As in the rhythmic modes of the thirteenth cen-

tury, *modus* (mood) applies to the relationship of longs and breves. The mood is perfect if the long equals three breves, imperfect if it equals two. Similarly, *tempus* (time) refers to the subdivision of the breve into semibreves and may be perfect or imperfect, depending on whether the breve equals three or two semibreves. *Prolatio* (prolation) refers to the semibreve and is the lowest level at which both triple and duple subdivisions are possible. Prolation too is perfect (or major) when the semibreve equals three minims, imperfect (or minor) when it equals two. In music with note values from the long to the minim, then, the mensuration at each level—mood, time, and prolation—could be either perfect or imperfect. Music of the thirteenth century, as we have seen, moved almost entirely in triple groups of longs and breves—in perfect mood, in other words. With the increasing use of shorter notes, the breve naturally become a longer value, and music of the fourteenth century moves primarily in breves, semibreves, and minims in one of the four possible combinations of time and prolation shown in Table 13 together with their identifying mensuration signs and modern equivalents. Many pieces restrict themselves to one of these combinations and make no use of mood, which would combine units of time and prolation into groups of two or three measures. As we shall see, however, mood and time do commonly appear in the lower parts of fourteenth-century motets, while the upper voices move in time and prolation. As an addition to this hierarchy of mensural organization, longs together with the duplex long—now called a *maxima*—could be grouped together to form a major mood (*maximodus*) that could also be either perfect or imperfect. This organization of the longest note values remained largely theoretical, although it does occur in a few motets of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth centuries.

Table 13: *The Four Combinations of Time and Prolation and Their Modern Equivalents*

3.   Nan C. Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1958), p. 317.

4.   Reese, MMA, pp. 336–37.

5.   See Schrade, PMC, 1, pp. 29–41.

From the note values given in Table 13 it is evident that the breve instead of the long has now become the unit of the musical measure. Thus the breve is no longer "short" in fact as well as name. Its value varies according to the mensuration, and it is the *minima* ($\downarrow$), the "shortest" or "least" note, that is now a constant value in all mensurations. Despite the superlative of its name, the minima too was soon subdivided into semiminims ($\eighthnote$). Even the *Ars nova* of Philippe de Vitry mentions semiminims, but this may have been a later addition to his treatise, because the note value did not come into common use until late in the fourteenth century. The minim was always considered to be duple, divisible into only two semiminims, and therefore the introduction of this smaller note did not produce another level of organization that might be either perfect or imperfect. That introduction, however, marks a further step in the already well advanced development that ultimately reversed the meaning of the word *breve*. In music of the last two or three centuries, the whole note is the equivalent of the semibreve, and the breve is now such a long note that it is almost never used. It is for this reason that modern transcriptions must reduce the values of medieval notation. To use the modern breve, semibreve, and minim ($\square, \circ, \downarrow$) in editions of fourteenth-century music would totally misrepresent the effect it had for its contemporaries. As far as we can tell, a moderate tempo for the metrical equivalents given in Table 13 most nearly reproduces that effect.

The mensuration signs created in the fourteenth century are also of considerable historical interest. They are, in fact, time signatures, one of which is still in use today. Perfect time was indicated by a circle, and perfect prolation, by a dot. Thus, it was only natural to indicate imperfect time by a half circle and imperfect prolation by the absence of a dot. The half circle we now think of as being the letter C, perhaps because of its association with what we call "common time" (4/4). We have also shifted the unit of time from the breve to the semibreve ($\circ$), but C means now—as it did in the fourteenth century—the duple division of that unit and of all smaller note values. The signature ₵ is nearly as old. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it meant that the beat fell on the breve (*alla breve*) instead of on the semibreve. Now, of course, it means that 4/4 becomes 2/2, with the beat falling on the half note (minim) instead of on the quarter. Nevertheless, we still speak of pieces with the signature ₵ as being alla breve.

After this brief look at some future developments, we may return to the fourteenth century. It should be evident that the notational system established by Philippe de Vitry did indeed constitute a new art of rhythmic organization. Other elements also contributed in some degree to the novelty of fourteenth-century music, but the real break with the music of the ars antiqua came in the field of rhythm. Never before had composers had at their disposal a notation that gave them such freedom

of rhythmic expression in a variety of different meters. Nor were they slow in exercising that freedom. In large part we may say that concern for rhythmic organization is the chief characteristic of French music in the fourteenth century. That concern manifests itself both in the development of large-scale forms based on rhythmic repetitions and in the creation of rhythmic complexities unequaled in any period of Western music before the twentieth century. Neither of these things happened all at once, of course, and we can follow their gradual evolution as we examine the music left to us by the French Ars Nova.

THE *ROMAN DE FAUVEL*

The first collection of music with pieces reflecting the innovations of the Ars Nova is known as the *Roman de Fauvel*. In reality, this is the title of a lengthy poem in two parts by Gervais de Bus, a clerk in the chancellery of the kings of France from 1313 to 1338. The poem is a characteristic medieval satire on social corruption symbolized by an ass or horse named Fauvel. As the poem explains, the name Fauvel is full of hidden meanings. Taken as a whole it indicates that Fauvel's color is a dingy reddish-yellow (*fauve*) because he is unworthy of being one of the bright colors that represent human virtues. The two syllables Fau-vel refer to his veiled falsehood, while the spelling of his name comes from the initial letters of *Flaterie, Avarice, Vilanie, Variété, Envie,* and *Lascheté*. Beginning with popes and kings, men of all classes display these common vices when they eagerly rub down and curry Fauvel. It is a measure of the poem's popularity that this activity gave rise to the parallel French and English expressions "étriller Fauvel" and "to curry favel." Only when memory of the poem had dimmed was the English expression transformed into the one we now use, "to curry favor."

Another measure of the popularity of the *Roman de Fauvel* is its preservation—in whole or in part—in no fewer than twelve manuscripts. Only one of these manuscripts, however, contains the musical interpolations that have made the *Roman de Fauvel* familiar to students of medieval music.[6] Gervais de Bus had completed the first part of his poem (1226 lines) in 1310 and the second part (2054 lines) in 1314. By 1316, one Chaillou de Pesstain had apparently completed the musical additions. Nothing is known about him, unless he is the Raoul Chaillou who was also in the service of the French court. If this is true, Chaillou and Gervais may even have collaborated on the version of the *Roman de Fauvel* that somewhat alters and expands the original poem to introduce the numerous musical items. Those items come from a variety of sources and represent an astonishing range of musical types. Thirty-four

6. Paris, Bibl. Nat., f. fr. 146. See Bibliography.

Two pages from the *Roman de Fauvel*, including the motet *Tribum—Quoniam secta—Merito*, by Philippe de Vitry (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. fr. 146).

motets account for the bulk of the collection, although monophonic songs appear in far greater numbers.[7] Despite the language of the *Roman de Fauvel,* the great majority of musical interpolations have Latin texts. Over fifty of the monophonic songs are liturgical chants that the original index identifies as Alleluias, antiphons, responses, hymns, and versets. Latin texts also occur in a group of twenty-five monophonic conducti and sequences. Complete songs with French texts include four lais, four rondeaux, and nine "ballades," two of which have the musical and poetic form of the virelai. Among shorter musical interpolations with French texts we find fifteen refrains and twelve brief quotations of sottes chansons (foolish songs). Finally, a complete duplum with French text has been extracted from a motet and broken into eleven fragments, each of which is followed by a textual interpolation.[8]

What part Chaillou de Pesstain played in choosing and adapting these musical interpolations remains unknown, but it would be a mistake to regard them as nothing more than an anthology of music popular around 1315. Their obvious purpose was to provide a running musical commentary on the *Roman de Fauvel,* and individual pieces were selected solely on the basis of their relation to the poem. Some were taken over without change. Others, even among the liturgical chants, were remodelled to fit the new situation or were extended to include specific references to Fauvel. Still others have new texts adapted to older musical sources—clausulae, motets, and the melismas of conducti. In a few pieces, finally, both words and music appear to have been newly composed.

MOTETS IN THE *ROMAN DE FAUVEL*

The motets in the *Roman de Fauvel* are characteristic of the repertory as a whole in their range of musical styles. Of the thirty-four pieces, only one is a four-voice motet; twenty-three are for three voices; and ten are for two. As in the monophonic songs, Latin texts predominate in the motets. Only four are French double motets with secular French tenors as well. Three more mix French and Latin texts in various ways.[9] In the

7. All the motets are published in Schrade, PM, 1. The complete musical contents of the *Roman de Fauvel* are listed in PMC, 1, pp. 57–101. The monophonic music is available in G. Harrison, *The Monophonic Music in the* Roman de Fauvel (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford, Univ., 1963, University Microfilms 64–1613).

8. Schrade, PMC, 1, p. 85, lists these fragments as eleven different "motets entés" (No. 57).

9. *Fauv* 15 (32) has a French triplum and Latin motetus; *Fauv* 28 (121) has Latin texts in the two upper voices with a French rondeau as a tenor; and *Fauv* 9 (12) presents a curious alternation of Latin and French phrases in both upper voices. NB: The first of the two identifying numbers are those of Schrade's edition cited in fn. 7 above. The numbers in parentheses indicate the position of the motets in the complete series of 130 pieces.

case of the motets, it would be true to say that they constitute an anthology—but one that represents all stages in the development of the form up to 1315. We find pieces from the early thirteenth century in strict modal rhythms, pieces from mid-century in the freer rhythms described by Franco of Cologne, and pieces from the end of the century in the style of Pierre de la Croix. Most important of all, however, are a few motets contemporary with the *Roman de Fauvel* itself. In these works, we can follow the early development of the Ars Nova and observe its first fruits. Some of the motets, indeed, are cited in the treatise of Philippe de Vitry and are believed to be his own compositions. It becomes doubly important, therefore, to see how these first examples of the fourteenth-century Ars Nova differ from the music of the ars antiqua.

The opening measures of *Adesto—Firmissime—Alleluya* (Example XV–1) illustrate some of the possible combinations of mensurations at different levels. Attributed to Philippe de Vitry, this motet is cited in his *Ars nova* as an example of imperfect mood and time; and we can see that both the long ($\downarrow$) and the breve ($\downarrow$) are duple in value. At higher and lower levels, however, the mensurations are perfect. Longs and maximas in the tenor combine to produce perfect maximodus, indicated in the transcription by measures in 3/2 meter. At the other end of the scale, semibreves and minims in triplet patterns ($\downarrow\!\!\downarrow$) show that the prolation is also perfect.[10]

Example XV–1: *Fauv 30 (124)—Philippe de Vitry (?)*

Come, holy Trinity—Let us keep the faith most firmly.

10. Schrade, PMC, 1, p. 95, inexplicably states that the prolation is imperfect (minor), but his transcription always subdivides the semibreve into triplets.

The musical effect of *Adesto—Firmissime–Alleluya* is much simpler than the complexity of its mensural organization would seem to suggest. We are primarily aware of the duple rhythms produced by the imperfect longs and breves, and it is this aspect of the music, of course, that makes it new. Interest in metrical organization has also led to a more regular treatment of the smaller note values. Instead of the many different subdivisions of the breve that characterize the style of Pierre de la Croix, we now find it replaced only by groups of two, three, or four notes (♩♩, ♩♪♪, ♪♪♪♪). The resulting rhythmic consistency makes a further contribution to the simplicity and attractiveness of this music.

Another *Fauvel* motet, *Garrit gallus—In nova fert* (AMM, No. 59), is attributed to Philippe de Vitry largely on the basis of his having cited it in the *Ars nova* for its use of red notes in the tenor. According to Vitry, coloration—either red or hollow notes in place of solid black—may have several different meanings. Most commonly, however, it indicates that perfect notes lose a third of their value—become imperfect, in other words—with a resulting change in mensuration. This is exactly what happens in the tenor of *Garrit gallus—In nova fert,* although the use of coloration was so new that an explanatory canon (rule) was added to indicate that the mood was perfect with black notes, imperfect with red. The already imperfect value of the breve remains unchanged by the coloration.

ISORHYTHM

Coloration in the tenor of *Garrit gallus—In nova fert* is only one aspect of the motet's modernity. Of much greater importance is the organization of the entire tenor melody in what we now call *isorhythm*. *Iso-* means "same," and the essential characteristic of isorhythmic structure is the repetition of identical rhythmic patterns called *taleae* (cuttings). As a rule, the tenor melody—now called a *color*—contains several statements of the rhythmic talea and usually is itself repeated at least once. In *Garrit gallus—In nova fert,* three statements of the talea shown in Example XV–2 complete the tenor melody, which is then repeated with its rhythmic organization unchanged. The overall organization of the tenor may therefore be indicated by the formula 2C = 6T. A further subtlety indicative of the motet's modernity is the symmetrical structure of the

Example XV–2: *The Tenor Talea of* Garrit gallus—In nova fert

[musical notation example]
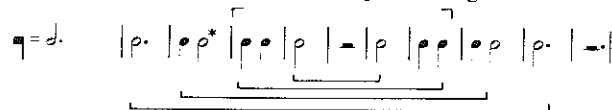
* The passage between incomplete brackets (⌐   ⌐) is in coloration.

talea itself. The two halves of the pattern are perfectly balanced around the rest in the middle of the passage in coloration, which changes the mood from perfect to imperfect. The final rest is more a separation than an integral part of the taleae and is omitted at the end of the motet.

Philippe de Vitry is often regarded as the inventor of isorhythm, but it is obvious that the principles of isorhythmic construction are not new in themselves. Taleae are no more than expanded forms of the repeated rhythmic patterns in the tenors of clausulae and thirteenth-century motets, in which repetitions of the melody were also commonplace. In a gradual process, the repeated patterns of tenors grew longer and freed themselves from the restrictions of the rhythmic modes. At the same time, tenor melodies continued to be repeated in a variety of ways, either with the same or with different rhythmic relationships. We do not ordinarily speak of isorhythm in thirteenth-century music, but it is there that we find its seeds as well as its first flowers.

Isorhythmic construction, then, was neither an invention of Philippe de Vitry nor his exclusive property in the early fourteenth century. The talea of *Garrit Gallus—In nova fert* has a more complex rhythmic structure than earlier examples or than other motets in the *Roman de Fauvel,* but some motets attributed to Vitry have simpler tenor patterns than their thirteenth-century prototypes. Moreover, Vitry's taleae closely resemble those in other *Fauvel* motets not attributed to him. For comparative purposes, four rhythmic patterns of taleae from the *Roman de Fauvel* are assembled in Example XV–3 together with the formulas that show the complete form of the tenor in each case.

Example XV–3: *Rhythms of Taleae in Four* Fauvel *Motets*

Motet	Talea	Form of tenor
Fauv 4	*[musical notation]*	2C = 10T
Fauv 9 (12)	*[musical notation]*	1C = 7T
Fauv 12 (22) (Ph. de Vitry, No. 1)	*[musical notation]* x 4 + y	3C = 9T
Fauv 16 (33)	*[musical notation]*	2C = 2(4T + y)

Composers sometimes gave variety to their isorhythmic structures by repeating the color with smaller note values in either free or strict diminution. This procedure undoubtedly stems from the older practice of repeating a plainchant tenor (color) with a different rhythmic pattern. One of the more striking examples of this practice occurs in *Ave, Virgo—Ave gloriosa Mater—Domino,* a motet that must have enjoyed great popularity in the thirteenth century.[11] The tenor is stated twice,

11. It occurs in variant forms in some nine different manuscripts, including *Ba* (No. 1), *Mo* (No. 53), and Las Huelgas (No. 101). See also Parrish, NMM, Pl. XXXII and XXXIII.

each time as a free and different variation of the original melody, the melisma of a *Benedicamus Domino* (LU, 124). It is the rhythmic contrast between the two statements that is of particular interest, however. The melody is first divided into three-note units in the common pattern of the fifth rhythmic mode (♩. ♩. ♩. ♪·). With the second variation of the melody, the rhythm shifts to a five-note pattern in the first mode (♩ ♪♩ ♪♩ ♪·). In a motet written just before the *Roman de Fauvel,* Pierre de la Croix produced a similar increase of rhythmic activity but in a different way.[12] He divided the first appearance of his color into nine statements of the same common fifth-mode pattern. For the repetition of the color, he did not change the note values but created a feeling of urgency and condensation by omitting all the rests. From practices such as these it is but a short step to free diminution in isorhythmic motets of the early fourteenth century.

One of the earliest instances of such diminution occurs in *Adesto—Fir- missime,* the fourth of Vitry's motets in the *Roman de Fauvel.* As we saw in Example XV-1, the tenor of this motet uses the pattern of the second rhythmic mode but transferred to the level of maximodus. The notes, that is, are longs and maximas instead of breves and longs. The color extends through eight statements of the five-note talea and is then repeated with the five notes reduced to even breves followed by a breve rest. As a result, the talea now occupies three instead of nine measures in 2/4 meter (Example XV-4).

Example XV-4: *The Tenor Talea of* Adesto—Firmissime

Color – 3 x $\frac{2}{4}$ ρ o |ρ o |ρ ▬ | x 8 –

is diminished to

$\frac{2}{4}$ ♪♪ |♪♪ |♪ ♪ | x 8

Another motet of Vitry, *Garison—Douce playsence—Neuma quinti toni* (Recovery [from a sickness]—Sweet pleasure—Melisma in the fifth [Lydian] mode; No. 6), illustrates the results of diminishing both perfect and imperfect longs. In the seven-note talea, each perfect long equals three measures of 9/8 meter, and each imperfect long equals two of 6/8. When the color is repeated in diminution, however, the perfect longs lose two-thirds of their value, while the imperfect longs lose only one-half of theirs. Omission of the first rest from the diminished talea further shortens its first part. In Example XV-5, double dots (:) indicate the values of measures in 9/8.

Before summarizing the various ways in which Philippe de Vitry treated isorhythm, we must digress to consider the characteristic distribution of voices in fourteenth-century motets. In the first half of the

12. HAM, No. 34.

Example XV-5: *The Isorhythmic Structure of the Tenor in* Garison—Douce playsence

Color – 3 x $\frac{9}{8}$ σ:ρ: |σ:ρ: |σ:ρ:|▬:▬:| 2 x $\frac{6}{8}$ o· |o· |o· |o· | ▬· | ▬· | x 4 –

is diminished to

$\frac{9}{8}$ ρ: |ρ: |ρ: |$\frac{6}{8}$ ρ· |ρ· |ρ· |ρ· | ▬· | ▬· | x 4

century, the majority of motets—whether isorhythmic or not—had three voices: a duplum and triplum with different texts, and a presumably instrumental tenor. When a fourth voice was added, it was no longer a quadruplum with its own text, as in the thirteenth-century motet. Instead, the added voice now has no text, lies in the same general range as the tenor, and is identified as a *contratenor.* This development reflects a growing tendency to stratify the voices at different pitch levels in contrast to the equal voice ranges often found in earlier polyphony. Thus, in the typical four-voice motet of the fourteenth century, the upper two voices move in approximately the same range a fifth or an octave above the range of the supporting tenor and contratenor. As we have already seen in three-voice motets, the upper voices are further differentiated from the lower by their mensural organization. They usually move in units of time and prolation, while the tenor, now accompanied by the contratenor, moves in units of mood and time. This stratification of the voice pairs with regard to both range and rhythmic character is one of the distinctive features of the later isorhythmic motet.

From our knowledge of previous practices in the successive composition of voices, we might expect that a four-voice motet could be reduced to three simply by omitting the contratenor. This may have been done at times, but there is evidence that the lower parts were coming to be regarded as a unit, neither member of which was complete without the other. A number of four-voice motets, including two of the three by Philippe de Vitry, are provided with an optional *solus tenor* (single tenor) to replace both the tenor and contratenor. Because these voices lie in the same range, they cross frequently; and one often complements the other by filling in its rests in the isorhythmic pattern. To function as a replacement for the tenor and contratenor when three-voice performance was desired, the solus tenor had to provide approximately the same harmonic support for the upper voices. The process of achieving this support was not invariable, but for the most part it consisted of taking the succession of lowest-sounding notes to create a new and nearly continuous tenor melody. The results of this process are noteworthy for a number of reasons. In the first place, a solus tenor cannot always maintain exact repetitions of the isorhythmic talea and color. Furthermore, because the solus tenor inevitably departs from the original tenor melody, it suggests the possibility of a supporting bass freed from the restrictions imposed by a preexistent plainchant. This dawning recogni-

tion of the importance of the bass line as a harmonic support represents one of the most significant new developments of the fourteenth century.

In most isorhythmic motets, one or both of the upper voices begin together with the first note of the tenor's talea, but four of Vitry's motets have an introduction, or *introitus,* before the isorhythmic structure commences. As a rule, the tenor does not participate in such introductions, and the upper voices enter successively, sometimes in imitation. One exception occurs in a late motet of Philippe de Vitry, *Petre Clemens—Lugentium* (No. 12), which honors Pope Clement VI (1342–52). Here, the tenor provides a rhythmically free accompaniment for the upper voices throughout the fourteen-measure introduction. It then leads without a break into the beginning of the isorhythmic talea in measure 15.

Because Vitry's isorhythmic motets foreshadow almost all future developments of the form, it is important that his procedures be summarized here. Throughout the history of isorhythm, we find three different ways of organizing the tenor taleae and colores. The least common procedure divides a long melody with no repeats into several taleae. Only one motet ascribed to Vitry is in this form, the above-mentioned *Petre Clemens—Lugentium,* in which the tenor melody extends over the introitus and seven taleae with no repetition of a color.[13] Tenors of this type occur more frequently in later motet collections, and many appear to be newly composed rather than taken from plainchant melismas. In the second way of organizing isorhythmic tenors, the talea is also repeated unchanged throughout the motet but with one or more repetitions of the melody. This color often equals a round number of taleae, so that the total structure of a tenor may be indicated by such formulas as $2C = 8T$ or $3C = 9T$. In some cases, however, the end of the color does not coincide with the end of a talea, and we find tenors in which $2C = 3T$ or $3C = 4T$. This practice, common in the works of Machaut and later composers, occurs only once in somewhat irregular fashion in the motets of Philippe de Vitry. In *Colla jugo—Bona condit* (No. 9), the color begins to repeat with the second note in the fourth of seven taleae. At the end of the first section of the motet, three added notes complete the melody, and a rhythmic extension follows the seventh talea before the whole is repeated in diminution. Such diminutions, found in six of Vitry's motets, constitute the third way of organizing isorhythmic tenors. As we have seen, Vitry sometimes used free diminution that altered the relative values of notes in the talea, but he also wrote motets in which the color and talea are repeated with all note values exactly halved.[14] This latter procedure is by far the more common in motets that introduce diminution in the tenor and contratenor parts, but later composers often added the subtlety of successive repetitions in different combinations of mood and time or of time and prolation. Thus, for example, the notes long–breve–breve–long would have the values of ♩. and ♩, when read successively in perfect and imperfect mood, perfect and imperfect time. The result appears to be a combination of the strict and free types of diminution used by Philippe de Vitry. Repetition with the change from perfect to imperfect mood reduces the total length by one third, but it also changes some of the relative note values within the pattern. The last two statements in perfect and imperfect time then diminish the first two exactly by half. Exact diminutions were sometimes written out in smaller note values. More often, the melody was written only once, with a canon (rule) prescribing the different mensurations or degrees of diminution to be used in successive statements of the original color and taleae.

In addition to establishing the normal methods of isorhythmic organization in the tenor and contratenor parts, Philippe de Vitry began applying isorhythm to the upper voices and using hocket both for structural clarity and climactic effect. Later composers expanded and refined the application of these procedures without changing any of the fundamental principles. Four-part writing became more and more common, and all voices were often strictly isorhythmic throughout an entire motet. At the same time, the taleae tended to become longer and consequently fewer in number. Isorhythmic upper voices normally followed the structure of the tenor and contratenor, except when these lower voices were repeated with changes of mensuration or in exact diminution. With rare exceptions, the duplum and triplum in such cases repeated nothing but introduced new melodic progressions in new taleae that matched the reduced length of the taleae in the lower parts. Reflecting the growing interest in rhythmic complexity, hocket continued to be used, but in conjunction with more sophisticated devices such as syncopation, rhythmic sequence, imitation, and canon. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, isorhythm occasionally appeared in forms other than the motet, such as Mass movements and secular songs. It was the isorhythmic motet, however, that became the most intricate and most highly organized musical form ever created by medieval composers.

## THE SONGS OF JEHAN DE LESCUREL

The manuscript that preserves the *Roman de Fauvel* with musical interpolations also contains a small group of pieces identified as "ballades, rondeaux, and poems grafted onto rondeau refrains, which Jehannot de

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13. For a similar subdivision of a single color into seven taleae, see the *Fauvel* motet in HAM, No. 43.

14. E.g., in PM, 1, Nos. 9, 10, and 14.

Lescurel made" (*balades, rondeaux et diz entez sus refrois de rondeaux, les quiex fist Jehannot de Lescurel*). The author of these songs is believed to be the same Jehan de Lescurel who was hanged on May 23, 1304, together with three other "children" of wealthy Parisian families. Convicted of debauchery and crimes against women, the four delinquents were tonsured clerks apparently connected with Notre Dame cathedral, where we may assume that Jehan received his musical training. His songs, however, are neither religious nor debauched. On the whole, they are inoffensive poems in the tradition of courtly love, although a few texts do name specific ladies.[15]

The collected works of Jehan de Lescurel comprise thirty-four pieces, of which the last two are "diz entez," lengthy poems of twenty-four and twenty-eight stanzas respectively, with a different refrain at the end of each stanza. The manuscript provides melodies for all of the refrains, but the poems themselves remain without music. They are therefore of limited interest except as they augment the repertory of quoted refrains.

Lescurel's settings of thirty-one lyric poems possess much greater musical and historical interest. Although the index of the manuscript mentions only ballades and rondeaux, the collection includes five virelais, fifteen ballades, and eleven rondeaux, of which one appears in both polyphonic and monophonic versions. These texts display considerable variety in the details of their internal structure, but they clearly establish the large structural patterns that differentiate the three poetic types and determine their characteristic musical forms. One of these forms had yet to receive its distinguishing name, but Lescurel's songs confirm the existence of all three at the beginning of the fourteenth century. By adopting only these forms, Lescurel departed from the more traditional types of trouvère chansons. On the other hand, he continued one tradition in his preference for monophonic song. Only the first piece in the collection, a rondeau refrain, is set in three-part polyphony. It is somewhat more melismatic than the conductus-like pieces by Adam de la Hale but is written in the same neume-against-neume style. Moreover, the middle voice again proves to be the basic melody of the setting. It reappears alone with the complete rondeau text as the third piece in the collection. Like the two versions of this rondeau, the monophonic songs in general tend to be more highly ornamented and to have more and longer melismas than the trouvère chansons of the later thirteenth century. Lescurel's works also differ from older chansons in being written in mensural notation. Unfortunately, that notation represents a transitional stage between the innovations of Pierre de la Croix and the fully developed system of the Ars Nova. It therefore leaves in doubt the correct interpretation of semibreves in groups of two to four, or occasionally five notes. As a result, various modern transcriptions differ considerably in

15.   For a modern edition with a facsimile of the manuscript, see N. Wilkins, *The Works of Jehan de Lescurel*.
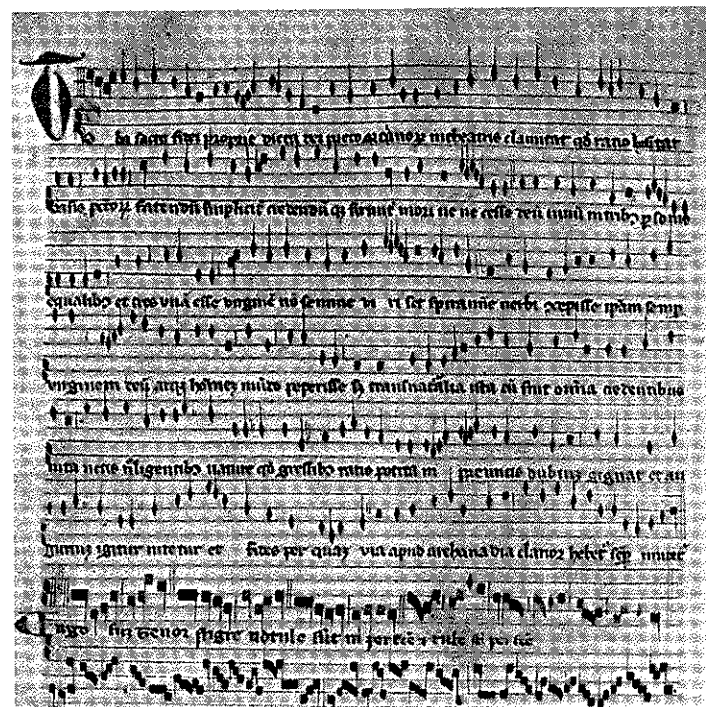
Triplum and Tenor of a motet by Philippe de Vitry from the Ivrea Codex: *Tuba sacrae fidei—In arboris—Virgo sum* (Biblioteca Capitolae, Ivrea).

their rhythmic details.[16] Nevertheless, the distinctive character of Lescurel's melodic and rhythmic style remains clear enough. It would seem that the fixed forms became the predominant types of French secular song only when they had lost or were in the process of losing their original connection with the dance. By their melodic elaboration, the songs of Jehan de Lescurel show that the process was well under way even before the advent of fourteenth-century secular polyphony. It remained for Guillaume de Machaut to devise an appropriate style that would transform the ballade, rondeau, and virelai into accompanied art songs far removed from their humble origins.

THE IVREA CODEX

After the *Roman de Fauvel* the next important source of fourteenth-century polyphony is a manuscript now in the Chapter Library at Ivrea, a small city near Turin in northwestern Italy. The Ivrea Codex (*Iv*) apparently originated around 1360 in the musical environment of the papal court at Avignon, and its contents form a representative anthology of music composed during the first half of the fourteenth century. As might be expected, nearly half of the more than eighty pieces are double

16.   In addition to the publication of N. Wilkins, the songs of Lescurel are available in Gennrich, RVB, 1, pp. 307–72. See also, RVB, 2, pp. 246–54.

motets, most of them isorhythmic. There are twenty-one motets with Latin texts, fourteen with French, and two with one Latin and one French text. It is more surprising to find that the next largest group of pieces consists of twenty-five settings of texts from the Ordinary of the Mass (see Chapter XVI). French secular songs are relatively few in number—six rondeaux, five virelais, and four canons or chaces. The manuscript does not identify any composers of this music, but it proves to be the primary source for the later motets attributed to Philippe de Vitry.[17] It also contains three motets and one rondeau by Machaut. Three-part writing prevails in the great majority of these pieces, and individual differences largely result from the degree to which isorhythm is present in the upper voices. Machaut's more complex application of isorhythmic procedures and his contributions to the development of polyphonic ballades, rondeaux, and virelais will be considered in Chapter XVII, devoted to his complete works. The one type of secular song in *Iv* that demands discussion here is the chace.

THE CHACE

Earlier discussions of polyphonic techniques in organum, the conductus, and even the motet, have cited instances of canonic writing and have noted its close relationship to the technique of voice exchange. Apart from *Sumer is icumen in,* however, canons as complete compositions do not appear before the four chaces in the Ivrea Codex. One of these pieces is called a *chace* in the instructions that indicate the manner of its performance, and the name was probably intended as a description of the way one voice chases another in a musical canon. Slightly later terminology shifted the emphasis from the pursuer to the pursued and gave it the name *fuga* (flight). The double meaning of the word *chace*—a simple pursuit, or a hunt—undoubtedly suggested the use of canonic technique to depict hunting scenes, and one of the Ivrea pieces does depict such a scene. The other three treat different subjects and offer the first but not the only evidence that it was the technique and not the musical description of a hunt that gave the chace its name.

The French chaces were first thought to be for two voices only, and some were published and performed in this way, even after it was discovered that they are three-part canons at the unison.[18] The origin of this sort of canon remains open to question, but it may well have devel-

oped from a popular or folk practice of singing rounds rather than from sporadic appearances of canonic writing in learned polyphony. The simplest and perhaps the oldest of the Ivrea chaces seems to bear out this supposition. *Talent m'est pris* is a short melody of twenty-one measures that is to be sung as a circular canon or round in which the voices enter at seven-measure intervals (Example XV–6). The text confesses a desire to sing like the cuckoo, presumably resulting from the return of "pretty weather." Cuckoo calls in hocket passages promptly appear, with a punning insinuation (cuckoo—cuckold) that betrays an age-old French preoccupation with the bird's domestic habits. *Talent m'est pris* possesses further interest because it exists in several variant forms.[19] Even in the Ivrea Codex it appears twice in slightly different versions, and copies in manuscripts of Germanic origin are even more divergent. One version is entirely in duple meter—2/4 instead of 6/8—and two have different German texts, one of which begins *Der Summer kummt* (Summer is coming). Together with its intrinsic qualities, these several versions of *Talent m'est pris* suggest that it was indeed a widely known "popular" song that learned musicians adapted and revised for their collections of "classical" polyphony. The many similarities between this round and the *Sumer* canon are obvious, but they do not justify any assumption of a direct relationship between the two pieces. Probably they both stem from medieval equivalents of *Frère Jacques* and *Three Blind Mice.*

Example XV–6: *Chace,* Talent m'est pris

Ta - nus.   Ta -   lent m'est pris   de chan - ter   cu-me le co-

qu,   cu-cu,   cu-cu,   quo-co-cu,   cha-le   quo - cu,

cu-cu, quo-cu,   cu-cu,   cu-cu,   quo-quo-cu,   li jo-li tans est   ve -

★ Voices enter at seven-measure intervals and eventually stop (with a typical three-voice cadence) on the notes with fermatas.

I am seized by a desire to sing like the cuckoo. Pretty weather has come.

The other three canons in the Ivrea Codex are longer and more complex pieces that illustrate the features generally regarded as characteristic of the chace. Their texts depict lively scenes of various kinds and often use nonsense syllables to imitate natural sounds, but only *Se je*

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17. As the motets of Vitry have already illustrated the various methods of isorhythmic construction, the other motets in *Iv* need not be discussed in detail. They are published, together with other motets from the middle and later fourteenth century in Harrison, PM, 5.

18. Credit for the discovery goes to N. Pirrotta, who announced it in "Per l'origine e la storia della 'caccia' . . . ," *Rivista musicale italiana,* 48 (1946), p. 317 ff.

19. See J. Handschin, "The Summer Canon and its Background," MD, 3 (1949), p. 80 f. Apel, FSC, 3, No. 291, gives three different versions.

chant mains que ne suel (If I sing less than usual) describes a hunt (AMM. No. 60). For these long and partly narrative texts, circular canons were no longer appropriate, and the three voices continue their chase until they are stopped by a strong final cadence that cuts off the second and third voices before they have sung the complete melody. However, the canons follow the example of *Talent m'est pris* in their use of hocket and lively rhythmic figures for descriptive purposes. Passages that introduce these devices become much more extended and complex, and it is evident that poetic and musical description was now of primary importance.

The emphasis that writers have placed on *Se je chant* must be held partly responsible for the common notion that a chace normally describes a hunt. If it is kept in mind that the notion holds true for only one of the French chaces, that one may still serve to illustrate the general characteristics of the type. More than the other chaces, *Se je chant* clearly and successfully contrasts quiet and slow-moving sections at the beginning and end with the lively descriptive scene that forms the central portion of the piece. The sectional divisions are clearly defined in the melody, but they naturally overlap in canonic performance. Thus a gradual involvement of all voices in the hunt creates a mounting excitement, which then subsides as one by one the voices return to calm. The realism of the hunting cries is obvious and rather naïve, but the broader treatment of rhythm in the hunt achieves a more sophisticated level of musical description. The piece as a whole is written in perfect mood with imperfect time and major prolation. This has been transcribed (AMM, No. 60) as 3/2 with triplet subdivisions of the quarter note (♩♪ and ♪♪). Near the climax of the hunt, however, the meter loses its stability when units equal to two or three breves appear in irregular alternation. In such a situation, the barring of a modern transcription might be done in several ways, all of which would be somewhat arbitrary. Nevertheless, some measures of 2/2 must be introduced to accommodate the irregular placement of the mensural units. Whatever barring is chosen for the individual voices, their combination produces a rich counterpoint of rhythms that subtly suggests the confusion of a hunt, a confusion that gradually diminishes as each voice resumes a straightforward triple meter. By this skillful exploitation of canonic technique for pictorial effect, the unknown composer of *Se je chant* turned what might have been an intellectual exercise into a masterpiece of descriptive music.

Although the canonic technique of the chaces sets them apart from other polyphonic forms, their texts show that they do not stand entirely outside the traditions of French secular poetry. The duplum of a motet in the Bamberg Codex (No. 92) begins "Talent m'est pris de chanter," but in this case the poet wants to sing of a much beloved lady rather than like a cuckoo. Similarly, the duplum of Motet 277 in the Montpellier

Codex begins with the line "Se je chante mains que ne sueil," but again the continuation is different. Here, it is not the love of falcons and hunting but unrequited love for a lady that has caused the singing to lapse. In neither of these two instances do the identical lines of text have the same melody, and there is no reason to assume a direct connection between the chaces and the presumably older motets. More probably they were both following the usual practice of quoting familiar lines and refrains. This supposition seems to be borne out by the fact that the first line of *Se je chant* appears in two other songs. Once it is the first line of a ballade, unfortunately without music, in the Oxford collection of song texts (Douce 308).[20] Even more interesting and thought-provoking is Guillaume de Machaut's use of the line as the refrain of his ballade No. 12. Moreover, the cantus of the ballade's refrain is melodically identical with the opening phrase of the chace except in the fourth measure, which Machaut presented in its unadorned and perhaps original form (Example XV–7). It seems improbable that the two pieces can have originated as independent quotations of a well-known refrain. Yet if they are directly connected we cannot tell whether Machaut quoted the beginning of the chace or its composer took Machaut's refrain as his starting point. In addition, the text of *Se je chant* perfectly expresses the love of falcons and of hunting that Machaut revealed in some of his longer poems. These connections and coincidences would normally be more than enough to attribute an anonymous work to a specific medieval composer. In this case, however, such an attribution is precluded by the absence of *Se je chant* from the manuscript collections of Machaut's works that were prepared under his supervision (see pages 399–401). If we must therefore assume an unknown composer for the chace, we may at least conjecture that he and Machaut were comrades in the cultivation of both music and the chase.

Example XV–7: *First Phrase of Chace and Refrain of Machaut's Ballade No. 12*

The four examples in the Ivrea Codex comprise the entire repertory of complete and independent chaces that have been preserved. However, the form was more popular and important than these few pieces would

20. Gennrich, RVB, 1, No. 171, and 2, p. 113.

seem to imply. The several versions of *Talent m'est pris* indicate that it was widely known, and a second copy of *Se je chant* is preserved in a manuscript fragment of northern French origin.[21] The same fragment contains the close of a fifth chace that is also found without its beginning in still another remnant of a larger manuscript. How many other examples have been lost we cannot know, but the evidence suggests that chaces were not uncommon in the early part of the fourteenth century. Subsequently, the chace retained its canonic technique but lost its descriptive function. In Machaut's Lai 11, the even-numbered stanzas are three-voice canons identified as chaces. The stanzas of the following lai (No. 12) lack the identifying label, but all twelve are set as three-voice canons. A similar canon occurs in Machaut's Ballade 17, with a different text for each voice. Although hocket passages appear in some of these nineteen canons, they have no programmatic relationship with the texts, which are normal examples of their poetic types (see pages 407–09). Toward the end of the fourteenth century the descriptive and programmatic aspects of the chace reappear in a number of French virelais.[22] One of these pieces, *Or sus vous dormez trop* (Get up, you sleep too much), is included in the Ivrea Codex, but probably as a later addition to the original contents. For the most part these virelais deal with pastoral themes and confine their descriptive effects to imitations of the songs of birds— the lark, the nightingale, and the inevitable cuckoo. The transfer of programmatic music from the chace to a form that was free of the restrictions imposed by canonic writing seems sensible enough, but it had to wait on Machaut's development of an appropriate style and distribution of voices for the polyphonic secular song.

The French chace was not without its counterparts in other countries during the fourteenth century. Its relationship with the Italian caccia is somewhat problematical and will be considered in connection with the emergence of Italian secular polyphony (Chapter XVIII). A more direct connection seems to exist between the chace and three pieces labelled *caça* in a Catalonian manuscript known as the *Llibre Vermell* (Red Book) from its red-velvet nineteenth-century binding. These pieces have Latin texts in praise of the Virgin, and rubrics indicate that they may be performed as either two- or three-part canons. Two are short rounds that involve little more than voice exchange. The other is a longer, noncircular canon with a chantlike melody in unmeasured notation.[23] All three serve as a final reminder that musical description was only a secondary and nonessential characteristic of the chace.

21. Paris, Bibl. Nat., Coll. de Picardie 67, fol. 67 (*Pic*). Facsimile in MGG, 1, cols. 715–16.

22. They are all available in W. Apel's publications of fourteenth-century French secular pieces (see Bibliography). *Or sus* is No. 70 in FSM and No. 212 in FSC, 3.

23. See O. Ursprung, "Spanisch-katalanische Liedkunst des 14. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, 4 (1921–22), pp. 153–55.

CHAPTER XVI

Liturgical Polyphony in the Fourteenth Century

The appearance of polyphonic Mass movements in the fourteenth century obliges us to consider the contemporary state of liturgical music. Historians in general tend to regard the period as one of increasing secularization in all the arts, and they account for this situation on both religious and economic grounds. With the "Babylonian captivity" of the popes in Avignon (1305–78) and with two and finally three rivals contending for the papal throne during the Great Schism (1378–1417), the power and prestige of the Church sank to a new low. On the other hand, the increasing wealth of the cities and their inhabitants created a vast new market for secular architecture, painting, and sculpture as well as music. Certainly these factors were in part responsible for the advance of secular culture, but even at its lowest ebb the Church—or individual churches and churchmen—did not entirely cease to patronize the arts. More than most, perhaps, historians of music had some excuse for overemphasizing secular composition. The accidents of history decided which of the fragile monuments of music should survive and which should first become known in modern times. Thus it was that the overwhelming preponderance of secular polyphony in the works of Machaut and of Italian composers came to be regarded as typical of the entire fourteenth century. By an unlucky chance, a famous decree of Pope John XXII (1316–34) provided a too-convenient explanation of this phenomenon. Issued in 1324 at Avignon, the decree used strong language to condemn composers who overloaded their music with a multitude of small notes—semibreves and minims—and who distorted the melodies of the Church with hocket and elaborate polyphony. Singers too were censured for their vocal display and for using gestures to express the sentiment of the music. The decree forbade all of these practices and prescribed penalties for failure to observe the prohibition. Only on solemn occasions might plainchant be enriched by a few concords—octaves, fifths, and fourths—as long as the established melodies remained unchanged and undisturbed.[1]

As a contemporary record of reactionary opposition to the innova-

1. For the text in both Latin and English, see *The Oxford History of Music*, 1, 2nd ed. (London, 1929), p. 294 ff.