

A Critical Study and Translation of
Bénigne de Bacilly's
Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter (1668)

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ABSTRACT

My aim is to provide a critical study and new translation with musical examples of Bénigne de Bacilly's *Remarques curieuses* (1668). This is the most comprehensive treatise on French seventeenth-century vocal performance practice. It is a unique guide to pronunciation and quantity in French declamation, which formed the basis of Bacilly's singing technique, practised by the leading contemporary singers in Paris. Bacilly also provided the most detailed descriptions for this period of vocal ornaments and embellishments.

Although the only English translation (1968) provided many of the musical examples to which Bacilly referred the reader, it was inaccurate in many areas and failed to address textual ambiguities. Bacilly's descriptions of ornaments in particular have caused disagreement among modern scholars. This new translation therefore includes a text-specific critical analysis in the form of footnote annotations and editorial examples to address obscurities at precise points in the text. A glossary listing French terms, which include Bacilly's technical terms, is provided at the end of the translation and Bacilly's revealing and previously un-translated 1679 'Discours qui sert de réponse à la critique de l'art de chanter' is presented in English as an appendix.

There is no comprehensive study of the text and context of the *Remarques*. An extensive contextual essay therefore introduces the present translation. Firstly, this provides a biography of Bacilly and a study of his patrons and milieu. It goes on to examine the type and structure of the poetry discussed in Part 1 of the *Remarques*, then the repertoire to which the treatise is relevant, mostly through Bacilly's own published works. It also assesses Bacilly's treatment of singing as a branch of rhetoric, with an analysis of the role of pronunciation and quantity as well as that of ornamentation as a rhetorical device, and finally considers the contemporary and modern reception of the treatise. In addition to musical sources and treatises, this edition uses seventeenth-century literary sources and a wide range of secondary sources to provide the broader contextual approach that Bacilly's treatise has so far lacked.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AJFS</i>	<i>Australian Journal of French Studies</i>
<i>AM</i>	<i>Acta Musicologica</i>
<i>BNF</i>	Bibliothèque nationale de France
<i>XVII^e siècle</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société d'étude du XVII^e siècle</i>
<i>BSLM</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société liegeoise de Musicologie</i>
<i>CMBV</i>	Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles
<i>CNRS</i>	Centre National de Recherches Scientifiques
<i>CUP</i>	Cambridge University Press
<i>EM</i>	<i>Early Music</i>
<i>IM</i>	<i>Imago musicae</i>
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
<i>JMT</i>	<i>Journal of Music Theory</i>
<i>JPP</i>	<i>Journal of Performance Practice</i>
<i>JRMA</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Musical Association</i>
<i>L'Em</i>	<i>L'Éducation musicale</i>
<i>MD</i>	<i>Musica Disciplina</i>
<i>MF</i>	<i>Music Forum</i>
<i>M&L</i>	<i>Music and Letters</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>MR</i>	<i>Music Review</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>Musical Times</i>
<i>Mu</i>	<i>Musurgia</i>
<i>NOHM</i>	<i>New Oxford History of Music</i>
<i>NRMI</i>	<i>Nuova rivista musicale italiana</i>
<i>OUP</i>	Oxford University Press
<i>PPR</i>	<i>Performance Practice Review</i>
<i>PUF</i>	Presses universitaires de France
<i>RbdeM</i>	<i>Revue belge de musicologie</i>
<i>RdeM</i>	<i>Revue de musicologie</i>
<i>RdeMa</i>	<i>Revista de musicologia</i>
<i>Recherches</i>	<i>Recherches sur la musique française classique</i>
<i>RM</i>	<i>Revue musicale</i>
<i>RMI</i>	<i>Rivista musicale italiana</i>
<i>RMSR</i>	<i>Revue musicale de la Suisse Romande</i>
<i>RdeMUC</i>	<i>Revue de musique des universités canadiennes</i>
<i>17th-CFS</i>	<i>Seventeenth-Century French Studies</i>
<i>Smi</i>	<i>Studi musicali</i>
<i>SM</i>	<i>Studies in Music</i>
<i>SMZ</i>	<i>Schweizerische Musikzeitung</i>

‘/R’ in the bibliography indicates a facsimile reprint.

SYSTEMS OF REFERENCE

An author/date system, followed by the page number, has been used for bibliographical references throughout the contextual essay and in the footnote annotations of the translation. Although this indicates the date of the edition used, facsimile reprints are the exception, for which the date of the original publication rather than that of the facsimile edition has been given, as the chronology of publications can

be relevant to explanations in the annotations. The author/date abbreviation is listed in brackets in the left-hand margin in the bibliography where the full reference is provided.

All but one of the references to Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle* are from the second volume of the 1965 facsimile edition. They show the treatise referred to within the second volume ('1' represents the first treatise in that volume, 'Traitez de la voix et des chants'; '2' represents the second, 'Traitez des consonances'), followed by the number of the book within the treatise and the page number. The only exception is a quotation from the third volume, Book Four, 'Traitez des instruments à cordes', on page 329 of the present study, which is indicated.

Wherever a page reference for Bacilly's *Remarques* is given in the annotations, this refers to the original pagination in the treatise (which is preserved within the present translation). When followed by an oblique stroke and a number in italics, the latter refers to the page number of the translation presented here.

PREFACE

Although Bénigne de Bacilly's *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter* (1668) was edited and translated in 1968 and has been the subject of some articles, neither a full-length comprehensive study nor a detailed commentary exists. Austin Caswell's 1968 English translation of Bacilly's treatise entitled *A Commentary on the Art of Proper Singing* has been of some importance to modern scholarship, being used as a frequent reference work in studies of performance practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Caswell was the first to provide in the text of his translation many of the musical examples to which Bacilly refers the reader. These musical examples were originally published separately from the *Remarques* and were not included in the treatise.

However, Caswell's translation is deficient in some important areas, as well as in many minor ones: Bacilly's text was mistranslated, misinterpreted or in some instances truncated. For example, Bacilly describes certain airs as 'de la basse cour'.¹ Caswell translated this as 'airs with a running bass',² adding a footnote to suggest 'basso seguente?' as a tentative alternative translation, followed by 'of inferior quality?' In the seventeenth century, the 'basse-cour' was the back courtyard as opposed to the 'cour d'honneur', or front courtyard, and is used by Bacilly to mean run-of-the-mill airs. Caswell's first two translations are quite misleading, as Bacilly had no such technical terms in mind. This example is not of primary importance within the context of the *Remarques*, but inaccuracies of translation equally affect the more significant areas of discussion in the treatise, with some unhappy results.³ Caswell's style of omitting or adding text in an effort to clarify Bacilly's long sentences can result in greater confusion. Caswell occasionally failed to include some of Bacilly's musical examples found in Bacilly's own volumes,⁴ supplied the wrong one,⁵ and is inconsistent in

¹ Bacilly (1668), p.86/ 210.

² Bacilly (1968), p.39.

³ For example, in Part 2, Bacilly (1668), p.252, wrote that '[...] c'estoit vouloir, comme on dit, "blanchir un More" que de pretendre luy faire connoistre sa faute, qu'il s'oitint opiniastrement jusques au bout.' This translates as 'trying to make [a teacher] see his error, which he stubbornly defended to the end, was like talking to a brick wall', while Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.131 understood it to mean that a singer needs to sustain all syllables obstinately till the end. On p.148, Caswell wrote that singers should avoid the rhyme scheme and follow written pronunciation while Bacilly (p.286) wrote that 'when the rhyme scheme allows it, words must be pronounced as written'. Caswell (p.23) also misunderstood Bacilly's opinion of the castrato voice (see p.188 and fn.59 of the present translation).

⁴ E.g. Bacilly's examples (1668), pp.185 and 230 are omitted by Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), pp.94 and 117. They are supplied as Exx. 65 and 88 in the present translation.

⁵ E.g. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.92 (3rd example); the correct extract is supplied as Ex. 64.

supplying a continuo part when printed in the source.⁶ His editorial method is unclear so that where he has added slurs in his ‘printed’ versions, their editorial nature is not made obvious to the reader.⁷ There are also minor inconsistencies of alignment and underlay.⁸

In 1998 I submitted a thirty thousand-word thesis in partial fulfilment of a Master of Philosophy degree at the University of Oxford entitled ‘A critical edition and translation of the first part of Bénigne de Bacilly’s *Remarques curieuses sur l’art de bien chanter*’. This word-limit requirement, consisting of fifteen thousand words of translated text and fifteen thousand words of introduction and footnote annotations, led me to concentrate on the first part only of Bacilly’s treatise. I chose to translate a number of chapters (Chapter VII, the first half of Chapter XI, articles 2 and 4 of Chapter XII and article 3 of Chapter XIII), while the remainder of Part One was presented in summary form. Since that time, the previously translated chapters (including the footnote annotations and the thirty-seven musical examples) have been revised fully and the translation of the entire treatise, together with a total of two hundred musical examples and over forty editorial examples, completed.

The present work explores the *Remarques* in greater detail and incorporates a wider discussion of the issues surrounding the treatise using a broader range of literary as well as musical sources. It has drawn on manuscript and printed musical sources at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and on the ‘Philidor’ database of the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, as well as the views of experts in their field such as William Christie, whose performances of the French seventeenth-century repertoire are largely based on Bacilly’s rules in the *Remarques*. It also includes as an appendix a translation of Bacilly’s ‘Discours qui sert de réponse à la critique de l’art de chanter’, published with the 1679 edition of Bacilly’s treatise and not previously translated. It is a response to the criticism which the treatise encountered and importantly reveals how Bacilly’s ideas on pronunciation and quantity developed in the light of this criticism.

The aim of this thesis is to provide a new, accurate and comprehensive account of the text. This is done in several ways, for the process of translation alone, which in this work seeks to respect as much as possible Bacilly’s text, is insufficient to an understanding of the treatise. Although translation calls for textual interpretation and

⁶ E.g. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.94 (1st and 3rd examples), supplied as Exx. 66 and 68.

⁷ E.g. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.122 (2nd example); supplied as Ex. 98.

⁸ E.g. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), pp.88 (2nd example) and 122 (2nd example); supplied as Exx. 58 and 98.

essential language skills in understanding the style and vocabulary of seventeenth-century French, the text may in some cases remain obscure. Particularly problematic is the interpretation of certain more technical points discussed in the treatise, as even the musical examples to which Bacilly refers his reader can often only provide inconclusive evidence.

The present study and translation with musical examples therefore aims to supply not only a clear presentation of Bacilly's text,⁹ but also a constructive way of approaching it: its indispensable critical apparatus lies in the text-specific footnote material provided for each area which requires clarification, something which Caswell failed to provide in his own translation.

The contextual essay, which forms an essential part of the present thesis, discusses the issues which arise in the treatise and which need clarification and critical evaluation for a full appreciation of the text. In addition to providing biographical information on Bacilly, it explores the significance of the cultural milieu surrounding Bacilly's activities and its influence on the genre and style of Bacilly's musical output, on which the treatise is based. It further explores Bacilly's understanding of the relationship between music and text both in composition and performance, the reasons for Bacilly's codification of rules for pronunciation and quantity, the logic behind his formulation of rules for ornamentation and embellishment and the evidence of contemporary and modern writers as to the value of Bacilly's work.

Developments in scholarship since Caswell's 1968 translation have put us in a better position to understand the text and context of the *Remarques*. For example, in 1968 Albert Cohen published an article on Jean Millet, a figure previously forgotten by modern scholars, just after Caswell's translation went to press and edited Millet's *La belle methode* (1666).¹⁰ It is important to compare Bacilly's text to this and a wide range of other primary sources, both in vocal and instrumental practice. Considerable contributions have also been made in the field of ornamentation practice, in studies of the repertoire and in considerations of vocal technique. Frederick Neumann's thorough survey of ornamentation in the Baroque era (first published in 1978) is central, as are works such as Catherine Massip's book on the music of Michel Lambert (1999) and a number of articles published in *Early Music* and *Performance Practice Review* on voice-types and vibrato during this period.

⁹ The editorial notes detail the procedure followed.

¹⁰ See Cohen (1968) and Millet (1666).

Elizabeth Gordon-Seifert's 1994 thesis (University of Michigan) explored the use of rhetorical devices in the airs of Bacilly and Michel Lambert for evidence of the existence of a vocabulary through which the passions employed in rhetoric could be represented musically. Whereas Gordon-Seifert concentrated in detail on the airs themselves, Chapters 4 and 5 of the contextual essay in this thesis seek in part to answer a similar question using evidence in the *Remarques* as a guide.

The 1996-8 Fuzeau four-volume facsimile reprints of Bacilly's two books of airs (1668) and the 1661 *Nouveau Livre d'airs*,¹¹ with commentary by Jean Saint-Arroman, illustrates the continuing interest in the repertoire among students and researchers of the period. Accompanying the music is a catalogue by Lescat (vol.3) of Bacilly's theoretical and musical works as well as a preface (vol.1) and commentary (vols.1 and 3) by Saint-Arroman. In the *Remarques*, Bacilly referred to specific airs in the two 1668 volumes to illustrate certain points under discussion. In his commentary, Saint-Arroman extracted those comments relevant to certain airs from the *Remarques*. Although the aim is to provide information for a performing edition, the results of selecting fragments of texts relevant to those airs only is distortional and restrictive, as Bacilly illustrates many other points of all aspects of performance by referring to airs by Lambert and other composers which are therefore not noted in Saint-Arroman's commentary. The other problem is that Saint-Arroman illustrates certain ornaments such as Bacilly's *port de voix* without giving Bacilly's own verbal descriptions of them or any other evidence on which his interpretation is based, resulting in at least two examples which, when compared to the text of the *Remarques*, are open to question.¹²

Olivier Bettens is the most recent scholar to turn his attention to Bacilly in his on-line publication *Chantez-vous français? Remarques curieuses sur le français Chanté* [...] (work in progress). Bettens uses Bacilly's rules for pronunciation and quantity for defining pronunciation in the performance of seventeenth-century French vocal music in general.

All of the above works reflect the number of ways in which the treatise can be of interest to scholars and performers. However, none of these has been devoted entirely to Bacilly and every aspect of his treatise. This edition seeks to address this lack of a wide-

¹¹ The contents of the *Nouveau livre d'airs* were included in the 1668 volumes. See Editorial notes for details.

¹² These are given on pp.16 and 19 of the commentary in Vol. I (Bacilly-Saint-Arroman [1996]) accompanying the *Nouveau Livre D'Airs*; Saint-Arroman's illustrations are discussed in the footnote annotations accompanying the present translation, such as in Part I, Ch.XII, art.1 in this instance.

ranging study by considering all of the available evidence and incorporating and updating previous scholarly work; only by considering the *Remarques* in context (historical and literary as well as musical) can the full value of the treatise be revealed. This edition, which also aims to address some of the issues with which a modern performer is faced when approaching the repertoire of French seventeenth-century vocal music, is as much for the benefit of scholars as for performers, who will find Bacilly's treatise invaluable to the study of this repertoire.

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CHAPTER 1

I. BENIGNE DE BACILLY

No single contemporary work furnishes us with full biographical details on Bénigne de Bacilly. This is surprising for a man who produced the most extensive treatise on singing in France of the seventeenth century, all the information we have about him is the result of pooling together comments, anecdotes and announcements drawn from a variety of sources; together they show that he was a renowned and successful composer, teacher and theorist.

And yet what little we know of Bacilly's education, his arrival in Paris, his teacher and his milieu, explored here and in the following sections of this essay, prove to be of considerable value in assessing the nature of his principal work, the *Remarques curieuses*, Bacilly's approach in writing it and what he hoped to achieve by publishing it.

Henry Prunières,¹ in 1913, and Théodore Gérold,² in 1921, were the first modern scholars to establish Bacilly's background. Later scholars, such as A. B. Caswell,³ have made use of their work in their research. Their sources were principally anecdotal accounts in Le Cerf de La Viéville's (1674-1707) *Comparaison* (1705) and Sébastien de Brossard's (c.1655-1730) *Catalogue des livres de musique* (1724), a manuscript catalogue of his library holdings. This biographical research supplied the following information. According to Brossard, Bacilly was born in lower Normandy around 1625⁴ (a fact confirmed by Bacilly himself)⁵ and educated in Rouen. An anecdote by Le Cerf⁶

¹ Prunières (1975 [1913¹] and 1923).

² Gérold (1921).

³ Caswell (1964).

⁴ Brossard (1994), p.42.

⁵ Bacilly (1688), 'Avis de consequence', p.9: '[...] un des plus grands Seigneurs du Royaume a dit qu'il n'y avoit que l'Auteur Normand qui laissast perdre son bien faute de plaider.' '[...] one of the highest-ranking Lords of the kingdom said that only the Norman composer lost his property through lack of litigation.'

⁶ Le Cerf, (1705), III, p.58: 'Bacilly étoit toujours en habit long dans le temps qu'il montrait à chanter à M^{me} la Maréchale de la Ferté; un jour M. le Maréchal le trouvant en habit court, lui dit: "Bacilly, es-tu toujours Prêtre?"' ('Bacilly was always in a long robe in the days when he taught singing to M^{me} la Maréchale de la Ferté; one day M. le Maréchal, finding him in short robe, said to him: "Bacilly, are you still a priest?"). It is unclear in what vein M. le Maréchal's remarks is made, but Le Cerf continues: 'C'est pour vous dire, Monsieur l'Abbé, que je ne voudrois point qu'un maître de Musique fameux put changer de figure, & qu'on lui pût faire une question aussi plaisante que celle-là.' ('What I mean, Monsieur l'Abbé, is that I do not find it desirable that a famous music teacher should change his appearance and that he should provoke so amusing a question as this one').

informs us that Bacilly may have trained as a priest but either was not ordained or left the church after ordination. An interesting remark made by Bacilly on page 8 of the ‘Avis au lecteur’ in his 1688 *Airs spirituels* helps support this anecdote: Bacilly explained that provincial cathedrals produced a supply of good singing teachers and wrote that ‘un Chantre Ecclesiastique’ is more suited than an ordinary secular singing teacher to teaching airs with devotional texts; and furthermore, that these teachers with an ecclesiastical background are capable of ensuring that the airs, both devotional and profane, which they use for teaching purposes contain no immodest or unsuitable words or thoughts. Bacilly may well have been referring to his own background.

A certain amount of biographical information can be gained from Bacilly’s published works. Caswell⁷ pointed out that Bacilly’s first known airs appeared in the collection of *Airs de differents autheurs à deux parties*, published in Paris by Robert Ballard in 1658. This indicates that Bacilly was already in Paris by that date. To this we may add that, in the dedicatory epistle of the *Remarques curieuses*, Bacilly mentioned that he had been in the service of the late Charles II, Duc de Lorraine d’Elbeuf (father of the dedicatee of the treatise, Marie-Marguerite Ignace de Lorraine d’Elbeuf, c.1629-1679). Therefore, Bacilly’s arrival in the city must have been before the duke’s death in 1657, and perhaps even as early as 1649, the time of the family’s arrival in Paris.⁸ It is also possible that Bacilly was in the family’s service before their arrival in Paris, since their family estates were in Normandy, Bacilly’s native region. Prunières established that Bacilly was taught by Pierre de Nyert, also spelt de Niert (c.1596-1682), a nobleman whose renowned singing career began under Louis XIII and who also counted the court musician Michel Lambert (1610-1696)⁹ amongst his pupils. Michel Lambert, who succeeded Jean de Cambefort as ‘Maître de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy’ in 1661, is a significant figure in the study of Bacilly’s work, as will be shown in subsequent chapters of this essay. Bacilly himself explained in the *Remarques* that his teacher was ‘un Seigneur aussi élevé par son Esprit que par sa Naissance & par sa Dignité’.¹⁰ In his ‘Discours qui sert de réponse à la critique de l’art de chanter’, published only with the third (1679) edition of the *Remarques*, Bacilly again mentioned

⁷ Caswell (1964), p.35.

⁸ Carpentier de Marigny (Chouvigny [1919], p.74) wrote a triolet on the ‘Prince d’Elbeuf et ses enfants’ in 1649, on the duke’s arrival in Paris to offer his services to the French Parliament.

⁹ Catherine Massip has published a detailed account of his life and works, in which we learn that Lambert was a musician in the Orléans household some time after 1625 (Massip [1999], pp.29-30); we learn from Loret (197) p.149, that the daughter of Gaston d’Orléans, the Grande Mademoiselle, was still his patron in 1651, and that the same household also counted Lully and Pierre Perrin amongst its employees.

a ‘unique’ nobleman whose talent knew no bounds, who sang for, and was rewarded by, ‘un grand Roy’, and whose authority in the art of singing was unrivalled.¹¹ Nyert was in the service of a duke, M. de Mortemart, who himself held the post of ‘Premier Gentilhomme de la Chambre du roi’ to Louis XIII, before being presented to the King by Saint-Simon’s father¹² and given the position of ‘Premier valet de Garde-Robe’, then ‘Premier Valet de la Chambre du Roi’ and ‘Maître d’Hôtel de Sa Majesté’. He held these posts under both Louis XIII and Louis XIV and passed them to his son, François de Nyert.¹³ Although Bacilly never named this teacher, nothing contradicts Prunières’ identification, which gives us a further clue to dating Bacilly’s arrival in Paris, for in his ‘Réponse’ Bacilly revealed that he first met the person he describes (but still fails to name) ‘twenty-five years ago’, which, assuming they met in Paris, would establish Bacilly’s presence there at least as early as 1654. A comment in the *Mercure galant* helps to confirm both that Bacilly and Pierre de Nyert were at least acquainted and the date of their meeting.¹⁴

As to the background of the *Remarques*, we only know that Bacilly’s treatise was being planned, if not already begun, in 1661: for that year, Bacilly asked for royal permission, in the ‘privilège’ of the *Recueil des plus beaux vers qui ont esté mis en chant* to print his works, which he listed as consisting of several airs, a treatise on singing (the *Remarques*) and the *Recueil* itself. The treatise is therefore as much a reflection of the performance practice of the late 1650s as of the 1660s.

Of Bacilly’s family very little is known: we gather from the *Mercure galant* that he had some relatives in Paris, since in December 1678, the journal reports that Bacilly had married off one of his nieces to a certain ‘M. Daniel’, himself a capable musician.

The title page of the *Remarques* informs us that in 1668 the author was living at an address in ‘ruë des Petits Champs’. By 1679, the third edition of the treatise advertises the author’s address as ‘ruë Pastourelle, au petit S. Jean’. In fact Bacilly seems to have moved with some frequency: by 1681, the *Mercure galant* noted that Bacilly lived in rue Saint-Claude, where ‘il donne des leçons de chant très recherchées.’¹⁵ In 1687, the journal informs its readers that his music was available at

¹⁰ Bacilly (1668), pp. 8-9. (‘[...] a Lord as noble in spirit as in birth and dignity’.)

¹¹ Bacilly (1679), pp. 8-9 (see Appendix 2).

¹² Benoît (1992), p.504.

¹³ De La Chenaye, vol.14, col.959.

¹⁴ ‘On sçavoit le commerce qu’ils avoient ensemble depuis trente années [...]’, ‘People knew of their thirty-year-long partnership’ (*MG*, June 1684).

¹⁵ *MG*, April 1681, p.360.

his home, the address of which is given as ‘ruë S. Anthoine, dans une Porte Cochere, qui est entre deux Boutiques de Ling[erie] vers l’Hostel de Suilly’ (*sic*),¹⁶ which was near the Bastille. Bacilly’s various Parisian addresses also appear on the cover of his musical works,¹⁷ from which we learn that he moved again soon after: the following year, we read on the cover of Bacilly’s 1688 *Airs spirituels* that the publication was not only available from the publisher Guillaume de Luyne but also from the composer, in the ‘rue St-Honoré, vis à vis les Ecuries de Monseign[eu]r le Dauphin’, near the church of St. Roch.

This is probably where Bacilly was living at the time of his death two years later, on the 30th of September 1690, which was announced in the *Mercure galant*: ‘Il est mort depuis trois jours, ses ouvrages ont fait connaître la beauté de son génie, et comme ils font son éloge, je n’ay rien à ajouter’.¹⁸

That is the sum of information which can be gathered on Bacilly and from which additional observations can be extracted. Firstly, we may note that if Bacilly met Pierre de Nyert as early as 1654, then his success following his arrival in Paris must have been immediate, for he managed to gain recognition quickly enough to bring him to the attention of (or for him to have gained access to) Nyert, already a celebrated singer among the elite of Parisian musical life.

If Bacilly did indeed train as a priest, this would provide a clue as to his education and academic background of which he seems so proud in his treatise, for he would have received a solid grounding in French grammar and literature, Latin and possibly Greek.

What exactly this background was will inevitably be a matter of conjecture, but according to the patterns of education in France during the first half of the century, Bacilly would have attended one or more of the following institutions. Basic (and mostly free) primary education was provided for all children of the parish at the local school. Alternatively, Bacilly could have attended a ‘petite école’, run by the parish clergy and demanding a nominal fee; these taught basic reading, writing and calculation and the cleverest pupils, deemed to be destined for the priesthood, were taught Latin.

¹⁶ *MG*, November 1687, following an unpaginated catalogue at the end of the issue after p.304.

¹⁷ Ryhming (1982/1), pp.10-11.

¹⁸ p. 278: ‘this is the last air you will be given by M. de Bacilly. He died three days ago. His works have revealed his admirable genius, and as they speak for themselves, I have nothing to add’. Bacilly had supplied the journal with unpublished airs from 1678 to 1690 (Prunières [1923], p.158).

The ‘enfants de chœur’ would have attended these schools or an episcopal choir school and would in addition have been taught plainsong. Children attended these schools until the age of about fifteen, some for longer.¹⁹ Following this, Bacilly could have attended a seminary in Rouen, or even one in Paris (or the Paris area), which attracted many students from all over the country. There the students were taught reading and writing, moral theology, liturgical instruction and singing. Their immediate aim, however, was to produce clergymen capable of delivering a sermon and of taking confession by the end of the short course which usually lasted about six months.²⁰ It is more likely that Bacilly, whose education seems to be broader than what the seminaries offered, could have attended a *collège de plein exercice* through which most of the future high-ranking professional members of the church and the elite in law and medicine were sent. They studied the art of the humanities, which aimed at producing students fluent in all aspects of Latin and which included a course in rhetoric and politics and the science of philosophy. These colleges also offered basic instruction in French and Greek.²¹ During the six years of study in the humanities, rhetoric and poetry was taught mainly through classical texts, including Virgil²² whom, incidentally, Bacilly quotes in the *Remarques*.²³

It is equally likely that Bacilly could have attended a Jesuit college (a large and successful one was founded at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Rouen); the Jesuits offered much the same as the *collèges de plein exercice* but included theology as part of the collegiate curriculum and encouraged, in addition to reading and writing Greek, a mastery of the spoken language.²⁴ Whatever establishment Bacilly may have attended, it was one at which he received a full education in the humanities to add to his skills in music, and one which placed him among the intellectual élite. He considered himself fortunate to have received the appropriate education to enable him to tackle both questions of music and questions concerning language in general in his treatise.²⁵

Professional musicians were commonly from modest backgrounds and began their musical apprenticeship at an early age; their basic education, therefore, was often rudimentary (with the exception of the singers of the king’s chapel who had received

¹⁹ Ferté (1962), pp.157-264.

²⁰ Brockliss (1987), pp. 228.

²¹ Brockliss (1987), pp.105-113.

²² Brockliss (1987), pp.137-8.

²³ Bacilly (1668), p.134.

²⁴ Brockliss (1987), pp.21, 113, 126. Bacilly uses the Greek letter omicron in order to illustrate a particular vowel sound in his discussion on the vowel *o* (1668, p.275).

holy orders and were recruited from the choir schools of Parisian or provincial churches; they, with their grasp of Latin, would have been in charge of teaching singing to the ‘enfants de la Chapelle du Roi’).²⁶ This resulted in highly skilled musicians who often could only write phonetically and who were incapable of participating in serious discussions concerning their own discipline.²⁷ Bacilly writes in the ‘Réponse’ that musicians often could neither read nor write,²⁸ which explains his remark in the ‘Réponse’ that certain people were surprised by the treatise

‘qu’ils croyoient estre au dessus du commun des Musiciens, gens, qui dans le commerce du monde n’ont pas jusqu’à present acquis toute l’estime deuë à un Art si considerable.’²⁹

It is no surprise to find that as a result, any critical writing on music was produced either by educated amateurs (such as Ragueneau and Le Cerf)³⁰ or by polygraph priests (such as the Jesuit François Ménéstrier and Sébastien de Brossard).³¹ This is why Bacilly is so exceptional among musical theorists: he is both a trained musician and capable of expressing himself in writing, a distinguishing factor which may help to explain how Bacilly came to contemplate the composition of a work as considerable in scope as the *Remarques*.

²⁵ Bacilly (1679), pp.4-6 (see Appendix 2).

²⁶ Benoit (1971), p.185.

²⁷ Benoit (1971), p.80, explains that dedications to patrons at the beginning of publications, often written in a very florid style, were frequently not the author’s work but were produced on demand to fulfil a basic stereotyped pattern of flattery for the sake of protocol. Bacilly says as much in his own dedication of the 1677 *Second Recueil d’Airs Bachiques*: ‘une Epistre Dédicatoire [...] d’ordinaire n’est remplie que de flatteries & de mensonges’ (‘a dedicatory preface [...] is usually nothing but flattery and lies’). They are therefore not always revealing of the author’s character nor literary style.

²⁸ Bacilly (1679), p.26 (see Appendix 2).

²⁹ Bacilly (1679), p.5 (‘which they thought to be beyond the reach of ordinary musicians, who so far have not managed to gain in society the respect that such a considerable art deserves’).

³⁰ Ragueneau (1702) and Le Cerf (1705)

³¹ Ménéstrier (1681) and Brossard (1705).

II. PATRONS AND MILIEU

During the course of his career in Paris, Bacilly benefited from a wide variety of patrons. His unique position as a combined teacher, composer, poet and theorist presented opportunities otherwise unavailable to ordinary musicians: he was patronised by the nobility and the bourgeoisie, by professional musicians, by the literary intellectual *élite* and by the press. He had contact with the broadest possible spectrum of Parisian society, from the illustrious aristocracy to the musician of questionable repute. His experience of all of these *milieux* comes together in his work and forms the basis of the *Remarques*.

The dedications printed in the front of his works show that Bacilly enjoyed the patronage of some of the highest-ranking members of the French aristocracy. If Bacilly did indeed train as a priest, this status would have counted in his favour in gaining access to, and employment in, these aristocratic households. For instance, the *Second livre d'airs* (Paris, Richer, 1664) is dedicated to 'Son Altesse Mlle. de Nemours'. The dedication of his second volume of the *Trois livres d'airs* published in 1668 is addressed to another pupil 'Son Altesse Royale, Madame la Duchesse de Savoye', and we have already seen that he was employed by the Duc de Lorraine d'Elbeuf to teach his daughter.³² The *Second livre d'airs bachiques* of 1677 is dedicated to yet another patron, the Maréchal Duc de la Ferté-Senectere, whom Bacilly thanks for his hospitality and interest.³³ These dedications illustrate the first type of patronage available to Bacilly: that in which a person of noble rank encourages an artist to produce his work. This is a two-way process of mutual recognition: the artist, by dedicating his work to such a person, recognises his patron's status and discernment (the greater the artist's reputation, the more significant the dedication); in exchange, the patron recognises publicly the artist's talent by associating his name with the work. Bacilly's dedications abound with tributes to inspiring patrons and their discerning taste where music is concerned: his gratitude to the Duc de la Ferté-Senectere is a good example.

'[...] l'amitié que vous avez pour la Musique & pour les beaux Airs dont vous connoissez le fin avec un discernement tout-à-fait singulier [...]'³⁴

³² Marie-Marguerite, no stranger to the court, was counted among the higher members of the aristocracy; 'Mademoiselle d'Elbeuf' appears in Félibien's description of the festivities held at Versailles on July 18th 1668, on the list of ladies who have the honour of joining the king at his table for supper. (Félibien [1994], p.70.)

³³ Bacilly (1677), dedicatory epistle.

³⁴ Bacilly (1677), dedicatory epistle ('[...] the enthusiasm you have shown towards music and towards good airs whose refinement you can determine with quite remarkable discernment [...]').

Although there is no binding obligation on behalf of either party towards the other, the patron will often give the artist some financial gratification for the dedication of his work, an acknowledgment that the patron, who thus becomes a benefactor, has appreciated the aesthetic value of the work.³⁵

The second type of patronage that Bacilly encountered is a more direct form of employment: an overt exchange of works for money. This is suggested by the use of the verb 'travailler' in the following remark made by the fictional 'M. le Marquis de E.' in *Le Cerf de la Viéville's Comparaison*:

'Bacilli a demeuré plusieurs années en cette ville. J'étois, sans vanité, son patron. Il a travaillé trente fois pour moi [...]'³⁶

Though fabricated by Le Cerf, this comment also demonstrates his awareness of Bacilly's value to that milieu. Another illustration of such patronage by wealthy and powerful members of society can be found in the *Mercure galant*, which recorded the following event:

'on a aussi représenté ce Carnaval une Comédie intitulée *Le Bon Mary*, chez une personne de qualité. Il y avoit des Entr'actes de musique. Les Paroles estoient de M. de Vaumorieres et les airs de M. B.D.B. dont le merveilleux génie est connu pour la musique. L'assemblée fut de gens choisis, fort capables d'en connoistre toutes les beautés.'³⁷

This is primarily an exchange of goods; the production of works in this case is regarded as a service.

Bacilly also had the patronage of intellectuals and literary figures: his 1661 *Recueil des plus beaux Vers, qui ont esté mis en Chant* is dedicated to the major literary figure and member of the Académie française Paul Pellisson-Fontanier.³⁸ Unfortunately, Pellisson was arrested on 5th September of that year,³⁹ together with his employer, the

³⁵ Viala (1985), pp.52-5, has identified distinctions between various forms of patronage during this period.

³⁶ 'Bacilly spent several years in this town. I was, without boasting, his patron. I required his services about thirty times.' (Le Cerf [1705], pt.ii, p.86.)

³⁷ *MG*, March 1678, p.84: 'For this carnival, a comedy was also given, entitled *Le Bon Mary*, at the home of a person of noble birth. There were musical interludes. The words were by M. de Vaumorieres and the melody by M. B.D.B., whose marvellous skill in music is renown. The audience consisted of persons of choice, eminently capable of appreciating its charms.' The music is lost. Vaumorières, with whom Bacilly collaborated for *Le Bon Mary*, is mentioned in the *Mercure galant* of February 1678 (p.19) as the poet whose words had been set by Charpentier in the 'air nouveau' for that month's issue.

³⁸ Pellisson (1624-1693), who was trained as a lawyer, arrived to settle in Paris in 1650. He gained the patronage of Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's Surintendant des Finances, who made Pellisson his secretary in 1657. Pellisson had been a figure of some controversy in the world of the Académie française for having blocked Boileau's nomination, at the insistence of Scudéry, to the institution in 1659, provoking serious discontent. (See Niderst [1976], pp.353-4, 385-6.)

³⁹ The second edition of the second part of the *Recueil* contains a copy of the original 1661 'privilege', which was requested on the 10th January and registered on the 13th April.

minister Nicolas Fouquet;⁴⁰ he was charged with bad administration, had all his wealth confiscated and was incarcerated, financially ruined, in the Bastille until 1666. Not until 1670 did Pellisson find himself officially back in favour as a result of writing to please the king, which included a collaboration with Lully in 1668 for the creation of the 'églogue en musique' *La Grotte de Versailles*,⁴¹ and of his conversion to Catholicism. He received the charge of royal historiographer, a position he held until 1677, when it passed to Racine and Boileau.⁴² Bacilly may have regretted the dedication of his volume to Pellisson earlier in the year of his arrest.

In spite of his spectacular fall from grace, it is possible that Pellisson may be the anonymous 'académicien' whom Bacilly credits in the 'Réponse' of 1679 with having encouraged him to write the *Remarques*: when the treatise was published, Pellisson had been two years out of jail but his reputation was still insecure, which would explain why Bacilly fails to name or even mention his supportive 'académicien' in 1668; by 1679, however, Pellisson's reputation was fully restored and he was at the head of the Académie française. An acknowledgment of his support, though still anonymous (as are the vast majority of Bacilly's references in the treatise), would by that time have been constructive. Although he was out of the public eye for most of the time leading up to the publication of the *Remarques*, Pellisson may still have been the one to encourage Bacilly; he may have come to hear of Bacilly's project before his incarceration (as the opening of the foreword suggests, Bacilly had been planning the *Remarques* for some time) or shortly after. This 'académicien' may also, of course, be someone else, such as Dangeau,⁴³ friend of Pellisson, and brother of the grammarian and member of the Académie française, the Abbé de Dangeau.⁴⁴ Bacilly would have benefited from the renown and reputation as leading literary figures of such patrons, though most of the time they, too, were in the employ of noble or wealthy patrons in order to subsist as writers.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Bacilly mentions in his dedication that Pellisson's verses alone in the *Recueil* would be sufficient to entertain Fouquet, to whom he refers as 'this exceptional minister'.

⁴¹ Barthélemy (1957), p.10.

⁴² Niderst (1976), pp.494, 504.

⁴³ Philippe de Courcillon, marquis de Dangeau (1638-1720), a converted Huguenot, had become linked to Pellisson in 1668 (Niderst [1976], p.482).

⁴⁴ Louis de Courcillon, Abbé de Dangeau (1643-1723).

⁴⁵ Though writers may have belonged to the 'petite noblesse', such as Madeleine and Georges de Scudéry, or the intellectual elite, such as Pellisson, they made their living from writing and depended on patronage for survival. (See Niderst [1976], pp.522-3, on the financial difficulties of Madeleine de Scudéry and her circle.) Nicolas Fouquet's large fortune enabled him to patronise figures such as Scudéry, Molière and La Fontaine. Viala (1985), p.52, identifies this important form of patronage as 'clientélisme'.

Later in his career Bacilly received the patronage of members of the clergy: it is interesting to see that the two volumes forming his 1688 *Airs spirituels* are dedicated to the archbishop of Paris and to the king's Jesuit confessor, the Père La Chaise, respectively. Not only were these two members of the high clergy among the most powerful in Paris, but their patronage may have been politically sensitive. The archbishop was responsible for implementing royal policy against the Jansenist base at Port-Royal, which had the support of many in the nobility;⁴⁶ and as the king's confessor, La Chaise was in a position of great influence, though whether or not these dedications are a reflection of Bacilly's political stances is impossible to ascertain.

The range and loftiness of this patronage so far suggests that Bacilly enjoyed a position of considerable renown and security in the upper reaches of Parisian society. The activities of this milieu help to explain his position.

Amateur singing was a widespread and highly prized practice in aristocratic and *mondain* circles, in particular the female-led salon society, dominated by the nobility, which provided Bacilly (and other musicians such as Michel Lambert) with the majority of his clientele; already around 1638, the famous salon of the Marquise de Rambouillet counted amongst its literary members and guests the singer Pierre de Nyert,⁴⁷ and the opportunity to perform at another salon was offered to Lambert in 1636.⁴⁸ As the number of salons grew, so did the pursuit of music, and of singing in particular as the height of refinement; as the editor of the *Mercure galant* declared, 'Le Dieu du Parnasse est celui du chant'.⁴⁹ A lively demand both for airs and for good singing teachers emanated from these salons. Tallemant des Réaux's *Historiettes*, Madeleine de Scudéry's novels,⁵⁰ Jean Loret's *La Muze historique* (1650-65),⁵¹ Abbé Michel de Pure's *Dictionnaire des ruelles précieuses* (1656), Somaize's *Grand dictionnaire des précieuses* (1660) and the letters of Mme de Sévigné (who is known to have sung airs by Camus but to have struggled with the ornamentation),⁵² written between 1660-1696, are among the texts which attest to the importance of amateur and professional music-

⁴⁶ Among ecclesiastical orders, the Jesuits, Sulpicians and Lazarists were particularly hostile to Jansenism; it is a possibility that if Bacilly did indeed support the archbishop's view, this stance may have been influenced by his indoctrination at a Jesuit college.

⁴⁷ Massip (1999), pp.15-16.

⁴⁸ This is recorded in a letter by Mme Saintot to a friend; in Massip (1999), p.37.

⁴⁹ *MG*, May 1678, p.25.

⁵⁰ *Le Grand Cyrus*, 10 vols., 1649-1653 and *La Clélie*, 10 vols., 1654-1661.

⁵¹ This periodical was in the form of journalistic letters written in octosyllabic verse to his patron from 1650 to 1665.

making in *précieux*, or refined society. Abraham Bosse's famous engravings and paintings (such as 'L'Ouïe', 1635) also illustrate this aspect of *précieux* society, as do Nicolas Bonnard's engravings of gentlemen and ladies clutching lutes and viols. The organist Nicolas Lebègue had in his possession a portrait by Nicolas Mignard of the Princess d'Elbeuf as Saint Cecilia playing the organ.⁵³

The salon environment enabled musicians (composers and performers) to come into contact with the ideas and inclinations of the elite section⁵⁴ of their audience. This was another two-way process: composers could observe at first hand the preferences of this leading social group, which dictated what was fashionable and what was desirable, while members of this group had access to the latest musical compositions.

This is the milieu to which Bacilly's aristocratic pupils belonged and therefore one of the contexts for the performance of his music. In the 'Réponse' Bacilly mentions this context when he writes about 'le chant qui se pratique dans les Ruelles'.⁵⁵ These 'ruelles', or 'alley-ways' denote the space between the wall and the bed on which the 'précieuses' reclined.⁵⁶ Bacilly also claims that airs were written 'to circulate in society'.⁵⁷ This gives a clue as to where he gave many of his lessons and at what kind of person the treatise is primarily directed.

There was, however, a different type of salon operating at the same time as, and hand in hand with, the 'ruelles': one that gave greater importance to literature and literary figures. Although literature did figure in the 'ruelles', it was considered more as a pastime and only a part of the cultural pursuits. The more literary, or intellectual salons, bordered on the specialised *académie*⁵⁸ and chose their members on the basis of literary ability; thus figures such as Pellisson and Ménage were part of Madeleine de Scudéry's circle. The activities of these salons complemented each other: the first established their notions of refinement and distinction through pleasurable pursuits; the

⁵² Vilcosqui (1977), p.54.

⁵³ Benoit (1971), p.384; this was probably Marie-Marguerite's mother, Catherine-Henriette (1596-1663), legitimised daughter of Henri IV and Gabrielle d'Estrée, Duchesse de Beaufort. (De La Chenaye-Desbois, Vol.12, col.422.)

⁵⁴ As salons mostly consisted of a group of about a dozen people, this group was inevitably small. (Viala [1985], p.133.)

⁵⁵ Bacilly (1679), pp.11-13 (see Appendix 2).

⁵⁶ Duneton (1998), p.463. See also Howard (1994) for an assessment of this milieu. It is clear from Bacilly's 'Réponse' that he uses the term 'ruelles' in this salon context (he mentions on p.13 those ladies who practice delicate singing 'for their own enjoyment') rather than any kind of street song (that is, in the 'ruelles' outside the salons).

⁵⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.104.

⁵⁸ The abbé D'Aubignac described the literary salon of Madeleine de Scudéry as an *académie* in 1656 (in Viala [1985], pp.134-5).

second, through discussion and reflection, set the parameters of the style generated by the first.⁵⁹

It is clear that Bacilly was introduced into this literary and learned section of society through his music and poetry. And this world in which he operated finds a reflection in the treatise; his literary ideals directly inspired by the intellectual salons are explored in the next chapter of this essay, but other aspects are also clearly evident. For instance, references to Cartesian thought such as the opening of Part I, Chapter VII,⁶⁰ recalling that of the *Discours*, and the debate concerning the superiority of man over beast in Part II,⁶¹ may point to discussions held in particular salons which Bacilly frequented: that the salon of Mme de la Sablière was particularly known for this type of discussion is documented by La Fontaine in his *Discours à Mme de la Sablière, Sur l'âme des animaux* (1674). Mme de la Sablière also showed a keen interest in the sciences and would often witness dissection sessions. Bacilly employs the word 'anatomie' in Chapter XI, when he suggests dissecting an air; such language may have had a certain relevance to his readers, or at least lent 'scientific' overtones to the treatise. In addition, members of the salon society were concerned with, and supported a reform of, French orthography,⁶² a notion that makes frequent appearances during the course of the treatise.⁶³

However, these patrons were not the only source of support from which Bacilly benefited, although their endorsement must have been of considerable value: of even greater significance were publishers and the press.

The numerous collections of airs produced throughout the seventeenth century attest to the overwhelming popularity of the solo vocal genre. We owe the majority of these volumes to the Ballard family of publishers, the official 'imprimeurs du roi'. Their publications of mostly anonymous airs were either by a mixture of authors⁶⁴ or by a

⁵⁹ Viala (1985), pp.18, 132ff, has analysed in detail the social role of the different elements of the salon world.

⁶⁰ Bacilly (1668), p.35.

⁶¹ Bacilly (1668), p.250-1.

⁶² Howard (1994), p.72.

⁶³ Bacilly (1668) demonstrates in Part 3, p.411/ 435, that he was aware of modern orthography.

⁶⁴ Massip (1999), p.144, has noted that composers' names are only systematically indicated after (and including) the *XXXIVe Livre d'airs de differents autheurs* of 1691. Of the earlier volumes, only the composers Dambruys and Mignon (*IIIe Livre d'airs de differents autheurs*, 1660) Hurel, Delagrance and Le Camus (*XVIe Livre d'airs de differents autheurs*, 1673) were mentioned sporadically.

single author.⁶⁵ Robert Ballard, the third in this dynasty of royal printers that began with the first Robert Ballard in 1552, published such volumes of around forty airs on an annual basis from 1658, with his first *Airs de differents autheurs*, until 1673. At his death, his son Christophe continued this practice between 1674 and 1694 with annual publications and, from 1694, monthly publications which lasted for over thirty years. These collections not only responded to a steady demand but did much to fuel it; in fact, they are largely responsible for bringing the air, heretofore mainly restricted to the salons, to the wider public by making the solo vocal repertoire available to all. Guillo⁶⁶ has noted that very few musicians were fortunate enough to have their works published; that Bacilly was the most prolific composer during the 1660s, and therefore played a significant role in shaping the solo vocal repertoire of the second half of the seventeenth century, is in large part due to the Ballard business.

The French periodical press was a seventeenth-century Parisian innovation, beginning with the *Mercure françoys* in 1611,⁶⁷ and it was in the pages of the *Mercure galant*, founded in 1672, that Bacilly's airs appeared. This periodical documents almost every aspect of seventeenth-century literary and *mondain* society. It effectively transformed the manner in which information was circulated among cultured and literary society and made details of its activities available to all its readers. Its founder and editor was Jean Donneau de Visé (1638-1710), a writer and friend of Molière, who was assisted by Thomas Corneille. The periodical was a monthly journal in the form of a letter addressed to a fictional female reader. Music is frequently mentioned, as the editor comments on recent performances, compositions and personalities in the music world. Each issue offered its readers a new air, sometimes several, both 'sérieux' and 'à boire', by composers such as Lambert, Sicard, Brossard and Charpentier; thirty-three airs by Bacilly have been traced in the *Mercure* covering a period of eleven years, between July 1679 and September 1690.⁶⁸ The editor often explains that he leaves it to the reader to judge the merit of these works, but the positive comments which often accompany Bacilly's airs are enough to show that he had the support and patronage of the editor, and that the journal's readers appreciated them.

⁶⁵ According to the *Mercure galant* of October 1679, Bacilly is the unnamed author of Christophe Ballard's *Premier recueil d'Airs sérieux et à boire de differents autheurs* (Paris, 1679). (See RISM *Recueils imprimés XVI^e –XVII^e siècles*, I, 1679/4.)

⁶⁶ Guillo (1998), p.281.

⁶⁷ Viala (1985), pp.129-130.

⁶⁸ See the catalogue of Bacilly's works in Bacilly-Lescat (1998), pp.13-14.

That Bacilly should figure regularly in the pages of the *Mercure galant* is a fact which is lent considerable significance when one considers the wide circulation of the journal and the breadth of its readership and contributors; these ranged from prominent literary figures such as Thomas Corneille and Charles Perrault, to members of the court aristocracy, the provincial nobility, the bourgeoisie, royal functionaries, lawyers, churchmen (the King's Jesuit confessor, the Père la Chaise, wrote verses for the journal), doctors and mathematicians. The editor himself noted the broadening of his readership in 1677:

'Il est devenu le livre des savants et des braves après avoir été le divertissement du beau sexe.'⁶⁹

Bacilly's airs, therefore, as well as his reputation, would have been known throughout an appreciably wide section of French society, both Parisian and provincial.⁷⁰

Though far less documented than the musical activity of the court, nobility and *mondain* circles, the performance of music also featured in bourgeois society. One finds its activities mentioned now and again in the weekly news letters from Jean Loret to his patron, the duchesse de Nemours.⁷¹ In them we find that rich bourgeois members of society would invite instrumentalists or singers to entertain their friends.⁷² Molière reflects this practice in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670), in which the following exchange occurs between Jourdain (the bourgeois in question) and his music master:

MAÎTRE DE MUSIQUE: '[...] Il faut qu'une personne comme vous, qui estes magnifique et qui avez de l'inclination pour les belles choses, ait un concert de musique chez soi tous les mercredis ou tous les jeudis.'

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: 'Est-ce que les gens de qualité en ont?'

MAÎTRE DE MUSIQUE: 'Oui, monsieur. [...] Il vous faudra trois voix, un dessus, une haute-contre et une basse, qui seront accompagnées d'une basse de viole, d'un théorbe et d'un clavecin pour les basses continues, avec deux dessus de violon pour jouer les ritournelles.'⁷³

⁶⁹ 'It has become a book for the learned and for gentlemen, having heretofore been for the entertainment of the fairer sex.' ('Au Lecteur', *NMG*, December 1677.)

⁷⁰ The editor noted in 1677 the success of the journal's airs in the provinces (Moureau [1997], p.311).

⁷¹ See fn.51.

⁷² Loret, December 1652, in Brossard (1960), p.48.

⁷³ Molière (1990), Act 2, Scene 1, pp.45-6. ('MUSIC MASTER: [...] A person such as you, who are magnificent and are drawn to beautiful things, should host a concert every Wednesday or Thursday. MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Do those of noble birth? MUSIC MASTER: Yes, sir [...] You will need three singers, one *dessus*, one *haute-contre* and one *basse*, accompanied by a *basse de viole*, a theorbo and a harpsichord to provide the continuo, and two *dessus de violons* to play the ritornelli.')

Below the undated portrait of the popular singer Guillaume de Limoges, who used to perform almost exclusively on the Pont Neuf, by Gérard Audran (who died in 1703), an anonymous poem reads:

'Quand il entonne ses chansons / La bourgeoisie et l'homme de cour, / S'il chante une chanson nouvelle, / Viennent l'entendre tour à tour... / [...]' ⁷⁴

This also helps to illustrate that the bourgeoisie, in imitation of the nobility, were as avid enthusiasts for the cultivation of vocal music as those on the higher echelons of the social ladder; both shared a taste for possessing the latest compositions, something which Bacilly observes in Chapter XI of the *Remarques*. We may assume that their milieu provided another platform for the air.

In 1681, the *Mercur*e informs us that Bacilly gives much sought-after lessons at his home in 'rue Saint-Claude';⁷⁵ the people who came to him for these lessons may not all have belonged to the nobility nor to the bourgeoisie, for the teachers seeing to the needs of that social class were often summoned to deliver their lessons at the patron's home,⁷⁶ a practice exemplified by Monsieur Jourdain's music master. It is possible that pupils of a similar or lower social standing would have been going to Bacilly for lessons, although Titon du Tillet reported that Lambert's lessons were so sought after that some members of the nobility were happy to go to him for lessons, implying that this was not the usual practice.⁷⁷ Bacilly's pupils would have included singers aspiring to a career as a professional performer,⁷⁸ for instance as a member of the *Musique de la Chambre du Roi*. Although there is nothing at all to suggest that Bacilly was ever personally involved with music at court, and this is most unlikely, it is nevertheless possible that he may have trained some of the singers responsible for providing the regular concerts for the king and his court in his apartments⁷⁹ as well as singing in all

⁷⁴ Duneton (1998), p.580; 'When he sings his songs / The bourgeois and the courtier, / Provided he is singing a new song, / Come to hear him in turn... / [...]'.

⁷⁵ *MG*, April 1681, p.360.

⁷⁶ Benoit (1971), p.163.

⁷⁷ Titon (1991), pp.16-17. '[...] et même une bonne partie de ces personnes ne faisoient point de difficulté d'aller chez lui, où il tenoit une façon d'Académie pour donner ses leçons' ('[...] and a significant number of these people were happy to go to his home, where he had a kind of specialised circle in which he taught [...]').

⁷⁸ Benoit (1971), p.164.

⁷⁹ See Benoit (1971), p.76. Mme de Sévigné writes that the *appartements* were held from three to six in a letter of 29th July 1676: 'Il y a toujours quelque musique, que le roi écoute et qui fait un très bon effet' (in Citron [1957], p.28). In 1692, the year of the marriage of the Duc de Chartres to Mlle de Blois, Saint-Simon mentions the 'appartements', or evening recreational time at Versailles in 1692: the court would play various card games or billiards from seven to ten while the King presided over their activities or retired to a salon. According to Saint-Simon, these took place three times a week in winter, the other three weekday evenings being reserved for a *comédie*. 'D'abord, il y avoit une musique; puis des tables par

the grander court entertainments (the *ballets* and *divertissements*), or in the royal chapel when required.

Whether or not Bacilly trained some of these singers, it is also possible that Bacilly's airs may have been performed at court. The Musique de la Chambre fulfilled diverse functions, at once both official and private, but their concerts of chamber music are the least well documented as to content: memoirs, journals and records of the period (such as those of André Félibien, the King's architectural historiographer who related the details of the Versailles festivities of 1668 and 1674 in 'Relation de la fête de Versailles' and 'Les Divertissements de Versailles') are very informative on *ballets*, *divertissements*, motets and operas, but are very short on detail when it comes to the private sessions provided by the Musique de la Chambre, such as the names of performers (only the most celebrated, such as Michel Lambert, Mlle Hilaire, Anne de la Barre and the Italian Anna Bergerotti are mentioned for their performances in the Chambre, in *ballets* and in the chapel), the programme (unless they were performing airs from an opera) and the identity of the composer.⁸⁰ In his journal the Marquis de Dangeau cited countless evenings at court where music was provided by the Musique at mealtimes, in the *appartements*, in the Chambre du Lit or the Salon de Mars, on the canal in a gondola, on the stairs, in Mme de Montespan's rooms.⁸¹ These were concerts during which Michel Lambert and Pierre de Nyert regularly sang. It is possible that Bacilly, one of the most widely published composers of his day, could have been one of the composers whose airs his former fellow pupil and teacher, as well as the other singers of the Chambre, could have performed.

Despite their involvement at court and their integration into the social elite, musicians as a working group did not rank high in society, prompting Bacilly to lament the lack of appreciation towards singers in particular in the 'Réponse':

'c'est assez pour estre méprisé que de passer pour un chanteur, & que souvent cette qualité loin d'honorer celui qui la possède semble étouffer ses autres Talens; & cela s'est tellement establi dans le monde qu'il y auroit de la honte a soutenir le contraire'.⁸²

toutes les pieces toutes prêtes pour toutes sortes de jeux' (Sarolea ed., n.d., p.43). ('First there was music, then tables were readied in all the rooms for all kinds of games'.)

⁸⁰ Citron (1957) p.26, suggests that this lack of detail is a direct result of their frequency.

⁸¹ Dangeau (1961-2), 196ff. Citron (1957), pp.26, notes that performances were so frequent that they would inevitably be seen as simply providing an audible décor for the court.

⁸² 'being labelled as a singer is enough to be held in contempt and often this attribute, far from being a credit to the one who has it, only seems to obscure his other skills. This is such a strong belief in society that no one would dare say otherwise', Bacilly (1679), p.5.

Molière caricatured the singing master in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* as one whose sole concern is to be paid for his services.⁸³ Musicians formed a tightly-knit community, usually marrying into other families of musicians, within a distinct socio-economic group:⁸⁴ the marriage of Bacilly's niece to Daniel, that of Lambert to the sister of the singer Hilaire Dupuy (c.1625-1709),⁸⁵ and that of Lully to Lambert's daughter Madeleine, are notable examples of this practice. Their station was alongside that of perfume makers, glovers, librarians and merchants.⁸⁶ However, Bacilly may have been in a better financial position than the majority of non-court musicians: the viol player Jean Rousseau, for instance, endured significant hardship and debt⁸⁷ to which Bacilly, as a result of owning the 'privilèges', or rights to his published music and treatise (which more often benefited the publisher) and thereby profiting from its sale, may not have been subject.

Professional musicians would organise musical gatherings for other musicians and for their patrons at their home, though few details of what was played or who exactly was present at these occasions are available.⁸⁸ The guitarist Medard was known to give concerts at home every fortnight,⁸⁹ as was the lutenist Dessanssonnières every week.⁹⁰ The *Mercure galant* records that Louis de Mollier, a lutenist belonging to the royal Musique de la Chambre, had composed *Andromède*, a small opera which was performed at his residence every Thursday over many weeks.⁹¹ Lambert and Hilaire Dupuy were also known to give private performances, often singing together,⁹² and a

⁸³ Musicians were frequently in debt due to the irregularity of the payments which they received. Titon du Tillet remarked on their condition in his *Parnasse*: 'Il arrive quelque fois, par un hazard extraordinaire, que des Poètes et des Musiciens ne sont pas maltraités du Dieu des Richesses' ('It sometimes happens, by incredible chance, that some poets and musicians are not ill-treated by the god of riches', Titon [1732], p.96).

⁸⁴ See Benoit (1971), p.287-9, who claims that musicians formed what amounted to castes: for instance, an organist belonging to the king's chapel was superior to a trumpeter in the *Écurie du Roi*, and a surintendant had little in common with a mere violinist of the *Chambre*.

⁸⁵ Hilaire Dupuy's career began in the Parisian salons and ended as an 'Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roi' (a post she obtained in 1659) when she was pensioned off in 1692 (Loret [1970], p.182).

⁸⁶ Benoit (1971), p.287.

⁸⁷ See Milliot (1991-2).

⁸⁸ Loret, February 1660 (Loret [1970], p.48).

⁸⁹ Brenet (1970), p.71.

⁹⁰ The *Mercure galant* records that his concerts are for his friends and those whom they wish to invite. (*MG*, March 1678, p.260.)

⁹¹ *MG*, Dec. 1678, p.126; also noted in Robert (1961-2), p.189. The *Mercure* described *Andromède* as 'une manière de petit Opéra', in which Perseus rescues Andromeda from the rock. It featured solo singers, an instrumental ensemble (there is a 'symphonie [...] agréablement diversifiée') and Elisabeth Jacquet played the harpsichord. The editor noted that one performance was given at the Louvre.

⁹² See Benoit (1971), p.12. Brenet (1970), p.60, also points to Huygens' correspondence during his visit to Paris, who noted that Lambert and Hilaire performed Lambert's dialogues together and that the keyboard

belated account by Titon du Tillet tells of Lambert organising concerts in his apartments and in the gardens of his country home at Puteau on the outskirts of Paris, which he shared with his daughter and son-in-law, Lully.⁹³

Social standing and education rather than skill was what separated the amateur from the professional. Bacilly puts this plainly in the 'Réponse', explaining that singers concentrated too much on singing to the detriment of literature and of language, without correcting themselves of the faults which usually plagued singers, 'pour les mœurs & pour sçavoir converser parmi le monde'.⁹⁴ Indeed, musicians, particularly those involved with the opera, were frequently involved in scandalous activities,⁹⁵ and found themselves from around the 1660s mentioned in many satirical songs.⁹⁶ Some amateurs could reach standards of proficiency equal to that of the professional musician: François de Beauvilliers, duc de Saint-Aignan was reputed to be a virtuosic amateur.⁹⁷ The complexity of some of the airs in Bacilly's 1668 volumes suggests that their intended performer, Marie-Marguerite, was a very capable singer, although it is also possible that, like Mme de Sévigné, she found the embellishments challenging. But even such accomplished amateurs would never lower themselves to being described as a 'chanteur'; Bacilly observes a general concern to disassociate oneself from such an appellation:

'un homme s'excuse lorsqu'on luy impute cette qualité, & la rebutte comme un affront signalé, en disant qu'il n'en fait pas profession, & que ce qu'il en fait ce n'est que pour son plaisir.'⁹⁸

The social divide between amateur and professional was rarely crossed. Pierre de Nyert, who held the title of Marquis de Gambais, was one notable exception for he taught singing and performed regularly at court, although he was not officially employed as a 'musicien du roi'.⁹⁹ Bacilly made a point of mentioning this in reference to his teacher in the 'Réponse':

player Chambonnières had organised 'L'Assemblée des Honnestes Curieux' who regularly gave and attended such concerts.

⁹³ Titon (1991), p.16.

⁹⁴ 'as regards moral standards and how to converse in polite society' (Bacilly [1679], p.5).

⁹⁵ For a sorry list of misdemeanours, see Benoit (1971), pp.373-377.

⁹⁶ Vernillat (1957), p.106. Lully, his scandalous activities and questionable lifestyle in particular provided good material for satirical songs; those that survive were assembled by Prunières in 1916. Beussant (1992), p.800, believes there to be some truth to them.

⁹⁷ Benoit (1971), p.43.

⁹⁸ 'if a man is called [a singer], he will at once deny it and will refute it as a deliberate insult, saying that he does not sing for his living, only for his pleasure' (Bacilly [1679], pp.5-6).

⁹⁹ De la Chenaye, (vol.14), col.959.

'la qualité de Chantre, qui pour l'ordinaire deshonore ceux qui la possèdent, luy a toujours esté honorable, & l'a fait distinguer des autres Courtisans.'¹⁰⁰

In fact, the division between professional and amateur could potentially create a delicate situation for amateurs keen to perform on stage, who would have to mix with professionals. Louis XIV and his entourage had already famously performed in ballets at court; to solve the indignity of appearing in an opera, the king dissociated the Académie d'Opéra in 1669 from ordinary theatre thereby placing a clear divide between spoken comédies and sung opera. The strongest differentiation made between the two genres was that actors were automatically excommunicated while singers were not. The clergy were nevertheless disapproving of opera and of singers and pressure from this direction gradually increased during the course of Louis XIV's reign; the king's decision to order the archbishop of Paris to attend a performance of Lully's *Roland* at court on 24th January 1686 must therefore have been a political gesture.¹⁰¹ At court, the aristocracy frequently incarnated all kinds of characters dancing on stage. Nevertheless, the performers of the first operas, primarily court spectacles,¹⁰² were professionals trained at the Académie.

Musicians in Bacilly's time trained, wrote and performed primarily for the benefit of the social élite; their existence depended on it. Bacilly says as much in the dedicatory preface of his 1677 book of *airs bachiques* when he puts the composition of the airs in this volume down to the duke's enthusiasm as Bacilly's patron and host:

'C'est [à vostre Table], MONSEIGNEUR, où j'ay pris la liberté de vous chanter ces Airs que vous avez écoutez avec joye; & c'est cette Table qui m'a animé pour les faire, & qui m'a donné l'art d'y réüssir [...] Voila, MONSEIGNEUR, le motif qui m'a fait prendre la liberté de vous presenter ce Livre comme une petite marque de ma reconnaissance [...]'¹⁰³

The enthusiasm of this group for music, and particularly vocal music, explains why good singing teachers and prolific composers were highly prized in Parisian society: the

¹⁰⁰ Bacilly (1679), p.9 ('the attribute of singer, which normally shames those who possess it, has always been borne honourably by him and has set him apart from other courtiers').

¹⁰¹ Beaussant has attributed the king's changing attitude towards opera, and towards Lully personally, to the influence of Mme de Maintenon and Lully's dissolute private life. This culminated in the failure of the king to witness Lully's last opera, *Armide*. (Beaussant, [1992], p.796-800.)

¹⁰² The public was not ordinarily admitted to royal spectacles at the Louvre, the Tuileries or the Palais Royal. With the founding of the Academy, a paying public was admitted to performances; though not specified in either Perrin's 1669 privilege for performances at the Academy nor Lully's in 1672, spectacles were first performed at court before they were offered to the public. This happened frequently during Lully's lifetime (it was the case for ten of his eighteen operas), unless the court was in mourning or the king was at war. (See Ducrot [1970], pp.25-30.)

¹⁰³ Bacilly (1677), dedicatory preface: 'It is [at your table], MY LORD, that I took the liberty of performing these airs which you heard with joy; & it is there that I was prompted to compose them and

patronage Bacilly enjoyed shows that he was valued as both of these and experienced this milieu at first hand. This in turn further enhanced his reputation, which brought him to the attention of a wider clientele through the press and through the enthusiasm of the bourgeoisie to emulate its betters; and we have seen that to supplement his income, Bacilly taught pupils at home.

that I was given the art to do so successfully [...] Here, MY LORD, is the reason for which I have taken the liberty of presenting this book to you, as a small token of my gratitude [...].

CHAPTER 2

THE STRUCTURE OF THE *REMARQUES* AND THE ISSUES OF PART 1.

In spite of its title, the *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter* is not exclusively a singing treatise. When compared with Jean Millet's *La belle méthode* (1666) and Jean Rousseau's *Méthode claire* (1678), the only other two French singing treatises of the seventeenth century, one is immediately aware that Bacilly aspires to far more than merely offering a method of sight-singing or of placing ornaments: throughout the foreword ('avant-propos'), Bacilly explains that his objective is to provide a guide to the pronunciation and quantity of words in French declamation, which is to form the basis of his singing technique,¹ and that the second and third parts of the work, dealing with these two areas, are in fact the generative themes of the treatise. The first part, 'On singing in general', was added by Bacilly as an afterthought:

[...] d'abord mon dessein n'ait esté que de donner des lumieres pour la veritable Prononciation, & pour la quantité des paroles Françaises qui se rencontrent dans le Chant [...] Toutesfois je trouve à propos de parler du Chant en general, & mesme de donner des Preceptes pour le bien mettre en usage [...].²

Indeed, in the 'Réponse à la critique', published with the third edition of the *Remarques* in 1679, we read that Bacilly had foreseen that his treatise would find approval with few musicians, but that certain 'persons of merit and talent', some members of the Académie française³ and, most significantly, people who regularly spoke in public, had congratulated him on his work.⁴ Neither does Bacilly claim that all aspects of teaching singing can be covered in his treatise, for he repeatedly stresses the need for oral teaching by devoting an entire chapter to the importance of a singing teacher for the

¹ For this reason it was recognised at the time that the *Remarques* amounted to more than just a singing treatise: the *Mercure galant* of December 1678 (p.103) records that '[...] peu de personnes en ont une connoissance aussi parfaite [de la belle manière de chanter] que M. de Bacilly, et qu'il en a mesme fait un Traité fort utile à ceux qui veulent parler en public, à cause des Regles de prononciation, à de quantité de choses très curieusement remarquées.' '[...] few people possess as perfect a knowledge of [the proper method of singing] as M. de Bacilly, who has even produced a treatise on it which is very useful to those who wish to speak in public, due to his rules for pronunciation and his unusual observations on a host of things.'

² '[...] At first my intention was only to give some insight into the correct pronunciation and the quantity of French words which one comes across in songs [...] However, I find it appropriate to discuss singing in general and even to give some basic rules so that it may be practised correctly [...].' (Bacilly [1668], p.2.)

³ See Ch.1, p.20.

⁴ Bacilly (1679), p.4 (see Appendix 2).

cultivation of the voice: vocal production is therefore not the primary point of concern in Bacilly's 'art du chant'.

In his work on the history of French song, Claude Duneton has listed Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle* and Bacilly's *Remarques curieuses* as the two theoretical works that examine both the practical and theoretical aspects of singing during the period.⁵ In fact, the *Remarques* bear the greatest comparison only to the second volume of Mersenne's study, in particular the second part, 'Traitez des consonances, des dissonances des genres, des modes & de la composition', of which Book 6 is entitled 'De l'Art de bien chanter'. This immediately puts the scale of Mersenne's work into perspective; yet even within this volume, Mersenne takes a far more scientific approach, consistent with the rest of the *Harmonie universelle*, to the question of singing as a whole: he is concerned, for example, with the manner in which different positions of the larynx affect the physical production of sound;⁶ he deals with Latin and Greek versification and the attempts of the French at the end of the sixteenth century at applying the same poetic metres to their own language;⁷ he lists and explains the different types of prolation and modes encountered in music;⁸ in short, Mersenne's *œuvre* is a theoretical work rooted in the sixteenth century, encompassing many branches of music and the elements involved therein. He was inspired by Platonic principles in his analysis of the properties of sound and his exploration of the concept of the harmony of the spheres.⁹ Bacilly, on the other hand, was a singing teacher. What he set out to achieve was not a theoretical treatise on singing: Mersenne had already done that. Instead, Bacilly was aware of the need for a practical guide that could set on paper the basic elements of the currently prevalent singing technique for the benefit of those members of society interested in cultivating the art. Bacilly set out to codify the principles on which his singing technique is based, to instil in his readers the fundamentals of the art of singing, aspiring to far more than providing a singing tutor for learning how to sing intervals, and if in the process he could correct any errant procedures in vocal production so much the better. The result is a work which is neither a conventional singing treatise like Rousseau's, nor a scientific study like Mersenne's,

⁵ Duneton (1998), p.589.

⁶ Mersenne (1636), 1, Bk.1, pp.40-1.

⁷ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, pp.395-420.

⁸ Mersenne (1636), 2 Bk.6, pp.420-1.

⁹ Isherwood (1973), pp.33-36.

but combines practical, technical and theoretical precepts to establish, and teach, ‘l’art de bien chanter’.¹⁰

Bacilly planned his treatise in three unequal parts. The first constitutes a general, at times scathing, at times humorous, commentary on singing and singing teachers, as well as a detailed discussion on the poetry of airs, to which has been appended a more technical explanation of ornamentation and embellishment. It is this first part which makes the *Remarques* more specifically about singing, without which the work, with its rules for pronunciation and quantity in the second and third parts, would be more along the lines of a manual for rhetoric were it not for Bacilly’s reference to musical examples. It must be stressed, however, that the three parts complement one another: as far as Bacilly is concerned, one cannot hope to master singing without paying equal attention to both the more general observations and technical discussions in the first part and the rules of parts two and three in which theoretical rules are given a practical application.

The authoritative tone with which Bacilly delivers his observations, recommendations and criticisms reflects a thoughtful and thorough author who is unafraid of his critics and of speaking out against commonly held views. For instance, at a time when falsettists were not particularly prized as singers (none of the foremost French singers of the day are known to have been falsettists), Bacilly recommends it as the ideal voice, when well trained, for exhibiting the full affective potential of ornamentation.¹¹ He considers such a voice to possess the height and brilliance associated with the female voice, coupled with the vigour and steadiness typical of the performance of male singers, who, uninhibited by modesty, have more talent in expressing the passions, a display which women consider to be reminiscent of the theatre.¹²

We learn about the practical aspects of singing and common problems which no other writer found the need to record, aspects which together form an invaluable full

¹⁰ As regards ornamentation and rhetorical principles in music, parts of the *Remarques* can further be compared with 17th- and 18th-century vocal and instrumental methods, such as those by Caccini, Bernhard, Rousseau (viol treatise) and Mattheson (see Ch.4 and Ch.5 of this essay and annotations in Ch.XII of the translation). See also Ch.4 on the relationship between Bacilly’s rules for pronunciation and quantity and contemporary French works on grammar and rhetoric, for example by Bary, Lamy and Hindret.

¹¹ Bacilly (1668), pp.46-7/ 192-3.

¹² Bacilly (1668), p.200/ 298.

view of contemporary thought on performance practice. The basic qualities which Bacilly believed a singer must possess in order to be a true master of the art are the possession of a good voice, a good ear and the technical disposition required to perform ornaments and embellishments. Although these can be improved with the help of a teacher, Bacilly recognised that all three must be naturally present in a good singer: such singers are less common than one may suppose, as Bacilly illustrated by the Latin proverb ‘gaudeant bene nati’¹³ to which Mersenne also referred on the subject of singers.¹⁴ We also learn what basic knowledge a singer ought to possess, what would most suitably accompany a solo voice, the importance of oral demonstration and the crucial choice of a singing teacher, who himself should be a good singer, should be able to compose his own airs and recognise the importance of oral demonstration, and who should have a thorough knowledge of French and the rules of declamation.

In spite of the difficulty of describing a voice, Bacilly tackled the merits of a variety of different voice types, their agility, tuning, affective qualities and suitability for different types of air. He created three broad categories. The first he used to describe voice types in aesthetic terms: there are ‘lovely’, ‘good’ and ‘pretty’ voices (*belle*, *bonne* and *jolie*). The second is based on physical attributes (such as ‘big’, ‘small’, ‘strong’, ‘weak’, ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ voices) and the third on range, for which Bacilly distinguished four principal types, the *superius*, *hautecontres*, *tailles* and *basses*.¹⁵ These distinctions are made to determine which voices are better suited to which type of singing and highlight the necessity of an awareness of the possibilities and limitations of the voice: some, for instance, possess a natural agility in the performance of ornaments, others are more moving. The delivery of a text, according to rhetoricians, required a considerable range of vocal colour and flexibility:¹⁶ the singer therefore had to achieve total mastery of his or her voice for the most affective performance. Bacilly’s categorisations are an attempt at identifying inherent vocal qualities which can be put to use in the most appropriate context.

¹³ Bacilly (1679), p.9 (see Appendix 2); Bacilly uses this in praise of his teacher Pierre de Nyert.

¹⁴ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.354.

¹⁵ These are discussed in Chapter VII of the *Remarques*. Bacilly adds the falsetto voice to his discussion, but makes no separate mention of the sub-categories such as ‘bas-dessus’ and ‘basse-taille’.

¹⁶ For example, in his *Traité de l’action de l’orateur. Ou de la prononciation du geste* (Paris, 1676), Michel le Faucheur recognised three distinctions that are possible in the voice and are at the disposal of an orator: the tessitura, the strength or softness and the speed (‘celle de la hauteur ou de la bassesse, celle de la contention ou de la douceur, et celle de la vitesse ou de la tardiveté’). (In Verschaeve [1997], p.51.)

There is a difference, however, between the cultivation of the voice as an instrument and the art of singing. Although Bacilly touched upon the voice in Part 1, as it is indispensable to good singing, it is communication in singing he was mainly interested in; and that involves words. Bacilly's careful description of vowel sounds in Part 2 rather indicates that he regards the sound of the voice, or vocal timbre, not only as a natural gift but also, as it emanates from the sound of the vowels and consonants which are being articulated, as the direct result of proper pronunciation. Thus in order to be a real master, Bacilly demands much from the singer in terms of education, placing considerable importance on the study of French,¹⁷ Latin, Italian and Spanish if necessary,¹⁸ and especially on the study of literature, in particular poetry, all of which would have been beyond the conventional basic training of a professional singer. Mastering the theorbo, in order to provide one's own instrumental accompaniment in case an instrumentalist is unavailable, and a thorough knowledge of the rules of ornamentation and embellishment, which rely on pronunciation and the quantity of syllables, must supplement these fundamental requirements. In a contemporary singing treatise from Germany, Christoph Bernhard (1627-92), writing around 1660, agrees that one needs more than just a good voice to be a singer:

‘To earn the title of Singer, it is not enough to execute skilfully all that appears [in the music]. Besides a good voice, a certain artistic style, commonly referred to as *Manier*, is required, and therefore must be learned. Only when the elaborations of this style are observed and applied is one entitled to the name of Singer.’¹⁹

The mastery of these ‘elaborations’ is one of the fundamental elements of both Bernhard's and Bacilly's singing techniques. Chapters XII and XIII at the end of the first part of the *Remarques* deal with the important issue of ornamentation and embellishment, which are discussed in a separate chapter of this essay.

A considerable portion of Part I (the lengthy Chapter XI) is devoted to addressing the subject of poetry and nationality: the nature of the lyric poetry set by composers, its advantages and restrictions, and the merits of Italian singers and Italian airs over their French counterparts. Below is an exploration of the background against which Bacilly made his observations, namely the literary currents in France at the time

¹⁷ Bacilly (1679), pp.4-6.

¹⁸ See also Bacilly (1688), ‘Avis de Consequence’, p.5.

¹⁹ *Von der Singe-Kunst oder Manier*, Bernhard (1973), p.13. This is an undated manuscript treatise, which Neumann (1983), p.538 estimates to date from around 1660 and Hilse (Bernhard [1973]), p.2 attributes to the late 1650s. It was first published in Leipzig in 1926. Bernhard's *manier* consists of the Italian style of ornamentation and embellishment.

and the significance of his comparison between French and Italian culture in view of current and subsequent cultural debates.

As many composers were little versed in literature, poets were relied upon to provide them with material for their output: salon poetry was not only produced for recitation; it was equally often meant to be sung, and thus composers had a steady supply of lyric poetry to set. The poetry of airs therefore followed the trends set by literary circles. Bacilly, who defines an air as a fusion of music and words where one cannot be considered without the other,²⁰ was praised for his ability to write his own texts,²¹ but even those composers who were capable of producing their own verse abided by the style of poetry fashionable in the intellectual salons and its rules: these airs had to reflect and comment on the interests of those for whom they were meant in order to be successful. The *galant* style of poetry found in the two 1668 volumes reflects the style favoured in the female-dominated salons. On the other hand, Bacilly's 1677 *airs à boire*, in a far less refined style, were written for the Duc de la Ferté-Senectère who, as Bacilly reported in the dedicatory preface, greatly enjoyed hearing them. The salons therefore play a dual role of setting the poetic agenda, which underlies every air produced at the time, and of consumer. We find in the *Recueil des plus beaux vers* that composers including Lambert and Bacilly regularly set poetry by leading salon figures such as Madeleine de Scudéry,²² Paul Pellisson,²³ Sarrazin, Saint-Amand and the Comtesse de la Suze, Perrin, Benserade, Quinault, Boileau and Corneille,²⁴ as well as those by a host of poets of lesser renown to modern readers (Jean Bouillon is a favourite of both composers). It is also clear that Bacilly's own texts are written wholly in the style established by the salon poets.

²⁰ Bacilly (1668), p.69/ 204.

²¹ The *Mercurie galant* referred to this in glowing terms in the February issue of 1682, pp.189-90. We also find that Bacilly was reputed for the speed with which he could write both the music and the words of an air: 'La facilité avec laquelle l'Authéur compose en mesme temps le Chant & les Paroles est si grande, qu'il n'y a que ceux qui l'ont éprouvé qui la puissent croire, en luy donnant un Sujet sur lequel il a fait en un quart d'heure les Airs qui paroissent luy avoir donné plus de peine.' ('The author composes both the words and the melody with such ease that only those who have witnessed it will believe it, by giving him a theme on which, in a quarter of an hour, he produces an air which seems to have taken more time to compose.' Bacilly [1677], 'Au Lecteur'.)

²² Scudéry (1607–1701) was patronised by Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's 'Surintendant des Finances', from whom Pellisson hugely benefited. The king gave Scudéry a pension of 2 000 *livres* in 1683. (Niderst [1976], p.509.) Her brother Georges was also a writer and member of the Académie Française.

²³ Scudéry met Pellisson in 1653, the same year as his nomination to the Académie française that November, and maintained a lifelong friendship.

²⁴ Bacilly *Recueil* (1661) and Bacilly *Recueil* (1668).

The stylistic traits of the poetry of the salon milieu, or *galant* poetry, which was dominant for almost half a century from the mid-1650s to around 1690, is illustrated in the works of Scudéry, known to her contemporaries as ‘Sappho’, and her circle, which included Pellisson and Gilles Ménage (1613-1692). Scudéry pursued her literary ideals in the production of *galant* poetry with her circle of poets, friends and patrons in the 1670s. By the late 1680s and early 1690s, although Boileau, Racine and La Fontaine now led the literary mainstream in Paris and at Versailles,²⁵ Scudéry was still a prominent figure in the literary world.

The *galant* style of poetry relied on the strict avoidance of pomposity, of jarring, indelicate words and of the burlesque. Instead, it favoured a seemingly ingenuous, ‘natural’ and sincere expression, in contrast to the vanity and deception often associated with the court.²⁶

The notion of ‘natural’ expression, clarity and moderation, as a disguise for artifice and affectation both in behaviour and creativity was one of the fundamental concepts of French aesthetics of the time.²⁷ Literary aesthetics referred to the precepts of the ancient Greco-Roman writers as the model for beauty and perfection. Boileau expressed these principles in *l’Art poétique* (1674), in which he drew particularly on the works of Horace, Aristotle and Quintilian to set out in verse the fundamental French classical literary notions that dominated the second half of the seventeenth century.

The most significant and influential of the Classical principles observed by the French classicists was Aristotle’s doctrine of the imitation of nature, which he proposed in his *Poetics*. Nature represented undisguised truth and it is this representation, the ideal of simplicity rather than nature itself, which the arts (literature through words, painting through colour) must strive to capture and imitate. The fundamentals of nature also represented and were applicable to human nature; hence a ‘natural’ expression was a direct and honest manifestation of human emotion.

Le Cerf de la Viéville and l’Abbé Batteux expanded on these aesthetic principles in the following century, Le Cerf basing his notions in his *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique françoise* (1705) on the literary theory of the French classicism of the previous century (as defined by Boileau in particular). Like Boileau,

²⁵ Niderst (1976), pp.497, 511-13.

²⁶ See Niderst (1976), pp.283 and 542.

he believed that in order to imitate nature in poetry and literature, one must refer to ancient classical models.²⁸ Le Cerf regularly referred to Horace and Aristotle, and it is through them that he established his understanding of the theory of imitation. Firstly, he defined in detail the imitation of nature as painting.²⁹ He then described the power of poetry to achieve with words what painting does with colour and its direct effect on human emotion as a result of its descriptive capability, or its ability to imitate painting imitating nature.³⁰

But most significantly, Le Cerf was the first French writer explicitly to discuss the application of literary aesthetics to music, which Aristotle himself associated by including music as one of the modes of the imitation of nature. Le Cerf accepted a correspondence between the arts ('Je conviens volontiers que [la Peinture, l'Eloquence, la Poësie] ont une liaison, qui leur rend presque commun ce qu'on peut dire de chacun d'eux'),³¹ and this helped his formulation of musical aesthetics. Like colours and words, music can portray and elicit human emotions; by painting an imitation of and blending with poetry,³² music becomes capable of expression, that is, of expressing the passions, the common and most important aim of painting, poetry and music.³³ Le Cerf was in

²⁷ Pellisson elaborated on the notion of 'le naturel' by promoting a type of studied negligence, proclaiming in a letter of May 1650 to Doneville that it is 'le grand art et le grand secret des lettres', (in Chantalat [1992], p.145).

²⁸ Le Cerf (1705), II, p.282, admits (through the character of the Chevalier) to 'faire valoir les principes des Anciens. Je suis, moi, pour les hommes de ce temps-là [...]', ('show the true worth of the principles of ancient classical writers. I am an advocate of the men of those times [...]').

²⁹ Le Cerf (1705), I, p.168: 'Quelle est la beauté de la Poësie? C'est de faire avec des paroles ce que le Peintre fait avec des couleurs. *Ut pictura Poësis erit*. Et vous sçavés qu'Aristote dans sa Poétique ne nous parle que *d'imiter*, cela veut dire de peindre. Tous les genres de Poësie ne sont, selon lui, que différentes *imitations*, de différentes peintures.' ('What is beauty in poetry? It means achieving with words what the painter achieves with colour. *Ut pictura Poësis erit* [Horace, *Art poetique*]. And observe that Aristotle [*omnes sunt imitatio in universam*, Aristotle, *Poetics* ch.I], in his *Poetics*, writes only of *imitating*, which means painting. All types of poetry are, according to him, only *imitations*, only paintings.' Material inserted here in square brackets is from Le Cerf's footnote annotation.)

³⁰ Le Cerf (1705), I, p.168: 'La perfection de la Poësie est de décrire les choses dont elle parle, avec des termes si propres & si justes, que le Lecteur s'imagine qu'il les voit. [...] C'est de peindre si vivement les mouvemens du cœur humain, que le Lecteur [...] partage toutes les passions que le Poëte donne au Heros.' ('Poetry's perfection consists in describing those things its depicts with such clear and appropriate words that the reader can imagine them in front of his eyes. [...] It consists in painting human emotions so brilliantly that the reader [...] shares all the passions that the poet bestows on the hero.')

³¹ Le Cerf (1705), II, p.282: 'I readily agree that [painting, rhetoric and poetry] have a connection, whereby what can be said of one can almost be said of the others'.

³² Le Cerf (1705), I, 169: 'Or comment la Musique *repeindra-t-elle* la Poësie, comment s'entreserviront-elles: à moins qu'on ne les lie avec une extrême justesse, à moins qu'elles ne se mêlent ensemble par l'accord le plus parfait?' ('Yet how may music repaint poetry, how may they draw upon each other: unless they are bound with great precision, unless they are blended together in perfect harmony?')

³³ Le Cerf (1705), I, p.169: '[la Musique] porte jusqu'au fond du cœur de l'Auditeur le sentiment de tout ce que le Chanteur dit. Voilà ce qui s'appelle exprimer. Exprimer est le but commun de la Peinture, & de la Poësie retouchée par la Musique.' ('[Music] carries straight to the heart of the listener the feeling of what

fact setting down what had been implicit in the previous century, for we find in Bacilly, for example, a similar parallel drawn between music and painting: he compared embellishments to the use of colour on page 224 and also associated learning the basic skills of singing with learning to draw on page 83. The association of music with rhetoric was more evident, for music could imitate poetry in terms of structure. The relationship between the two is examined in Chapter 4 of this essay.

Like Boileau, Le Cerf believed in the use of reason as a guide to achieving ‘natural’ expression; by following this other Aristotelian precept, one would avoid excess.³⁴ Composition had to seem ‘natural’,³⁵ to demonstrate spontaneity proper to nature: flouting ‘le naturel’ reflected a lack of regard for sincere expression. In practice, this meant the appearance of a lack of technical effort; Le Cerf regarded simplicity as a basic component of ‘le naturel’:

‘[...] une musique doit être naturelle, expressive, harmonieuse. Premièrement naturelle, ou plutôt simple, car la simplicité est la première partie, la première marque du naturel’.³⁶

Le Cerf drew on Descartes’ *Compendium* to illustrate the importance of this technical simplicity (characterised by clarity and sparing ornamentation)³⁷ as regards the listener: any confusion must be avoided so that the listener is not challenged in understanding the

the singer articulates. This is what is called expression. Expression is the common goal of painting and that of poetry coloured by music.’)

³⁴ Le Cerf (1705), III, pp.131-2 quoted Bk.1, ch.6 of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*: ‘[...] la vraie perfection est par tout de fuir l’excez En sorte qu’il y aura lieu de soutenir, selon Aristote que tout ce qui n’est point dans l’excez est un bien, puisque tout ce qui est excessif & plus grand qu’il ne faut, est un mal. Tout, & en Poésie, /132/ & en Peinture, & en Eloquence, & en Musique.’ (‘[...] true perfection is attained by avoiding excess in everything, so that, according to Aristotle, one may rightly maintain that that which is not excessive is good, since all that is excessive and oversize is bad. Everything, that is in Poetry, painting, rhetoric and music.’) In (1705) III, p.71, he refers to this theory of moderation as a universal rule.

³⁵ Le Cerf (1705), III, p.147: ‘Une Musique agréable [...] est naturelle, douce, liée & suivie. Nous la voulons naturelle, parce que nous demandons par tout du naturel [...]’. (‘Pleasant music [...] is natural, sweet, flowing and regular. We want it natural because we require everything to be natural [...]’.)

³⁶ Le Cerf (1705), III, p.301 (‘[...] music should be natural, expressive, harmonious. Primarily natural, or rather, simple, for simplicity is the first sign, the first sign of being natural’).

³⁷ Le Cerf (1705), III, pp.143-4, ‘La simplicité, deuxième perfection de la Musique, consiste dans le naturel, la netteté, l’épargne d’ornemens.’ (‘Simplicity, the second element of perfection in music, consists of natural expression, clarity and of using ornaments sparingly’). Descartes, following the principles of reason rather than classical principles, also called for simplicity in poetry: ‘Mais pour ce qui regarde les contrepoints artificiels, comme on dit, dans lesquels on use d’un tel artifice du début jusqua la fin, je ne crois pas qu’ils appartiennent plus à la musique que les acrostiches et les poèmes rétrogrades appartiennent à la poétique;’ (‘As far as regards the use of artificial counterpoint, as it is called, it no more belongs in music that acrostics and retrograde poems belong to poetry’, Descartes [1987], pp.134-6).

music.³⁸ Later, Batteux expressed the same concern with avoiding the semblance of effort.³⁹

While Bacilly usually referred to both the music and the poetry when discussing ‘the air’ in Chapter XI, he did separate the two elements to clarify his idea of ‘le naturel’. Accordingly, we find in the treatise Bacilly’s recommendation that airs be composed with simple melodies (rather than ‘bizarre’, ‘unnatural’ ones) and familiar (rather than ‘extraordinary’) harmonies.⁴⁰ The aesthetic principle of the imitation of nature is one of the issues at the heart of Bacilly’s Chapter XI.

In the *Remarques*, Bacilly accepted the strict conventions of *galant* poetry; in keeping with salon aesthetics, he explained that the words used for these airs must be neither pompous nor unnatural: provided they express some passion, they need not even be particularly outstanding in order to be acceptable.⁴¹ The conventions of the vocabulary of lyric poetry were based on ‘l’usage’, the use of language of the salon society. This provided a source for a precise vocabulary whose meaning was agreed: in order to convey every nuance of meaning and move the listener in the desired way, words had to be chosen very carefully and their exact meaning had to be clear.⁴² Bacilly stated plainly that words presenting the slightest ambiguity of meaning must be avoided.⁴³ Words that were ‘unnatural’, or ‘bizarre’ therefore were those that did not belong to this salon vocabulary. Pierre Perrin, setting out the premises for lyric poetry in 1666, is in agreement with this approach. On the construction of the phrase, he wrote:

‘Je l’ay faite juste et exacte, fournie de tous les mots nec[essai]res et purgée de tous les superflus. Enfin j’ay taché de la rendre élevée et poetique, mais moderement et sans hyperboles trop enflées, sans allusions aux fables peu connües, et sans metaphores trop éloignées, ou hors d’usage.’⁴⁴

³⁸ Le Cerf (1705), III, p. 144.

³⁹ Batteux (1746), p.275, ‘[Les expressions] doivent être aisées et simples: tout ce qui sent l’effort nous fait peine et nous fatigue’. (‘[Musical expression] should be effortless and simple: anything that seems laboured pains and tires us’.)

⁴⁰ Bacilly (1668), pp.102-3/ 218-219.

⁴¹ Bacilly (1668), p.112/ 225.

⁴² Mornet (1929), p.313. On p.314, Mornet pointed out that, although ‘le bel usage’ was that of an elite, it was an arbitrary one that could also be whimsical. A strong governing factor, however, was that of ‘bon goût’, which is discussed in Ch.5 of this essay.

⁴³ Bacilly (1668), p.114/ 225.

⁴⁴ ‘I have made it accurate and precise, containing all the necessary words and purged of all superfluous ones. Finally I have endeavoured to make it elevated and poetic, but moderately so and with neither exaggerated hyperboles, nor references to unfamiliar fables, nor far-fetched or uncommon metaphors.’ (Perrin [1986], ‘Avant-Propos’, p.ix, paragraph f.)

Bacilly gave an example on page 95 of the *Remarques* illustrating the stylistic difference between contemporary lyric poetry as outlined by Perrin and the works of the end of the previous century, as regards the change in language and syntax.

Boileau made a further point in *L'Art poétique* on the importance of employing certain words in favour of others in poetry: not only should words not belonging to conventional salon vocabulary be avoided, but others ought also to be avoided in poetry if their sound is unpleasant to the ear. His particular example is that of using proper names with unpleasant sounds and unfortunate rhyming: the name Childebrand can be made to rhyme with 'ignorant'.

O le plaisant projet d'un poète ignorant,
Qui de tant de héros va choisir Childebrand!
D'un seul nom quelquefois le son dur ou bizarre
Rend un poème entier ou burlesque ou barbare.⁴⁵

This helps us to understand the same concern with the sound of words raised in the *Remarques*, where we are advised that words that are 'jarring to the ear',⁴⁶ both literally and when they are either unexpected (that is, they do not belong to the conventional poetic language) or meaningless, ought to be avoided.

On the whole, Bacilly took a balanced view on the matter of style and vocabulary: while acknowledging the importance of respecting these conventions in order to produce airs that will please an audience (another clue as to who the listeners were), he recognised that they may be a little too strict from the point of view of composers⁴⁷ and questioned the wisdom of such a restricted repertoire of unvaried images and predictable words.⁴⁸ For we also learn that the rules are stricter for lyric poetry than for non-lyric poetry, for there are many instances during the course of Chapter XI when Bacilly mentions words or a turn of phrase that, though acceptable in poetry, are unsuitable when set to music. He explained that the conventions of lyric poetry could exclude the most expressive language:

⁴⁵ Boileau (1934), p.89 (chant iii, ll.241-244). The author of *Childebrand* was Carel de Sainte-Garde. Wygant (1999), p.23 has noted that the 'b' of Childebrand is thrown into relief by the rhyme; it then proceeds to contaminate the next two lines, appearing in 'burlesque', 'bizarre' and 'barbare'.

⁴⁶ Bacilly (1668), p.114/ 225.

⁴⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.92/ 213.

⁴⁸ Bacilly also comments on the implications of the restrictive conventions of lyric poetry on composition by asking, on p.103, 'How, therefore, can a musician avoid re-using the same notes, once he has so successfully applied them to words that it seems no other solution was possible?' There is a limitation to the ways in which the conventions of poetry may be expressed with a conventional musical language.

[...] il semble que c'est une rigueur trop grande que cette exclusion de ces sortes de termes & d'expressions, qui hors la chanson sont non seulement bonnes, mais qui sont mesme souvent de grands poids & de grande consideration dans la Poësie;⁴⁹

Galant lyric poetry had particular themes, reflecting the topics of conversation most common in the salons. These were expressed using a particular vocabulary based on the codes of salon society. Both themes and vocabulary were heavily influenced by Honoré d'Urfé's hugely popular pastoral novel *l'Astrée* (in four parts, 1607-1624), the story of the shepherd Céladon's love for the shepherdess Astrée and a favourite of the salons of the early seventeenth century,⁵⁰ but its influence lasted well into the second half of the century. The sentiments and adventures of the shepherds and nymphs in these stories in fact represented those of noble or aristocratic men and women, who adopted bucolic names from these novels in the salons.⁵¹ In the same tradition, most *galant* poetry reflected a pastoral world of idealised Roman shepherds and shepherdesses with names such as Tircis and Climène, and centred on different aspects of the pursuits and trials of love: its anticipation, its fulfilment and its loss, such as in Scudéry's novel *Clélie* (1654-1661).⁵²

The journey into the kingdom of love was an undertaking which had to respect certain rules and follow certain paths, as reflected by the different villages along the river represented in the 'Carte de Tendre', described in the first volume of *Clélie* and illustrated in an anonymous engraving in 1654. The object of affection was not expected to encourage male attention (or at least had to make him wait, sometimes years, before reciprocating any positive sentiments),⁵³ even if his faithfulness and tenderness were exemplary in salon terms; if a lover revealed his sentiments, he could expect a cruel rejection. Agony and longing were usually a matter of course. In the majority of poems, where the poetic voice is male, the image of the woman is therefore often one of perfection but also one of cruel indifference towards the lover.

⁴⁹ Bacilly (1668), p.94/ 214. 'The exclusion of these unusual words and expressions seems to be too rigorous, for when not set to music they are quite acceptable, and often are even of great substance and value in poetry.'

⁵⁰ *L'Astrée* was a French imitation of the 16th-century Italian and Spanish pastoral such as Sannazar's *Arcadia* (1502) and Cervantes' *Galatea* (1585).

⁵¹ For instance, the marquise de Rambouillet, famous salon figure, was known as Arthénice; her daughter, Julie d'Angennes, adopted the name Mélanide.

⁵² This *roman à clef* in ten volumes is in the style of an epic poem and written in the tradition of *L'Astrée*. See Niderst (1976), p.283.

⁵³ Paralleling the adventures of Astrée and Céladon, the poet Julie d'Angennes, daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet and famous salon figure, took this notion to heart, making the duc de Montausier wait fourteen years before agreeing to marriage.

While Bacilly may be more or less submissive to salon ideals and prescribed themes in his theoretical work, we are made aware of his frustrations with the limitations of salon conventions in his music. In the *air à boire* ‘Je suis bien las d’entendre’, Bacilly revealed dissatisfaction with endless pastoral references and banal themes by making fun of the names so closely associated to the *galant* language of the salons:

Fig.1 [Bacilly 1664, fol.34v-35]

Je suis bien las d’entendre
Parler d’Amarilis,
De Cloris, de Silvandre,
Amarante et Philis;
J’ayme le nom d’Aminte,
Et celui de Margot:
C’est que l’un rime à pinte,
Et l’autre rime à pot.

Le nom de Celimeine,
Et celui de Cloris,
Ne produisent que peine,
Que rigueur, que mepris:
J’ayme le nom d’Aminte,
Et celui de Margot:
C’est que l’un rime à pinte,
Et l’autre rime à pot.⁵⁴

Bacilly made a distinction in his treatise between an *air sérieux* and an *air galant*;⁵⁵ these terms are used to distinguish one style of air from another, depending on the subject of the text, which in turn affects the musical style. Both categories, however, fall into the overall *galant* style of poetry associated with the salon milieu and are suited to the kind of performance which responded to the ideals of that society. This is made clear in the ‘Réponse’, where Bacilly referred to ‘le chant galant’:

‘Il faut donc conclure en faveur du Chant galant & delicat, & dire que [le recitatif] sied mieux dans la bouche d’un Maistre Chantre, qui a pour but de regaler une assemblée d’Auditeurs, que dans celle d’une Dame qui ne chante que pour son divertissement’.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Though the rhyme is lost in translation, the two strophes can be translated as follows: ‘I am tired / of hearing of Amarilis, / of Cloris, of Silvandre, / of Amarante and Philis. / I like the name Aminte, / and the name Margot, / because one rhymes with pint, / the other rhymes with jug. // The name Celimeine / and the name Cloris / only inspire pain, / hardship and scorn. / I like the name Aminte, / and the name Margot, / because one rhymes with pint, / the other rhymes with jug.’

⁵⁵ Bacilly (1668), p.287/ 355.

⁵⁶ Bacilly (1679), p.13. (‘One must therefore conclude in favour of *galant* and delicate singing and say that [recitative] is better suited to a master singer, whose aim it is to delight an assembled audience, than to a lady who sings solely for her own enjoyment.’)

In spite of his apparent reservations, we find that the *airs sérieux* and *galants* of Bacilly's volumes, as well as those of Lambert which Bacilly used in conjunction with his own to illustrate points throughout the *Remarques* and which he upheld as the epitome of good taste, deal with love and nature, where birds, shady groves and characters with names such as Philis, Iris and Clymène figure prominently. The lighter dance airs (which Bacilly categorised as *galant*) included in the Bacilly volumes tend towards more explicitly pastoral images⁵⁷ and a happy outcome to a romantic adventure,⁵⁸ while the texts of his *air sérieux* (which form the majority of the collection), as well as those by Lambert, are more inclined towards suffering and death, and their pastoral style is often limited to the use of pastoral names.⁵⁹ The musical distinction between *airs sérieux* and *airs galants* is explored in Chapter 3 of this essay; at this stage the poetry is under consideration.

In her thesis on rhetoric in the poetry and music of the airs of Bacilly and Lambert, Elizabeth Gordon-Seifert⁶⁰ has identified three principal subject-types centred on love which the collections have in common; she has labelled these 'painful love', 'bitter-sweet love' and 'enticing love'. A further subject-type, 'joyous love', is associated with the lighter airs in Bacilly's volumes.⁶¹ Though not all airs fall easily into one of these categories,⁶² they are useful terms by which to consider the typical poetic style of these poems associated with the salons. 'Painful' and 'bitter-sweet' love are the two most frequent subject-types: love that is either unrequited, suppressed or lost (usually as a result of revealing it to the scornful beloved), leads to the narrator's unhappy yearning for death or his resolve to find happiness in his suffering. The lover

⁵⁷ Direct references are made to sheep and shepherds (such as in the *chanson pour danser* 'L'Autre jour une bergere', Bacilly I [1668], p.74 and in 'Pour une bergere infidelle', Bacilly II [1668], p.42). Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.80, has also pointed out that natural elements can be used metaphorically such as in 'Petite abeille mesnagere' in Bacilly I (1668), p.58. Exceptions do occur, however, such as 'Soupirez doux Zephirs, murmurez claires eaux', an *air sérieux* in which the 'petits oiseaux' are asked to unite their 'tristes voix aux accens de mes plaintes' (Bacilly II [1668], pp.38-9).

⁵⁸ Exceptions include 'Petits aigieux' (Bacilly I [1668], pp.76-7) in which the narrator has angered his beloved, but which is set to a regular dance metre; also the narrator in the gavotte 'Le Printemps est de retour' (Bacilly I [1668], pp.56-7) reproaches Iris for being blind to the joys of spring.

⁵⁹ Gordon-Seifert (1994), pp.79-80.

⁶⁰ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.71.

⁶¹ Gordon-Seifert uses these subject-types in her analysis of the passions involved in lyric poetry and its relation to rhetorical structure in the musical settings of these airs. She determines that the subject-type of each air has a direct bearing on the number and intensity of the passions involved in the text (see [1994] pp.101-2). While I have retained her labels for subject-types, I am only concerned at present with the relation between the lyric poetry of these airs and the literary ideas of the salons.

⁶² The air 'Iris en vain' (Bacilly II [1668], pp.35-7), for instance, displays defiance towards the charms of the beautiful Iris, whose pride and cruelty is incapable of inspiring a tender and faithful love.

frequently laments the contradictions of the salon ideals: the more passion and constancy is demonstrated (as is desirable), the firmer the rejection (which, on the part of the lady, is equally desirable). There are plenty of these in both the Lambert and Bacilly volumes: Bacilly's 'Je voy des amans chaque jour' refers to the pain of revealing one's love (rather than suffering in silence) because of the inevitable consequence of rejection or indifference (in keeping with the salon ideals); a consequence that leaves the narrator few options:

Fig.2 [Bacilly I, 1668, pp.8-11]

Je voy des amans chaque jour
 Sans crainte des rigueurs découvrir leur martire;
 Mais de tout ce qu'on dit dans l'Empire d'amour
 L'adieu belle Philis couste le plus a dire.

Chacun peut donner un beau tour au discours
 Qui fait voir que son ame soûpire;
 Mais pour bien dire adieu dans l'Empire d'amour
 C'est aimable Philis la mort qui le doit dire.⁶³

'Si je vous dit que je vous ayme'⁶⁴ is also a good example of 'salon-style' rejection, in which the narrator concludes that it would have been wiser not to admit the truth of his sentiments. The narrator in 'Au secours ma raison'⁶⁵ anticipates a painful love, having unsuccessfully fought his misgivings by appealing to his reason; futile attempts at escaping from inevitably painful love are also illustrated in 'Au milieu des plaisirs les plus doux'.⁶⁶

'Bitter-sweet' love involves the lover whose love is hopeless finding comfort in his pain and in the sorrow of unrequited love; silent suffering is also a frequent complaint in the airs belonging to this subject-type, such as in 'Qui conte les faveurs'⁶⁷ and 'Il faut parler pour finir son martire'.⁶⁸

Fig.3 [Bacilly I, 1668, pp.24-7]

C'est bien a tort que l'on se plaint d'amour
 Quoy que je brûle nuit et jour
 Philis mon bonheur est extreme.
 Rien n'est fascheux aux vrays amans
 Je ne ressens point de tourmens

⁶³ 'Every day I see lovers / reveal their suffering unfeared of pain; / but of all that is spoken in the kingdom of love / a farewell, lovely Philis, has the highest price. // Each [lover] can deliver an eloquent speech / to reveal the longing of his soul; / but an eloquent farewell in the kingdom of love / only death, kind Philis, can deliver.' (Bacilly I [1668], pp.8-11.)

⁶⁴ Bacilly I (1668), pp.52-5.

⁶⁵ Bacilly I (1668), pp.28-31.

⁶⁶ Bacilly I (1668), pp.73-4. There are more airs of this subject-type in volume 2, such as 'Après mille rigueurs' (pp.73-5) and 'Après mille tourmens souffers' (pp.8-11).

⁶⁷ Bacilly I (1668), pp.40-3.

⁶⁸ Bacilly I (1668), p.72.

Ou si j'en ressens je les aime.

Qu'un autre cœur murmure a tout moment
Contre un objet doux et charmant
Pour moy je n'en fais pas de mesme.
Dans le plus fort de mes langueurs
Je ne répans jamais de pleurs
Ou si j'en répans je les aime.⁶⁹

'Enticing love' involves admiration of the beloved or the anticipation of love without immediate reference to possible painful consequences; indeed, the narrator is still hopeful of a positive reception: 'Il n'est parlé que de vos charmes',⁷⁰ 'Pour la bergere Lisette'⁷¹ and 'Petite abeille'⁷² fall into this category, which is reserved for airs in a lighter style, the *chansons pour danser*.

Fig.4 [Bacilly I, 1668, pp.22-3]

Tantost je suis sous l'Empire
Des yeux de la belle Iris,
Tantost pour ceux de Cloris
Je languis et je soupire;
Et mon cœur trop amoureux
Aime assez pour estre a deux.

Que ceux qui sont les fidelles
Se piquent d'un feu plus beau;
Mon amour porte un flambeau
Qui peut éclairer deux belles,
Et ces deux belles je croy
Sont fidelles comme moy.⁷³

Two airs from Bacilly's second volume of airs, 'Deux beaux yeux, une belle bouche' (pp.16-17) and 'Un cœur amoureux et tendre' (pp.28-30), both depicting a carefree narrator ready to give his heart to whoever will take it, can also be placed in this category.

The last subject-type is 'joyous love', the fulfilment of the narrator's expectations. This is exclusively associated with light airs, such as 'A l'ombre de ce

⁶⁹ 'It is unwise to complain of love / although I burn night and day / Philis, my happiness knows no bounds. Nothing is difficult for true lovers/ I feel no agonies/ but if I do, I love them// Another heart may constantly murmur / about the sweet and delightful object of his love / but that is not how I behave. / In the very depths of my longing / I never spill any tears / but if I do, I love them.' (Bacilly I [1668], pp.24-7.)

⁷⁰ Bacilly I (1668), pp.32-5.

⁷¹ Bacilly I (1668), pp.70-1. This air also appears in Bacilly (1665), fol.4v-5r.

⁷² Bacilly I (1668), pp.58-9.

⁷³ Bacilly I (1668), pp.22-3. 'Sometimes I am under the spell / of beautiful Iris' eyes, / sometimes, for those of Cloris / I languish and sigh; / and my heart, too full of love, / has enough love to belong to two people. / Let those who are faithful / boast of a more ardent fire; / my love carries a torch / capable of lighting two beauties, / and I believe these two beauties / are as faithful as I am.'

bocage' (I, 1668, pp.78-80), in which a shepherd and shepherdess converse.⁷⁴ Pastoral references associated with the lighter style of air are abundant:

Fig.5 [Bacilly I, 1668, pp.78-80.]

A l'ombre de ce bocage
Cloris et Tircis un jour,
D'un doux et tendre langage
S'assûroient de leur amour.
Je ne seray point legere,
Disoit Cloris au berger,
Et Tircis a la bergere,
Je ne seray point leger.

Puisque pour finir nos peines
L'amour ici nous a joints
O bois, ô prez, ô fontaines
Vous en serez les temoins.
Je ne seray point legere,
Disoit Cloris au berger,
Et Tircis a la bergere,
Je ne seray point leger.

Employant une eloquence
Qui ne s'entend que des yeux
Leurs ames par le silence
S'expliquoient encore mieux.
Je ne seray point legere,
Disoit Cloris au berger,
Et Tircis a la bergere,
Je ne seray point leger.⁷⁵

Lyric poetry not only had to conform to certain conventions of theme and vocabulary. It had to move the listener, or rather, 'persuade' the passions. The passions, at the heart of the doctrine of the affects, were a dominant notion in the seventeenth century both in the literary and musical world, and in France it controlled most aspects of discussion and creativity particularly in the salons during the second half of the century. The principal inspiration for such a notion was Descartes' *Les Passions de l'âme* (1649) in which he discusses in scientific terms the nature of man's fundamental emotions, or passions. The passions are excited by the sight or perception of something associated with that passion, such as an object of fear or of love: this causes the

⁷⁴ There are two other airs in the style of a dialogue, both in Bacilly's first volume ('L'Autre jour une bergere', pp.74-5 and 'Pour la bergere Lisette', pp.70-1); Lambert's volume includes a proper dialogue (for two voices and bass part) at the end.

⁷⁵ Bacilly I (1668), pp.78-80. 'In the shade of this grove / Cloris and Tircis one day / with sweet and tender words / swore their love to each other. / I will not be fickle / said Cloris to the shepherd, / and Tircis said to the shepherdess / I will not be fickle. // Since love has brought us together / to end our sorrows in this place, / O woods, O meadows, O fountains / you will be our witnesses. / I will not be

circulation of blood and fluids called the ‘*esprits animaux*’ from and back to the brain, and this movement in turn generates that passion in the soul.⁷⁶ Accessing the passions became an aesthetic requirement, which the principle of Aristotelian mimesis helped to fulfil.

The means of moving the passions through a text was founded in discourse: French treatises on rhetoric rely on the manipulation of the passions of the listener through the careful structural organisation of their oration and their use of vocabulary.⁷⁷ In order to achieve the same expressive effect, lyric poetry made use of rhetorical principles and devices in order to move the passions. The various components of rhetoric, such as *inventio* and *dispositio*, or *elaboratio*, and *decoratio*⁷⁸ were applicable to poetry in providing subject and structure. *Actio*, or *pronunciatio*, came into play in matters of performance and constitute the principal discussion of the fourth chapter of this essay.

In 1929, Mornet claimed that almost all French lyric poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century can be broken down into some or all of the parts of the discourse which together form the *dispositio*, or structure of the oration. These are the *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (laying out the facts of the case), *propositio* or *explicatio* (proposing the point to be proven), *partitio* (proposing the points of the argument), *confirmatio* (substantiation or further evidence), *refutatio* (countering the arguments against the case), and *peroratio*, the conclusion. He gives an example of a 1624 poem by François Maynard to illustrate the point that each line of the poem can easily function as a part of the *dispositio*:⁷⁹

Exordium: Ma fille est morte, et je suis désespéré

Propositio: que deviendrai-je après un tel naufrage?

Confirmatio: car ma fille avait toutes les vertus et toutes les grâces.

Refutatio: n’essayez pas de me consoler; qui me console excite ma colère.

Peroratio: o ciel, fais-moi mourir comme ma fille!’

Gordon-Seifert analysed the poems used by the two composers Lambert and Bacilly in a similar way,⁸⁰ pointing out that most of them include up to six of the seven parts of

fickle [etc.] // Using a language / which only the eyes can understand, / their souls, through the silence, / conversed readily. / I will not be fickle [etc.].

⁷⁶ Descartes (1992), pp.704-747.

⁷⁷ See for instance Bary (1659), Lamy (1699).

⁷⁸ Benoit (1992), p.610.

⁷⁹ Mornet (1929), p.201.

⁸⁰ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.256. The study only includes the first volume of Bacilly’s 1668 collection and the 1669 edition of Lambert’s airs.

rhetorical discourse in the combination of their strophes,⁸¹ and that even the single-strophe poems demonstrate a rhetorical structure.⁸² So in addition to observing specific themes and vocabulary, lyric poetry had an additional means of conveying expressive meaning to the listener.

Lambert and Bacilly mainly set poems of four to six lines in length; rarely are they longer than this, but exceptions include ‘Mon sort est digne de pitié’ (Bacilly I [1668] p.12-15), which has two strophes of nine lines each, and ‘En vain j’ay consulté’,⁸³ in which each strophe is eight lines long.

Fig.6 [Bacilly I, 1668, pp.18-21]

En vain j’ay consulté l’amour et le respect
 Pour sçavoir s’il faut rompre ou garder le silence;
 L’un m’a tousjours esté suspect
 Et je voy bien que l’autre vous offence.
 Helas Philis pour me guerir
 Apprenez moy ce qu’il faut faire;
 Puis-je parler, dois-je me taire,
 Pour moy je croy qu’il faut mourir

L’un de ces deux tyrans est d’accord avec vous
 Pour me faire languir sous un cruel Empire;
 L’autre malgré vostre couroux
 Me dit qu’il faut declarer mon martire.
 Helas Philis pour me guerir
 Apprenez moy ce qu’il faut faire;
 Puis-je parler, dois-je me taire,
 Pour moy je croy qu’il faut mourir.

Each line of poetry contributes to the meaning of the poem.⁸⁴ Two lines, a distich, usually form a sentence; sentences (a minimum of two) form strophes and additional strophes complete the sense of the text. Though most poems are strophic, several in the Bacilly volumes, in particular the second, have only one strophe, such as in the very concise ‘Loin de vos yeux’ (fig.7).⁸⁵ They include all subject-types, though musically the ‘painful’ and ‘bitter-sweet’ single-strophe airs tend to be more akin to the regular phrasing and rhythms of the *air galant* than that of the *air sérieux*.

Fig.7 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.21]

Loin de vos yeux je soupire,
 Prez d’eux je suis interdit.
 Voila tout ce que j’en puis dire,

⁸¹ See Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.259.

⁸² Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.279, uses Bacilly’s ‘Il faut parler pour finir son martire’ (Bacilly I [1668], p.72), as an example, whose five lines of text comprise a combined *exordium* and *narratio* followed by *propositio*, *confirmatio* and *peroratio* (which involves the final two lines).

⁸³ Bacilly I, (1668), pp.18-21.

⁸⁴ Structure and syntax in lyric poetry is analysed in detail in Gordon-Seifert (1994), pp.80-1, 99.

⁸⁵ In Bacilly (1664), vol.17v-18, this air is printed with the words of a second strophe.

Et peut-estre en ay-je trop dit.⁸⁶

The airs in Bacilly's volumes normally have two strophes, of which the second is usually indispensable to the overall meaning of the poem. Others, such as 'Qui conte les faveurs' (Bacilly I, pp.40-3), have three strophes, though this is more a feature of the lighter airs,⁸⁷ in which the subsequent strophes are less crucial to the sense of the poem, the theme having been set in the first strophe. Exceptions include 'Lors que pour me contenter', a 'bitter-sweet', light air, in which the 'bitter-sweet' element is reserved till the end of second strophe:

Fig.8 [Bacilly II, pp.54-5]

Lors que pour me contenter
Iris se met a chanter,
Ô dieux que cette belle
Exprime bien pour moy
Ce que je sens pour elle.

Ces soupirs et ces langueurs
Dont elles flatte le cœur
Pour elles sont des feintes;
Mais las ce sont pour moy
De mortelles atteintes.⁸⁸

Two-thirds of the airs in Bacilly's first 1668 volume and just over half of the airs in the second volume are in mixed verse,⁸⁹ where the lines in a strophe are of irregular or alternating length (the six lines of Bacilly's 'Après mille tourmens', for example, are 8, 10, 12, 12, 12 and 8 syllables long).⁹⁰ In his description of the first French pastoral, Cambert's *La Pastorale d'Issy* (1659), Méneftier commented on the suitability of mixed verse for lyric poetry:

'Les Vers libres de mesures inégales, [...], ne contribuerent pas peu à faire réussir ces actions par la liberté que l'on eut d'en faire de cette sorte au lieu des Vers Alexandrins,

⁸⁶ 'I sigh when I am far from your eyes, / I am forbidden to approach them. / That is all I am able to say about it, / and perhaps I have said too much.' Bacilly repeats the last line in his setting, reinforcing the impression that perhaps too much has been said (the musical setting of these texts is examined in the following chapter of this essay). Other single-strophe airs include: 'Dussay-je avoir' (I, p.64), 'Soupirez doux Zephirs' (II, pp.38-9), 'Vous doutez que l'amour' (II, p.31) and 'Fleurs qui naissez' (II, p.69).

⁸⁷ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.80, perhaps mistaking the part of the second treble voice given separately for another verse, mentions that 'A l'ombre de ce bocage' has four verses, while it actually has only three (see Fig.5). On the other hand, 'L'Autre jour une bergere' has two verses written out, but two fragments are given at the end with the directions 'pour le 3^{me} couplet' and 'pour le 4^{me} couplet'; it is unclear, however, how these strophes are meant to be completed without the full text.

⁸⁸ 'When, so as to please me, / Iris starts to sing, / O heavens, how well this beauty / expresses on my behalf / what I feel for her. // The sighing and languishing, / with which she flatters our hearts / is all feigned on her part; / but alas, it is to me / a mortal blow.'

⁸⁹ 'vers libres'. Aquien (1995), p.35, has pointed out the confusion resulting from the use of the same terminology to denote the 'vers libres', or free verse of the 19th century and has suggested the term 'vers mêlés', or mixed verse, as more appropriate to 17th-century poetry, in which conventionally structured lines are alternated.

⁹⁰ Bacilly II (1668), pp.8-9.

qui étoient les seuls qu'on récitoient sur nos Theatres. On connut que ces petits Vers étoient plus propres pour la Musique que les autres, parce qu'ils sont plus coupez, & qu'ils ont plus de rapport aux *Versi sciolti* des Italiens qui servent à ces actions.⁹¹

The rest of the airs are in regular heptasyllabic, octosyllabic or decasyllabic verse; the alexandrine rhythm, which had strong associations to French classical *tragédie*, is also used (such as in 'Vous l'avez entendu').⁹²

Each line of poetry contained a caesura, or moment of repose that usually divided the line into two equal 'hemistiches' (hence it would occur on the sixth syllable in an alexandrine and on the fourth in an octosyllabic line), but could also divide the line unequally: the caesura in a decasyllabic line could be after the fourth or sixth syllable.

Though the length of the line varied, great importance was placed on the rhyme. The quatrains generally rhyme in ABAB or ABBA; repetitions of the last line, such as in Lambert's 'Jugez si ma peine est extreme' (1666, pp.28-31), create an extra rhyme (in this case, ABBAA). Those of six lines, the sixains, offer more possibilities: ABABAB, AABCCB, AABCBC, ABBACC, ABABCC, ABCBCB and ABBCDD, for example, are patterns found in the Bacilly volumes and Lambert's book of airs.⁹³ Bacilly's 'Mon sort est digne' rhymes in ABABCDCDC.⁹⁴ Both the regular and mixed verse poems mix or alternate masculine and feminine endings. Feminine endings (which end in the 'feminine' or 'mute' *e*) contain an extra syllable at the end of the line that is not counted – thus a feminine alexandrine has thirteen syllables, but alternating masculine and feminine alexandrines do not constitute mixed verse.

Bacilly's discussion on the poetry of airs in Chapter XI of the *Remarques* is based on first-hand experience as an author of such poetic material. He produced airs with texts in the *galant* style throughout his career, beginning in the late 1650s until his death in 1690, publishing them in several collections and individually in the *Mercure galant*. Although Bacilly limited his musical examples in the *Remarques* to his *galant* airs, his discussion on the nature of poetry in Chapter XI encompasses all types of airs,

⁹¹ Ménestrier (1681), p.210: 'Mixed verse of unequal length [...] greatly contributed to the success of these activities thanks to the fact that poets were permitted to use them rather than alexandrines, which was the only type of verse declaimed in the theatre. People realised that these shorter lines were more suited to music than the others because they are more varied and bear a greater resemblance to the Italian *versi sciolti* which serve this purpose.'

⁹² Bacilly II (1668), pp.4-5.

⁹³ Bacilly's volumes contain a few airs of eight lines long: the rhyming pattern of 'En vain j'ay consulté l'amour' (1668, I, pp.18-21) is ABABCDDC.

including drinking songs, airs found in the *ballet* and in opera and sacred *airs de récit*, for Bacilly did not limit himself solely to writing poetry for airs in the *galant* style: the *air à boire*, or *bachique*, also spans his career, and his *airs spirituels* appeared in the 1670s, with a second edition in the late 1680s followed by two more posthumous editions by Ballard. The *airs à boire* are less conventional than the texts of his *airs galants*, perhaps because the author was less restricted by rules and principles governing their creation; indeed, the *Mercure galant* reported on the originality of Bacilly's own texts for such airs, in which he comments on the drinking of tea, coffee and of chocolate,⁹⁵ an unusual variation on the more traditional alcoholic beverages (wine or beer) and the consequences of their abuse:

Fig.9 [MG August 1686, pp.200-201].

Café délicieux dont la douce amertume
M'a sceu garantir tant de foi
d'un impitoyable Rhume
Qui venoit desoler ma voix.
Je serois un ingrat
Si je ne chantois a ta gloire;
Nargue du chocolat
Je n'en veux jamais boire;
Fi fi fi fi du Thé,
Et vive le café.⁹⁶

The other constant theme in Bacilly's Chapter XI is the relative merits of French and Italian singers and vocal music. The issue was famously debated at the beginning of the eighteenth century following the publication of François Ragueneau's *Parallèle des Italiens et des François en ce qui regarde la Musique et les Opéra* in Paris in 1702. Ragueneau's work was so overwhelmingly in praise of Italian music that it prompted a response by Le Cerf in the form of the *Comparaison* and a further publication by Ragueneau, the *Défense du Parallèle des Italiens et des François* (Paris 1705). This was essentially a debate between the partisans of Lullian opera around 1700 and its detractors, between those who favoured the virtuosity of Italian singers and the richness of Italian ornamentation over the comparatively lifeless singing of the French which they considered too heavily governed by rules. More specifically, Ragueneau also pointed to the superior nature of Italian airs as regards their more complex harmony and daring

⁹⁴ In his setting, Bacilly repeats the final line, resulting in ABABCDCCDC.

⁹⁵ 'Fut-il jamais breuvage plus savoureux, plus délicat, que le chocolat?', *MG* June 1684, pp.260-261.

⁹⁶ 'Delicious coffee, whose sweet bitterness / on more than one occasion / has fended off a ruthless cold / which threatened to ruin my voice. / I would be ungrateful / if I did not sing your praises; / you are superior to chocolate, / which I never want to try; / so pooh-pooh to tea, / praise be to coffee.'

use of dissonance and their more interesting textures in which equal attention was paid to all the parts.⁹⁷

The debate between French and Italian music at the beginning of the eighteenth century paralleled the broader literary arguments between the partisans of ancient classical ideals and those who opposed them in the seventeenth century, known as the ‘ancients’ and ‘moderns’.⁹⁸ Le Cerf associated the literary quarrels with musical ones; as Le Cerf defended what had by that stage become the classical French tradition (Lullian opera) against ‘modern’ Italian cantatas and sonatas, so had Boileau defended classical literary ideals against ‘modern’ literature influenced by Italian models.⁹⁹

However, these differences had become an issue long before Ragueneau’s arguments appeared in print and were a feature of seventeenth-century writings: Saint-Evremond had tackled the matter of French and Italian singing in 1684, concluding that *solus Gallus cantat*;¹⁰⁰ Ménéstrier, in 1681, noted the peculiarities of each nation’s singing style and concluded that only the French could sing properly;¹⁰¹ and the very same characteristics listed by Ragueneau and Le Cerf were already clearly defined by Bacilly in 1668, when Lullian opera as Le Cerf knew it was not yet a factor in the debate. Lully made his contribution to highlighting the differences in his *Ballet de la Raillerie* (1659), which contains a ‘Dialogue de la Musique italienne et de la musique française’ in which the vocal style of the two countries are exaggeratedly contrasted, and the question was being pursued in Maugars’ *Response faite à un curieux* of 1639 and Mersenne’s comparison between French and Italian vocal styles in 1636.¹⁰²

Italian music did not conform to the aesthetic ideal of Aristotelian mimesis. The criticism levelled at Italian music by those who preferred moderate and sincere expression to the Italian tendency to obscure the words with elaborate embellishment is a direct response to the flouting of this principle; such music could appear artificial,

⁹⁷ Ragueneau (1702), pp.28-33, 38-40.

⁹⁸ Grell (2000), pp.263-5, has also noted the political aspect of this debate towards the end of the 17th century in which the ‘moderns’ were portrayed as royalists, defending the superiority of the French language – symbolising the greatness of France and by implication its sovereign – from those who favoured ancient classical ideals.

⁹⁹ Cowart (1981), pp.63 and 72-4; see in particular her ch.2-4 for a more detailed discussion of the issues involved in the literary and musical debates.

¹⁰⁰ (1684), pp.100-6. Saint-Evremond wrote the majority of *Sur les Opera* in exile in 1669-70; by the time it was finished and published, he had come to admire Lully’s operas.

¹⁰¹ (1681), p.107; Ménéstrier attempted to trace the origins of music, and of singing in particular, explored the Italian origins of opera and discussed the issue of French versification. Ménéstrier’s own conclusion on the merits of Italian, Spanish, French and German singers, *Galli cantant*, may be the inspiration for Saint-Evremond’s view.

insincere and against Aristotelian moderation. Bacilly criticised the Italian tendency towards repetition of insignificant words for the sake of embellishment in Chapter XI and again at the beginning of Part 2;¹⁰³ Le Cerf, who quoted Boileau's *Art Poétique* to make his case, produced the same observation:

‘Quand [les Musiciens Italiens] ont repris une ou deux fois les deux derniers Vers de l'air, vous croyés que c'est fait: pardonnés-moi. Sur la dernière syllabe du dernier mot, qui souvent ne fait rien au sens; mais où il y aura quelque *a* ou quelque *o* propres à leurs passages badins, ils vous mettent un roulement de 5. ou 6. mesures: en faveur duquel répétant sur nouveaux frais le dernier Vers 3. ou 4. fois, en voilà encore pour un quart d'heure. Et où est le naturel à cela, où est la belle expression? [...] *Evitons ces excés: laissons à l'Italie / De tous ces faux brillans l'éclatante folie.*'¹⁰⁴

We therefore find Bacilly among a number of commentators in an on-going debate, firmly in favour of French singers and French vocal music, while not denying the skill of his Italian counterparts.

The new factor that Bacilly brought into the argument over the differences between the French and the Italians was language, which until then had not been drawn into the debate as much as the difference in character traits. Several factors may have influenced his stance and the strength of his position on this matter: Bacilly's italoophile teacher, Pierre de Nyert, played a large part in defining the nationality of the vocal style which would dominate the second half of the century in France by tailoring an Italianate style of singing to suit French taste.¹⁰⁵ This would explain Bacilly's reluctance to dismiss the skill of Italian singers entirely while highlighting the difference in temperament, and hence in musical taste, between the two nations. It is also possible that Bacilly's keenness to establish the identity of French vocal music and performance may stem from the political environment of his period. The ascent of Louis XIV to the throne in 1661 ended the pro-Italian policy pursued by cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661), an Italian who adopted French nationality in 1639, as regards music at the French court during Anne of Austria's regency;¹⁰⁶ his influence had already found resistance during

¹⁰² (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.357.

¹⁰³ Bacilly (1668), pp.92/ 213, 246/ 330.

¹⁰⁴ Le Cerf (1705), I, p.63 'Once [the Italian musicians] have repeated once or twice the last two lines of an air, one thinks it is over: excuse me. On the final syllable of the last word, which is often meaningless but which contains a convenient 'a' or 'o' for their playful embellishments, they insert a *roulement* that is five or six bars long; because of it, they repeat once again the last line three or four times, and the whole thing lasts another quarter of an hour. Where is natural expression in all this? [...] "Let us avoid such excess: let Italy keep / the dazzling madness of such artificial glitter".'

¹⁰⁵ The precise nature of this achievement is discussed later in Chapter 4 of this essay.

¹⁰⁶ Mazarin was responsible for the introduction of Italian opera in France. Ménestrier recalled the following in his *Représentations*: 'L'an 1647, le Cardinal Mazarin, qui vouloit introduire en France les divertissemens d'Italie, fit venir des Comédiens de delà des Monts, qui représentèrent au Palais Royal,

the years of the civil wars known as the Fronde between 1648 and 1653. Lully, whose career would soar during Louis XIV's reign, starting with his nomination as 'Surintendant de la Musique du Roi', obtained French nationality in 1661, married a French singer and had the Italian troupe of musicians sent away from the court in 1666, thus reinforcing his position as a French musician.¹⁰⁷ As Ménéstrier pointed out in 1681, his style would come to define French music, written for the glorification of the king of France.¹⁰⁸ It was at this point, early in the new king's reign, that Bacilly wrote and published his treatise; it represents the crystallisation of a French style at a time when the French identity was reasserting itself.¹⁰⁹

Although language plays a large part in defining the nationality of Bacilly's art of singing, as demonstrated in the second and third parts of the treatise, the inclusion of the first part confirms that the peculiarities of the French language in declamation are not the sole ingredient. What we see from Chapter XI in particular, and later in Chapters XII and XIII, is that Bacilly's conception of singing places it not only at the heart of French society but also at the heart of current literary and philosophical ideas in France: it reflects in clear and direct terms the notions of clarity, the espousal of natural expression and the rejection of artifice, both in the poetry and in the music, which characterize French thought of the period. This first part is as vital to determining the value of the *Remarques* as a literary work and commentator on vocal activities as the second and third parts are in establishing its importance as a theoretical work on the art of declamation; both combine to form a practical manual for singing.

Orphée & Euridice en Vers Italiens & en Musique, avec de merveilleux changements de Theatre, & des machines qu'on n'avoit pas encore vûes.' ('In 1647, Cardinal Mazarin, who wanted to introduce Italian *divertissements* in France, invited foreign actors who performed *Orphée et Euridice* in Italian verse and music at the Palais Royal, with wonderful scene changes and machines the like of which we had not seen before.' [1681], p.195.) Mazarin invited the harpist and singer Marazzoli, the singer Leonora Baroni and the castrato Atto Melani in 1644

¹⁰⁷ Cowart (1981), pp.16-19 labels the year 1661 as 'the year of transition', in which Lully wrote his last work in the Italian style, the *Ballet de l'impatience*, before asserting himself as a 'French' composer.

¹⁰⁸ Ménéstrier commented on Lully's success in creating French opera: 'Monsieur Lully [...] est né au pais des belles choses, & il s'est tellement accommodé à nos manières par le long séjour qu'il a fait en France, qu'il a fait du caractere de l'esprit de sa Nation, & de celui de la nôtre ce juste mélange de l'un & de l'autre [...]' ('Monsieur Lully [...] was born in the land of beautiful things, yet has so accustomed himself to our manner following his long stay in France, that, from the nature of the character of his country and of ours, he has created a perfect combination of the two [...]'), (1681), p.151.

¹⁰⁹ The measures that Lully took to distance Italian musicians did not put an end to Italy's influence on music in France. His anti-Italian policy was undermined by the continuing interest of a number of people in Italian music, such as Abbé Nicolas Matthieu of Saint-André-des-Arts, who held weekly concerts of Italian sacred music by composers such as Rossi, Cavalli and Carissimi from 1681 (Tunley [1997], pp.5-6).

CHAPTER 3

BACILLY'S REPERTOIRE: THE MUSIC OF THE *REMARQUES*

Vocal chamber music was part of the fabric of French society. In the dedication of his 1661 *Recueil des plus beaux vers*, Bacilly remarked on the extensive pursuit of this occupation ('le nombre de ceux qui chantent estant infiny, il n'y a personne qui n'ait sa Chanson favorite'),¹ which reflects the scale of vocal activity in need of a constant supply of new repertoire. The poetry of these airs has been considered; we must now turn to the music that forms the repertoire with which Bacilly is concerned in his treatise. His own published output forms the basis of this examination, without which one cannot appreciate Bacilly's position as a composer. While musical embellishment is discussed here as a defining characteristic of the air, a more detailed look at the function of ornamentation and embellishment is included in Chapter 5 of this essay.

Bacilly's *Recueil des plus beaux vers* is as illustrative of the popularity of the genre as the Ballard collections produced throughout the century.² This is a publication in three volumes in which only the texts of the airs are given and not the music; the point of it is not only to provide the full text as an *aide-mémoire* to singers who knew the melody by heart, but also, as far as it was possible, to name the poet and the composer. Although he endeavoured to list the favourite airs of the time, Bacilly pointed out that some of them, with which he must have been well acquainted judging by the contents of his library, are as much as thirty years old;³ the *Recueil* demonstrates the lasting appeal of certain airs.

Lambert is the most frequently listed composer in the *Recueil*, followed by Sébastien le Camus, whose airs published in the Ballard collections from 1656 were republished posthumously by his son Charles in 1678. Other composers named by

¹ 'Those who sing are so great in number, that everyone has a favourite song', (Bacilly *Recueil* 1661, dedicatory epistle, f.3v-4r).

² See pp.23-4.

³ That Bacilly was as acquainted with the repertoire of the early 17th century as the latest compositions can be seen in the advertisement in the *Mercure galant* in 1687 for the sale of the contents of Bacilly's library. Amongst its items are listed '[...] ouvrages du vieux Boisset, et de Guédron, de Moulinié, comme aussi toutes sortes de Livres d'Airs de differens Auteurs, dont les trois premiers ne se trouvent plus chez le sieur Ballard, & autres Livres de Richard, Chastelet, des Rosiers, Sicard, Cambefort, Hotman, Cambert, & tous les Livres de chansons à danser & à boire, depuis l'an 1621, jusqu'à la presente année [...]' ('[...] works by the elder Boisset, Guédron, Moulinié, as well as lots of different *Livres d'Airs de differens Auteurs*, of which the first three are no longer available from Mr Ballard, and other volumes by Richard, Chastelet, des Rosiers, Sicard, Cambefort, Hotman, Cambert, and all the *Livres de chansons à danser & à boire* published from 1621 to this year [...]') (*MG*, Nov. 1687, non-paginated catalogue at end of issue).

Bacilly were all leading composers of their time writing in the same genre and included Moulinié, la Barre, Sicard, Chambonnière, Cambefort, d'Ambruis and of course, Bacilly himself. The *Recueil* volumes constitute an invaluable bibliographic source for the seventeenth-century French air; not only have many of the otherwise anonymous airs in the Ballard volumes been matched to their author but the volumes also provide a useful indication as to which poets were most active in supplying composers with material to set to music.

Judging from his output, it would be easy to believe that Bacilly was steeped in the French air to the exclusion of much else. Although it is true that all his published works are in the same genre – solo vocal chamber music - the same *Mercurie galant* announcement of the sale of his library shows that Bacilly's musical interests were by no means limited and included sacred and secular music, Italian music and opera:

‘[...] Monsieur de Bacilly avertit qu’il a une bibliothèque à vendre de toutes sortes de livres de musique, italienne, latine & françoise, *in quarto*, au nombre de plus de cent volumes, à trois, à quatre & à cinq parties, [...] même plusieurs opera tant notez qu’en feuille, & plusieurs livres à vignette, reliez en maroquin, pour écrire de la musique & de la tablature.’⁴

Nevertheless, the air, of which Bacilly covers a wide range, is our sole basis on which to assess his output.

In spite of belonging to a popular repertoire, Bacilly's own volumes of airs are of particular interest amongst contemporary works thanks in a large part to his decision to follow Michel Lambert's example and not hire the services of the royal printer Ballard for their publication. The monopoly of this family over music printing had begun with Pierre Ballard by royal decree in 1611, which was reiterated in 1633 and 1637. The career of his son Robert, who took over the family business, was marked by a series of court cases against other publishers attempting to undermine his exclusive rights to publication. Christophe Ballard (1641-1715) took over the family enterprise upon receiving a renewal the royal privilege on the 11th May 1673.⁵ Under his direction

⁴ ‘Monsieur de Bacilly announces that he is selling his library containing over one hundred volumes for three, four and five parts of all kinds of Italian, Latin and French music *in quarto*, [...] even several operas notated on loose sheets and several leather-bound volumes with vignettes for writing music and tablature’ (*MG* November 1687, non-paginated catalogue at end of issue). There is no information as to why Bacilly was selling his library, for he had family to whom to leave it; perhaps times were hard, for there is no evidence Bacilly had a pension and must therefore have earned his living entirely from the sale of his works and from teaching, something which he was perhaps less capable of doing three years before his death.

⁵ The royal privilege was renewed once more on the 6th May 1750 with his son, Jean-Baptiste Christophe, at the head of the firm. (Benoit [1971], p.369).

from 1674, the monopoly of the firm was finally ended with the use of the new technique of musical engraving: Lambert obtained a royal privilege in March 1659 to publish his 1660 volume of airs, which employed the services of the engraver Pierre Richer and was the first known example of music in France to be printed using this technique of engraving,⁶ in contrast to the Ballards' moveable type. Bacilly, whose dance airs and drinking airs continued to feature prominently in the Ballard editions throughout the 1660s, was quick to emulate Lambert by publishing his first personal volume of airs, the 1661 *Nouveau Livre d'airs*, in the same fashion and with the services of the same engraver. The difference between the two methods is illustrated in Examples A, B and C.

Example A: 'Vous voulez qu'on vous trouve belle', from Bacilly III. *Livre de chansons pour danser et pour boire*, Paris, R. Ballard, 1665, p.34 (B.N.F. microfilm). This sample shows the *dessus* and vocal bass parts of an *air sérieux* included in the volume, with the two parts on facing pages.



⁶ See Devriès (1976), p.4.

Example B: 'Non n'aprehendez point', from the third edition of Lambert's 1660 *Les Airs de Monsieur Lambert*, Paris 1666 (Minkoff facsimile edition 1983), p.24. This extract shows the *dessus*, vocal bass and continuo parts in score format.

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Non n'aprehendez point que ie vous fasse en-ten-dre le pouuoir abso=

Non n'aprehendez point que ie vous fasse en-ten-dre le pouuoir abso=

6 7 6 6 3 5 3 8 7 6 * 3 5 5 6

Example C: 'Auprez des beaux yeux de Silvie', from Bacilly *Nouveau Livre d'airs gravez par Richer*, Paris, Ch.de Sercy, 1661, (Fuzeau facsimile edition 1996), p.48.

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Auprez des beaux yeux de Silui=e ie lan=guis

Auprez des beaux yeux de Silui=e ie lan=guis ie lan=guis

The significance of this new printing technique is momentous to our understanding of contemporary performance practice: engraving offered far greater flexibility in notation than Ballard's typography. Consequently, the *double*, the complexly embellished and ornamented second verse of an air (see below), could more easily be expressed in engraved notation than in the more cumbersome moveable type, and it seems that Lambert was fully aware of the new possibilities available to him for his book of airs is the first printed collection to provide a *double* for each air.

None of the Ballard collections provides a *double*, neither those of the 1660s nor his later ones such as the *VI^e Recueil de chansonnettes de differents auteurs à deux parties* of 1680:⁷ not until the beginning of the eighteenth century does the *double* appear in these volumes with the three books of *Brunettes et petits airs tendres*.⁸ Lambert's second and last volume to be published during his lifetime was the 1689

⁷ However, La Barre's 1669 book of airs, published by Robert Ballard, includes the *double* of each air (La Barre [1669]).

⁸ Ballard (1703, 1704, 1711).

book of airs; dedicated to the king, it represents his entire output from 1658 and includes airs not previously in print. Published by Christophe Ballard in moveable type, the sixty pieces it contains, four of which are dialogues written for Lully's court ballets of the late 1660s,⁹ feature no *doubles*, in contrast to the 1660 volume, and few clues are given as to ornamentation with the exception of an occasional 't'.¹⁰

It is therefore thanks to Lambert's initiative that the *double* is provided for almost every air in Bacilly's two 1668 volumes,¹¹ as well as in those of d'Ambruis, who made copious and very precise use of ornament symbols throughout his 1685 publication. This collection was engraved by a certain Lhuillier in Paris and published by Pierre le Monier. D'Ambruis, who wished to present a definitive version of his airs to the public, provided a table of ornament signs (but not their realisation) in the preface to the publication. These printed *doubles* not only provide us with a clearer picture of how these particular airs were performed, but they are an invaluable source for the analysis of the technique of improvised ornamentation and embellishment employed in airs in general in the middle of the seventeenth century. It is little coincidence that Lambert's airs should be included in the *Remarques* alongside Bacilly's own compositions to illustrate this very technique.

There is another reason for which Lambert's 1660 book is significant to this study of the air: not only was the engraving itself a novelty, but the layout of the book was new. The usual method of presentation was to have the separate vocal parts (generally a *dessus* and vocal bass part) facing each other on a separate page, such as in the Ballard publications up to and including the 1684 *XXVIIe Livre d'airs de differents auteurs à deux et trois parties*. From the *XXVIIIe Livre* (1685) onwards, though, the two or three vocal parts, to which is frequently added a basso continuo, appear in score format, until then commonly used only in manuscript collections.¹² Lambert's book, however, uses this type of presentation as early as 1660: all the vocal parts, together with a basso continuo line (a relatively recent phenomenon in France)¹³ are presented in

⁹ Massip (1999), p.138, notes that the inclusion of these four dialogues in Lambert's 1689 book confirms the identity of their author: they are contained in the manuscript sources of Lully's early ballets without any attribution.

¹⁰ This indicated a *tremblement* of variable length; see Chapter 5, pp.124-5.

¹¹ Three airs in volume I and seven airs in volume II are without a *double*.

¹² Massip (1999), p.153.

¹³ Massip (1999), p.15. The early 17th-century air was written for several voices or solo voice with lute tablature, a method of presentation which became infrequent after 1643 and almost vanished around 1650-1660 in favour of the basso continuo. Massip (p.140) has catalogued Lambert's compositions and notes that only one air by Lambert, "Prononcez l'arrêt de ma mort", exists in lute tablature in a manuscript volume of anonymous airs edited by Ballard between 1650-60.

score format (see Ex. B, above). In his use of basso continuo, or *basse continue*, Lambert was ahead of the Ballards: in his preface, Lambert explained why he provided only a *basse continue* and not tablature for the theorbo (he claimed this would facilitate the transposition of the accompaniment when the singer required it)¹⁴ while a figured bass accompaniment did not appear in the Ballard volumes until 1672 with the *XV Livre d'airs de differents auteurs à deux parties*.¹⁵

Gundrun Ryhming¹⁶ has warned against dealing with the air as a unified genre, as it includes such a variety of texts and all levels of technical difficulty: all of these are reflected in Bacilly's work. It also involves some overlap between different types of air, as Jean Sicard observed in the preface to his *4e livre d'airs à boire* of 1669:

'parmy les [pièces] Sérieuses, il y a des enjoués qui demandent un mouvement fort gai; Il y en a aussi à boire, qui demandent le mouvement sérieux, & l'enjoué tout ensemble.'¹⁷

The basic premise for the genre, however, was a short, simple bipartite air offering the possibility for virtuosic embellishment, which required, if anything, only another voice, sometimes more, or (preferably) a theorbo as accompaniment and could easily be suited to all types of voices; it was, above all, a vehicle through which to express the text.

The *air sérieux* is that which figures most prominently in the *Remarques*. It is this type of air which the poet Pierre Perrin described poetically as 'la musique des anges';¹⁸ his definition, contained in his 1666 *Recueil de paroles de musique*, is more technical. He begins with the following description:

'L'Air marche à mesure et à mouvement libres et graves, et ainsy il est plus propre pour exprimer l'amour honneste, et les emotions tendres qu'il cause dans les cœurs [...]'¹⁹

The *air sérieux* distinguishes itself by its *galant* text, and Perrin continues with the specifics of its construction, both textual and musical:

¹⁴ However, tablature would in fact be more convenient if one wanted to transpose by the interval of a second or third, as the instrument could be re-tuned (though see Ch.IV, p.22/ 179-180, on the inconvenience of having to tune a theorbo).

¹⁵ The term 'basse continue', however, only appeared for the first time in Christophe Ballard's first volume, the 1674 *XVIIe Livre d'airs de differents auteurs à deux parties* (Massip 1999, p.153).

¹⁶ (1982/2), p.3.

¹⁷ 'amongst the [*airs*] *sérieux*, some are merry and require a very lively *mouvement*; there are also some *airs à boire* that require both a serious and a merry *mouvement* all at once'.

¹⁸ This is from a sonnet by Perrin written in honour of Lambert (whom he likens to Amphiion, Orpheus and Apollo) on p.3 of the 1666 edition, inserted between the preface and the first air.

¹⁹ 'The air progresses with a free and solemn metre, and is therefore more suited to expressing honest love and the tender emotions it arouses [...]' Perrin (1986), 'Avant-propos', p.xi.

‘L’Air [...] n’excede pas la valeur de six grands vers, ny se borne pas aussy à moins du grand Distique; Les meilleurs à mon avis sont les quatrains, cinquains ou sixains de vers irreguliers. Il peut estre composé de trois parties, mais il reussit mieux à deux, qui quadrent à deux reprises de chant. Il peut estre meslé de Rondeaux, au commencement, au milieu, à la fin, ou en quelque endroit que ce soit; et ces jeux mesmes ont beaucoup de grace dans la musique, parce qu’ils donnent lieu aux reprises et aux repetitions, imitations et relations de chant, sur lesquelles roule toute sa beauté.’²⁰

This description is apt for the airs of Lambert and Bacilly; the *airs sérieux* of Lambert’s volume and of Bacilly’s two 1668 volumes, for which he wrote his own *galant* poetry, are typical of the mid-seventeenth-century air in form: strophic binary with repeats, i.e. AABB, is the most common, the two parts separated by a double bar [A//B].²¹ Occasionally, the repetition of the opening material at the end of the air creates a ternary structure, as in Bacilly’s ‘Il faut parler’ (1668, I, p.72) for example, where the phrase pattern is AB//CDA; and in ‘Au secours ma raison’ (1668, I, pp.28-31), which has no double bar, the first two phrases (the rhetorical ‘Au secours, au secours’) are repeated textually and musically at the end of the air, providing a structural repetition: the result is ABCDEFAB’ (where B’ is embellished).

In the air ‘Puis que Philis est infidelle’ (1668, I, pp.4-8) Bacilly has created a tripartite structure within the confines of binary form by displacing the repetition of the second half to exclude the repetition of the first phrase. The six-line verse is constructed as follows as regards the length of each line: 8 6 8 // 6 12 12, rhyming as ABA // BCC. The musical phrases are ABC // DEF; however, the notes and text inserted after the final double bar that serve to indicate where to begin the reprise (// [ai]-me Ah!) imply that only E and F are to be repeated, resulting in ABCABC D EFEF rather than the expected ABCABC DEFDEF. This scheme with the solitary D phrase seems to have been suggested by the text itself:

[A] Puisque Philis est infidelle
 [B] Evitons le trépas
 [C] Mon cœur révoltions nous contre elle //

[D] Mais tu n’y consens pas

[E] Ah! Qu’il est malaisé quand l’amour est extreme
 [F] De bannir de son cœur une ingrante qu’on aime.

²⁰ ‘The air [...] does not exceed six long lines, nor can it be shorter than a distich; the best [airs] in my opinion are those of four, five or six lines of irregular length. It can be composed of three parts but is more successful in two, where the repetition of the melody in each part mirrors the other. It can include a rondo, either at the beginning, in the middle, at the end, or anywhere during the course of the air; and these devices are very graceful because they initiate repetition and reiteration, imitation and melodic relationships, on which rests the beauty of the air.’ Perrin (1986), ‘Avant-propos’, p.xi.

²¹ Although this is the general form, ‘En vain j’ay consulté l’amour’ (Bacilly I [1668], pp.19-21), for instance, with an eight-line stanza, has no double bar or structural repeats.

The thought introduced by phrase D contrasts entirely with the defiance expressed in A, B and C; it is also separate from E and F which together have the character of a concluding maxim.

Lambert avoided the regular binary form with repeats on two occasions in the 1660 book, of which the third, 1666 edition has been used for the purposes of this edition:²² ‘Jugez si ma peine est extreme’ (1666, pp.28-32) is constructed of repetitions and a refrain, resulting in ABAB CDACDAA’.²³ In ‘J’ay juré mille fois de ne jamais aymer’ (1666, pp.48-51), the first part has no repeat (there is no double bar) but a repetition of the second half is indicated by a prompt after the final double bar: ABCDEFEF.²⁴

The diversity of structure which can be achieved within this binary arrangement is what has led Massip,²⁵ in agreement with J.R. Anthony,²⁶ to consider the air as a miniature form: in both the Bacilly volumes and Lambert in particular, we find a variety of internal structures which distract from, and occasionally defy, the overall binary form.

In *L’Art poetique*, Boileau decreed that the metrical articulations and the grammatical articulations in a line of poetry had to coincide.²⁷ That meant that the fixed accents (the caesura and the rhyme) had to coincide with commas and full stops. This respect for the fixed accents was transmitted to music: Bacilly placed great importance on the line ending, the rhyme, which must always be observed as it dictates the placing of musical cadences, and therefore shapes the phrase structure of the air.²⁸ The caesura in each line of poetry was also respected in composition: it was usually highlighted by a cadence or long note.²⁹ As each line of poetry could be of variable length, the melody was inevitably of flexible structure and rhythm, for by submitting the melody to the poetic form, prominence could be given to the poetry, which was the primary function of this type of air. The metric and rhyming conventions of lyric poetry therefore help shape the melodic construction of the *air sérieux*: lines of irregular length and

²² See Editorial Notes, p.157.

²³ The last refrain (A’) is a slightly altered version of A.

²⁴ Massip (1999), p.167 has noted Lambert’s efforts to amplify and escape the predominant binary structure with repeats in his 1689 volume of airs with the use of rondo form, basso ostinato and a rondo within a binary structure with repeats in some of his later airs.

²⁵ Massip (1991), p.130.

²⁶ Anthony (1997), p.416.

²⁷ Aquien (1995), p.87.

²⁸ Bacilly makes this point frequently in the treatise, as on p.119/ 231-2.

²⁹ Long notes could also punctuate further divisions of the line within each hemistich.

alternating feminine and masculine line-endings are reflected in a free-metered melody with occasional changes of metre which accommodate the shifting poetic accents, in contrast to lighter airs (the *chansons*) which are often constrained by a regular dance metre. The air ‘Fault il que malgré ma raison’ (Bacilly 1668, II, pp.46-7) for example, has a line scheme of 8 8 12 // 10 12 12; the melodic phrases which correspond to these lines, defined by cadences, are of very irregular lengths (the following indicate the number of whole bars and the superscript number, the additional beats): $3^2 2^1 4^2 // 4 3^2 6^2$ (the last line includes a repetition of the words ‘ses rigueurs’). When the text of an *air sérieux* is more square-cut in structure, such as a quatrain of alexandrines, the insertion of textual repetitions help break the regular phrase pattern: in ‘Qui conte les faveurs’ (Bacilly 1668, I, pp.40-3) for instance, the melody of the first three lines of twelve syllables is five bars long, but the last line is extended to eight bars by the repetition of ‘et lors qu’on est heureux’ (the first half of the last alexandrine); in addition, the melody is characterised by a regularly alternating metre between 3 (minim beats, that is $\frac{3}{2}$) and 2 (minim beats, that is $\frac{2}{2}$). This can be seen in Example D. Similarly, the second half of the last of the six alexandrines in ‘Si malgré la rigueur’ (Bacilly 1668, II, pp.67-8), the words ‘que vous ne m’aimez pas’, is repeated, extending it to seven bars.

EXAMPLE D [Bacilly I, 1668, p.41]

Qui - con - que a de l'a - mour doit a - voir du se -
 Qui - con - que a de l'a - mour doit a - voir du se -
 -cret Et lors qu'on est heu - reux Et lors qu'on
 -cret Et lors qu'on est heu - reux Et lors qu'on
 est heu - reux il faut es - tre dis - cret
 est heu - reux il faut es - tre dis - cret

In spite of these textual repetitions, there are very few melodic repetitions in these airs, with the exception of a few imitative entries and the ternary-form returns; textual repetitions during the course of an air are therefore not generally mirrored in the melody.³⁰

The *air sérieux* also distinguishes itself by the complex nature of its *double* and this must be one of the reasons for which Bacilly chose to concentrate on the *air sérieux* in the *Remarques* by drawing from this repertoire for his references to musical examples: the quality and subject of the poetry and the combination of simplicity (in the first verse, or *simple*, which was only moderately ornamented) and complexity (in the *double*, which gave singers the opportunity to display fully their technical skill with the addition of more complex embellishment) of the vocal line provided a suitable vehicle for Bacilly's pedagogical intentions.

The French practice of the improvised *double* dates from the first half of the century and has its roots in Italian vocal diminution of the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century.³¹ Mersenne illustrated the existing practice in his *Harmonie universelle*, where a short air by Boesset, 'N'esperez plus mes yeux', is printed together with embellished versions by Moulinié, Bailly³² and Boesset.³³ Moulinié had earlier included a dialogue with two subsequent verses in diminution in a 1625 collection of airs,³⁴ but the *double* was essentially an aural tradition that only began to be recorded in print with any consistency with Lambert's volume of airs. The *double* offered a means of avoiding the straight musical repetition imposed by a strophic poem. The second verse becomes a variation on the first where the underlying melody is disguised by embellishments but is never entirely obscured. Occasionally a third verse is given in the Bacilly volumes, embellished differently. Both Bacilly and Lambert agree on the basic principle of an embellished variation and both share a respect for prosody in the careful placing of their embellishments (explained by Bacilly in

³⁰ Massip (1999), p.246 has called this the 'principle of non-repetition' whereby the absence of a melodic cell from which the air can be constructed results in a constantly forward-moving melody, whose momentum is provided by the structure of the poem.

³¹ Treatises on the subject of embellishment include Girolamo Della Casa's *Il vero modo di diminuir* (1594). In his *Nuove musiche* (1601/2), Caccini (who spent the winter and spring of 1604-5 displaying his vocal art in Paris with his family) included a strophic aria, 'Ard' il mio petto misero', in which slight variations occur in the melody of each strophe.

³² Henri le Bailly (d.1637) was a court musician in the first half of the seventeenth century whose skill at inventing *doubles* for other composers' airs is noted by Bacilly (Bacilly [1668] Ch.X, p.61/ 200). Bacilly also credits Bailly with the invention of *passages*, the French equivalent of the Italian *passaggi*, and diminution on p. 225/ 316.

³³ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, pp.411-12.

³⁴ Gérold (1921), pp.78-9.

Part 1, Chapter XIII, article 3 of the *Remarques*). A comparison between Bacilly's fifty-nine airs and the nineteen airs contained in the Lambert 1666 volume (the third edition of the 1660 book), however, reveals that Bacilly's embellishments, particularly in the *doubles*, can be more complex than those of Lambert; Bacilly's are more frequently 'grammatically' incorrect and it is not always an easy task to fit the *double* to the bass line provided with the *simple*, whereas the embellishments in the Lambert volume are more accurately notated.

This very imprecision on behalf of Bacilly, criticized by Massip (who finds his ornamentation on the whole indiscriminate and wasteful in comparison to the discretion and accuracy of Lambert's judiciously placed embellishments)³⁵ is in fact of great significance because Bacilly's more graphic account of this improvised art holds many clues as to the principle of ornamentation and embellishment, particularly in the alternative embellishments often inserted after the final double bar-line:³⁶ not only can these include part of a written-out ornament otherwise never illustrated, but we are also given an idea of how rhythmically flexible these embellishments were.

There are two possible explanations for the apparent difference between the approach of Bacilly and Lambert in the notation of embellishments in the *double*: either Bacilly was attempting to be more precise in reflecting performance practice in notation, and therefore Lambert's embellishments would have borne a closer resemblance to Bacilly's in performance; or the two musicians differed in their views on musical expressiveness:³⁷ Lambert, though by no means against elaborate embellishment, may have held a stricter attitude towards the supremacy of the text over the music than Bacilly, who believed that as long as the prosody (the length of syllables) and the poetic structure (the caesuras and the rhymes) were respected, then embellishments, when correctly placed, could only serve to increase the beauty of an air and reinforce its expressiveness rather than obscure the poetry; Lambert on the other hand seems more concerned with preserving the legibility of the original melody.³⁸

³⁵ Massip (1999), p.252.

³⁶ For example, Bacilly gives three alternatives to the embellishments on the words 'cause de ma mort' in the *double* of the air 'Vous l'avez entendu ce soupir' on p.7 of the second book *in octavo*.

³⁷ Bacilly mentions at the beginning of Chapter XIII, p.213/ 304-5, that not everyone agreed on the aesthetic principle that embellishments increased the expressiveness of a text.

³⁸ Massip (1999), p.255 has suggested that Lambert was not concerned with virtuosity in his use of embellishment but merely with expressing the text more effectively. She also suggests that Lambert's reserve with embellishments represent the end of the process of ridding French song from Italian excesses (p.253).

Most of the fifty-nine airs in the two 1668 volumes are for two parts, but some are for three parts (the two upper parts are written in a varied combination of clefs).³⁹ The bass line given for the first verse, or *simple*, of every air in Bacilly's volumes has both words and continuo figuration, indicating that it can be either vocal or instrumental, or both. As for the *double*, only the *dessus* part is given, often on a spare staff at the foot of each page.⁴⁰ In Lambert's volume, the airs are all for *dessus*, bass and continuo, and the vocal and instrumental bass parts are written on a separate staff in the *simple*, although the melody of the vocal part mostly follows that of the continuo, with minor rhythmic alterations to allow for the extra syllables in the text. Unlike Bacilly, however, Lambert supplied the vocal bass part for the *double* as well, to which is added the instrumental figuration together with a few extra instrumental notes.

The bass lines in both composers' airs are frequently very mobile and in addition to fulfilling a harmonic function,⁴¹ also play a distinct melodic role. Several airs, both in Bacilly's volumes and Lambert's, begin with the *dessus* echoing the vocal or instrumental bass line.⁴² [Examples E and F.]

EXAMPLE E [Lambert 1666, p.16, bb.1-9]

The musical score for Example E consists of three systems of staves. The first system has two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 3/2 time. The second system also has two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 3/2 time. The third system has three staves: a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a lower bass clef staff, all in 3/2 time. The lower bass clef staff contains the lyrics: "Il faut ay-mer" and "Il faut ay-mer il faut ay-mer c'est un". Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-6 below the notes.

³⁹ These suggest either two *dessus* parts or one *dessus* and one *hautecontre* and combine two G² clefs, two C¹ clefs, G² with C², C¹ with C³, or G² with C¹. The bass part is written in either the F³ or F⁴ clef.

⁴⁰ The other part(s) was not embellished like the *dessus*, which is why Bacilly may only have felt it necessary to supply the *dessus* part for the *doubles*. Massip (1999), p.275 has suggested that this was for reasons of economy; many *doubles* are indeed packed into spare staves.

⁴¹ Lambert seems anxious to make the harmonic movement as clear as possible: he occasionally adds small notes above the bass staff to indicate the exact placing of suspensions.

EXAMPLE F [Bacilly I, 1668, p.60, bb.1-5]

Vous ne pou - vez I -
 Vous ne pou - vez I - ris vous mons -
 - ris vous mons - trer plus se - ve - re
 - trer vous mons - trer plus se - ve - re Lors[que]

The melodic nature of Lambert’s bass line is also hinted at in the bass figuration of the air ‘O dieux comment se peut il faire’ (Example G), suggesting that these are primarily vocal rather than instrumental in nature.

EXAMPLE G [Lambert 1666, p.12]

Phi - ils puis - se ca - cher u - n[e]a - me
 [Phi]lis Phi - lis puis - se ca - cher u - nea - me
 3 5 1 2 3 4 6 3

Also present in the two 1668 volumes are light airs, what Bacilly calls ‘petits airs’, ‘chansons à danser’ or ‘chansonnettes’ in the *Remarques*. The differences between the *chanson* and the *air sérieux* are not visible in the structure; they are either in binary form with repeats or in rondo form. It is rhythm which defines these *chansons*: while the *air sérieux* is characterised by a free metre, the *chanson* is defined by its dance metre,

⁴² Le Camus’ instrumental background as court theorbo and viol player is apparent in the 3- to 5-bar instrumental preludes in his posthumous volume of airs (Le Camus [1678]).

providing a regular beat with regular accents on the principal beat(s). Perrin described it as follows:

‘La Chanson differe de l’air, en ce que l’Air suit comme nous avons dit une mesure libre, et la chanson un mouvement réglé, ou de danse ou autre; [...] Les plus communes se font pour des chants ou sur des chants de danses, graves ou legeres. Les graves sont les Sarabandes, les Gavottes graves, et les Courantes, et demandent des paroles tendres et serieuses, pareille à celles des Airs; et les Chansonnettes de danses legeres, comme Gavottes legeres, Menuets, Gygues, Passepieds, Bourrées, Canaris, Gaillardes, airs legers de ballet &c, quadrent mieux à des paroles enjouées ou champêtres.’⁴³

Christophe Ballard similarly attempted to define the *chanson à danser* in his preface to the reader of the 1673 *Recueil de chansonnettes de differents auteurs à deux parties*:

‘Sous ce titre sont comprises les Chansons à Danser, soit qu’elles ayent un mouvement de Gavote, de Sarabande, de Rondeau, de Courante, de Gigue, ou de Menuet, les Vaudevilles qui sont proprement Airs familiers, et les Villanelles qui sont des Airs champêtres.’⁴⁴

Although Bacilly’s volumes present a mixture of airs, he does not differentiate between the two types in the volumes themselves; he does, however, clearly indicate that a distinction is to be made between the *airs sérieux* and the *chansons* on page 299 of the *Remarques*, for the two types require a different treatment in terms of pronunciation and ornamentation. He cites a *gavotte* on page 56 of the first volume as an example of a *chansonnette* (Example H).

EXAMPLE H [Bacilly I, 1668, p.56]

Le Prin-temps est de re-tour tout rid dans ce bo-ca - ge Et des
L'a-mour fait ai-mer ses coups ils n'ont rien de ter-ri - ble Tout se

Le Prin-temps est de re-tour tout rid dans ce bo-ca - ge Et des

Le Prin-temps est de re - tour tout rid dans ce bo - ca - ge Et des

⁴³ ‘The *Chanson* differs from the *air* in that the *air* has, as I have already mentioned, a free metre and the *chanson* has a regular metre, be it of a dance or other; [...] They are commonly written for, or set as, a dance, which can be either slow [and solemn] or light [and lively]. The slow ones are the *Sarabande*, the slow *Gavotte* and the *Courante*, and require tender and serious lyrics, such as those of the *air*; *Chansonnettes* set to a light dance, such as the light *Gavotte*, the *Menuet*, the *Gigue*, the *Passepied*, the *Bourrée*, the *Canaries*, the *Gaillarde*, the light *air de ballet*, etc., are more suited to lively or pastoral lyrics.’ Perrin (1986), ‘Avant-propos’, p.xii.

⁴⁴ ‘This title encompasses the *chansons à danser*, be they either a *Gavote*, a *Sarabande*, a *Rondeau*, a *Courante*, a *Gigue*, or a *Menuet*, as well as the *Vaudevilles*, which are really common airs, and the *Villanelles* which are pastoral airs’ (in Massip [1999], p.189).

oi - seaux nuit et jour on en - tend le ra - ma - ge I - ris
 sent d'un mal si doux c'est un charme in - vin - ci - ble I - ris
 oi - seaux nuit et jour on en - tend le ra - ma - ge I - ris
 oi - seaux nuit et jour on en - tend le ra - ma - ge I - ris

pour fai - re l'a - mour en faut il da - van - ta - ge
 a quoy pen - sez vous d'es - tre seu - le in - sen - si - ble
 pour fai - re l'a - mour en faut il da - van - ta - ge
 pour fai - re l'a - mour en faut il da - van - ta - ge

Cet oi - seau qui de son chant fait re - ten - tir la Plai - ne Dit as -
 - sez qu'il est con - tent de l'a - mour - qui l'en - chais - ne Il ne
 chan - te - roit pas tant si ces - toit u - ne pei - ne

As a result of their regular metre, the *chansons à danser* allow for less flexible ornamentation and embellishment than the free-metred *air*; this is clearly the case in the *double* of the *gavotte* cited above, where the ornamentation and embellishment is visibly restricted, a fact which would also affect any additional improvised ornamentation in performance. Even amongst dance metres, Bacilly makes clear on page 108 of the treatise that not all the rules for ornamentation and embellishment are equally applicable to *gavottes*, *sarabandes* or *menuets*.

In spite of these definitions, the *chansons* in the two 1668 volumes are not always easily distinguishable from some of the *airs* which resemble the *chanson* in character as they have a more lively text, are written with a more regular rhythm or in a lighter style and are as easily accessible; it would seem in fact that there is a certain overlap between the two, which may have helped Massip to conclude that Bacilly's original 1661 *Nouveau Livre d'airs* (included in the new volumes of 1668) has a simple,

naïve melodic style which announces the eighteenth-century *brunette*.⁴⁵ ‘Un cœur amoureux et tendre’ (Bacilly II, 1668, pp.28-30), for instance, is such an air in a lighter style: it has a regular metre and a simple melodic style within a ternary structure. The regularity of its four-bar phrases, however, is broken by the textual, but not musical repetition of the first line of the poem, adding an extra two bars to the structure: the poetic scheme results in AB // CAD AB while the musical phrases are structured as AB // CDE AB. And yet it is not as straightforward as ‘A l’ombre de ce bocage’ (1668, II, pp.78-80), which has the unmistakable character of a popular air, what Ballard and Bacilly call a ‘villanelle’. Although many of the airs are indeed in this simpler style, by no means all of them can be dismissed as ‘naïve’: those such as ‘Puisque Philis est infidelle’, ‘Au secours ma raison’, ‘Auprez des beaux yeux de Silvie’ and ‘Je tasche en vain de faire resistance’⁴⁶ display all the characteristics of the *air sérieux* rather than the *chanson*.

Bacilly produced many of these ‘little airs’, or *chansonnettes* as he describes them in the dedication of his 1665 *III Livre de chansons pour danser et pour boire*. Together with the *air à boire* they form the largest part of Bacilly’s output, with regular publications from 1661 to 1690 in the mixed Ballard collections of *Livres de chansons pour danser et pour boire* and in the *Mercure galant*. The difference between these and those included in the 1668 volumes is that in the former only the *dessus* part is given and no *double* is provided for the words of the following verses; the 1668 volumes are therefore as informative on the principles of embellishment in the *chanson* as in the *air sérieux*.

The *air à boire*, or *bachique*, was a short strophic air for one or more voices, with or without instrumental accompaniment, binary in structure and often based on a dance rhythm, which typically celebrated wine.⁴⁷ It was usually in a simple, syllabic style. Shifting his gaze from salon to tavern, Bacilly was among the most prolific composers of this type of air during the second half of the seventeenth century, together with Moulinié and Sicard, who alone published seventeen volumes between 1666 and 1683.

⁴⁵ Massip (1999), p.275.

⁴⁶ Bacilly I (1661), pp.4-7, 28-31, 48-51 and 36-9.

⁴⁷ On the subject of his ‘paroles à boire’ in his 1666 *Recueil*, Perrin explains that he composed them ‘dans l’esprit de la chansonnette, et pour quadrer à des mouvements gays de danse ou autre’ (‘in the same vein as the *chansonnette*, and so that they may be suitable for a lively dance *mouvement* or other’, Perrin [1986], ‘Avant-propos, p.xiii).

Bacilly is also responsible, according to the *Mercur*e galant of July 1679, for the invention of a particular type of *air à boire*, the *récit de bass*.⁴⁸ These are solo binary-form *airs à boire* for bass voice, on the whole slightly longer than the *air sérieux* or the *chanson*. The poems are written in mixed verse, resulting in the same flexibility of phrase as in the *air sérieux*. These *récits* make the most of the range and flexibility of the bass voice, somewhat in contradiction to Bacilly's belief in Part 1, Chapter VII that the bass voice is inflexible and suited only to providing the continuo part in vocal music. Sicard's comment that an *air à boire* could require the weight and application normally reserved for the *air sérieux* would be appropriate to these *récits*. Examples I and J are both from the 1677 *Second recueil d'airs bachiques*. The first, 'Ah! Que l'on est misérable', with its melismatic ending, shows that a flexible voice was required; the second shows a rare use of musical imitation in response to the rhyming of the words 'ange', 'change', 'vange' and 'range'.

EXAMPLE I [Bacilly 1677, pp.31-32]

[k]

Ah! que l'on est mi-se-ra-ble que l'on est mi-se-ra-ble De ren-
-con-trer u-ne Ta-ble Ou le mais-tre de la mai-son Qui se co-gnoist en vin com-
-me un oi-son Vous en fait boi-re d'e-xe-cra-ble -[ble] Sou-vent ce-la m'est ar-ri-
-vé Et je m'en suis fait mal trou-vé Mais i-cy ce n'est pas de mes-me Nos-
-trehos-te est un hom-me di-vin Il ai-me Il ai-me Il ai-me trop la
joy-e et le bon vin Il ai-me Il ai-me trop la joy - -
- e et le bon vin

⁴⁸ 'Voici un *air à boire* dont l'Autheur est facile à deviner par le grand nombre de ceux qu'il a faits de cette manière. Je veux dire des Recits de basse. C'est luy qui en est l'original & l'inventeur, & on le peut

EXAMPLE J [Bacilly 1677, pp.23-24]

Trin - quons de ce vin a tas - se plei - ne Sans nous met - tre en pei - ne des me -
 -pris de Cli - me - ne Et de son in - fi - de - li - té Eust el - leen -
 - cor cent fois plus de beau - té Eust - el - leen - cor cent fois plus de beau - té Fust - el - leun an - ge
 Puis qu'el - le chan - ge Ba - chus me van - ge Et je me ran - ge je me
 ran - ge sous ses loix des au - jour - dhuy Sans vou - loir ja - mais rien ai - mer que luy Sans vou -
 - loir ja - mais Sansvou - loir ja - mais ja - mais rien ai - mer rien ai - mer que luy.

Bacilly's *airs spirituels*, of which the first volume was published in 1672, the second in 1677 and both republished together in the second edition of 1688, form an exception amongst his output for the reason that the texts are mostly by other poets: they are from the *Stances Chrétiennes* by l'Abbé Testu, with the exception of 'Toy qui vois d'un œil', which is by Antoine Godeau, 'Des vrais Sçavans la sagesse profonde' from Pierre Corneille's *Imitation de Jésus-Christ* and some additions, particularly of the *doubles*, by Bacilly himself. These *airs spirituels* were written in response to the problem of 'parodies' which Bacilly never found a wholly satisfactory activity: the abbé François Berthod had already transformed airs by composers such as Lambert, Moulinié and Henri Dumont into devotional songs in his three *Livres d'airs de dévotion à deux partie, ou Conversion de quelques-uns des plus beaux de ce temps en Airs Spirituels*;⁴⁹ the second volume of 1658 contains seven parodies of airs by Bacilly, five of which are from the 1661 *Nouveau Livre d'airs*. In it, Bacilly's 'Auprès des beaux yeux de Sylvie' for example becomes 'Mon Dieu, que mon Ame s'ennuie', and 'Lorsque mon cœur pour exprimer' is turned into 'Dieu tout puissant qui connois'. Berthod's textual interventions, written in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, were made for didactical

voir par ses deux livres gravez.' (MG July 2nd, 1679.)

purposes, so that nuns and devotees could exercise the art of singing without encountering the profanity of salon culture which pervaded the air. The problem with these, according to Bacilly in the 'Avis' to his 1688 collection, was that the text was usually badly suited to the existing music:

'plusieurs personnes de piété se sont contentez de faire faire des paroles spirituelles sur les airs qui courent dans le monde, pretendant par ce moyen rendre pieux ce qui est profane; mais ils n'ont pas considéré que ce changement de mots souvent ne quadre plus avec le chant composé, & que les syllabes longues ou brèves, n'y ayant plus le mesme rapport que les supprimées, cela n'a fait qu'attirer le mépris de la part de ceux qui n'ont déjà que trop de penchant à censurer les Airs qui portent pour titre le mot de Spirituels & de devotion, comme quelque chose de fade & d'insipide.'⁵⁰

Bacilly therefore tackled the problem the other way round: instead of making the words fit the existing music, he wrote music to fit existing words. In fact, Bacilly admits that his choice of poems and extracts from Testu's works had to be carefully made for the very reason that they were not originally written to be set to music:

's'il l'avoit preveu [qu'on les dût mettre en chant], il auroit fait des Madrigaux, je veux dire des couplets plus propres à faire des Airs de differente mesure'.⁵¹

Despite claiming that these airs were in fact the best for pedagogical purposes due to the elevating nature of their texts, Bacilly was still aware that in order to increase their popularity, they needed to resemble other types of airs; he said as much in the long 'Avis' at the back of the second edition on the subject of the poetry,⁵² but the *airs spirituels* are also stylistically similar to the *airs sérieux* as regards the music: they are mostly in binary form with repeats with the same alternations of metre, and are to be sung with as many ornaments and as much expression, particularly in the *double*. Again, Bacilly does not limit himself to this, for some of them are two- and three-part rondos.⁵³

⁴⁹ Paris, Robert Ballard, 3 vols: 1656, 1658 and 1662.

⁵⁰ 'Several pious people have been satisfied with having sacred words written to pre-existing fashionable airs, pretending in this way to render pious what was previously profane; but they have failed to realise that these substitute words often no longer fit the melody and the long and short syllables do not correspond to those which were there before. This has only served to attract the scorn of people who are already well-disposed to criticise airs which can be described as *spirituel* or *de devotion* as something dull and insipid.' (Bacilly [1688], 'Avis', p.3.)

⁵¹ 'If he had intended them [to be set to music], he would have written madrigals, by which I mean verses more suited to writing airs in free metre', (Bacilly [1688], 'Avis', p.4).

⁵² 'on y trouvera tout ce qu'on peut souhaiter, mesme tous les termes usitez dans les airs ordinaires, qui est un grand point pour les faire considerer', ('They include everything one could wish for, even all the words normally used in ordinary airs, which is of great value in making them esteemed', Bacilly [1688], 'Avis', p.4).

⁵³ This is in line with Perrin's earlier definition of the air in his 1666 *Recueil de paroles* (Perrin [1986], 'Avant-propos', p.xi) where he mentions that it can be interspersed with rondos (see above, p.63).

It is perhaps surprising to find that in the 1688 edition of his *Airs spirituels*, Bacilly also provides a total of five *préludes*,⁵⁴ written for the benefit of those who had heard Bacilly

‘[...] preluder en chantant à la manière des instrumens de musique, [...]’⁵⁵

The *prélude* was traditionally instrumental and was based on improvisations that developed from the need to warm up or tune an instrument or to establish a new tonality.⁵⁶ In the seventeenth century in France, the prelude developed as a genre associated with the lute that was of semi-improvisatory character and rhythmically unmeasured. During the second half of the century, it could either be autonomous or, more often, serve as an overture to a suite.⁵⁷ Marais, De Machy and Sainte Colombe wrote many such *préludes* for the viol, and seventeenth-century French harpsichordists such as Chambonnières, Louis Couperin and d’Anglebert, assumed in the *préludes non mesurées* in white notation of their keyboard suites the characteristics of the improvisatory lute prelude.

Bacilly’s *prélude*, which he also called ‘a sort of *impromptu*’, is an unaccompanied, free-metered piece; one of the five is partly unbarred, another completely unbarred (though these both have an initial time signature), and two of them have changes of metre during the course of the piece. It has the character of an improvisation, created on the spur of the moment, which we are told cannot be accurately represented in notation.⁵⁸ Bacilly explained that he had written words to which these *préludes* could be sung so as to facilitate learning and remembering them, and even acknowledged that they may have been good enough to pass off as proper airs. Whether this means that he performed them as wordless vocal pieces is unclear. He admitted the novelty of such a composition:

‘C’est une nouvelle invention dont on ne s’est point encore avisé, & que je n’ay pratiquée que par la sollicitation de plusieurs curieux [...]’⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Bacilly (1688) Vol.1, pp. 1, 37, Vol.2, pp.1, 37, 44.

⁵⁵ ‘[...] prelude in the manner of a musical instrument’, Bacilly (1688), ‘Avis’, p.2.

⁵⁶ Notated preludes date from 15th-century Germany; in France, early examples of lute preludes were published by Pierre Attaignant (c.1494-c.1552) around 1530.

⁵⁷ Lully inserted instrumental preludes into his dramatic works to fill gaps between dances, acts or scenes, or, as in *Armide* for example, as an introduction to an air. They could also occur at dramatically significant moments, such as in act III of *Amadis*.

⁵⁸ ‘je leur ay représenté que ces sortes d’impromptus, ne pouvoient se noter aussi promptement qu’on les chante’ (‘I put it to them that this kind of impromptu could not be notated as readily as they are sung’), Bacilly (1688), ‘Avis’, p.2.

⁵⁹ ‘It is a new invention of which other people are not yet aware, and which I have only performed at the request of certain inquiring minds [...]’. (Bacilly [1688], ‘Avis’, p.2.)

EXAMPLE K [Bacilly 1688, vol.2, p.37]

Quel le fo-li - e que de pas-ser Le cours de nos - tre
vi - e En mi - le vains de-sirs Et mi le faux plai-
-sirs Nos-tre sa - lut Nos-tre sa - lut Est le seul but Ou nous de-vons nous de-
-vons nous de-vons as - pi - rer Et le seul bien Et le seul
bien que l'on doit que l'on doit de - si - rer

If these are, as they appear to be, original adaptations of an instrumental genre for the voice, they would seem to contradict Bacilly's belief in the superiority of the voice over instruments:

'Le chant des Instruments est un son que l'Art a inventer pour imiter la voix'.⁶⁰

This would be even more striking if, as we are led to believe, the words for these printed *préludes* merely served as an *aide-mémoire* for the melody and they could be performed as a type of vocalise, because Bacilly made it clear that it is its capacity for language that gives the human voice supremacy over birds and instruments. Treating the voice as an instrument would mean reducing its expressive capabilities: Bacilly referred on two occasions to the unpleasantness of the hurdy-gurdy and made clear the undesirability of singing like one,⁶¹ though it is perhaps instruments such as the viol which Bacilly had in mind for imitation. Perhaps, in spite of his insistence on the word as the most important factor in song, Bacilly succumbed to exploring the voice as a sound for its own sake, capable of expression without words.

⁶⁰ 'the singing of instruments is a sound which Art has invented to imitate the natural voice'. (Bacilly [1668], p.244.)

⁶¹ This is in the context of singing *passages*, in Pt.1, Ch.XIII, art.3, pp.233/ 322 and 236/ 325. The hurdy-gurdy was associated with street singers and provincial songs, much like the musette, its equivalent in the wind family, with which it shares the feature of a drone.

In addition to the *préludes*, Bacilly's *Airs spirituels* also contain a *récit*, 'Saisy de tristesse et de crainte' (Example L). This is of particular interest amongst Bacilly's output, because he explained that it was

'un récit à la manière des Scenes des Opera, pour faire voir que je ne suis pas borné aux
Airs ordinaires.'⁶²

The longer structure of the *récit* (it is 83 bars long) allows for more expressive, complex and dramatic possibilities. The text consists of three ten-line stanzas that share an ABBACDEDE rhyme scheme. It is in octosyllabic verse with the exception of the final line of each stanza, which is an alexandrine, and the first line of the third stanza, which is decasyllabic:

Saisy de tristesse et de crainte	[Seized by sorrow and fear
Pour les crimes que j'ay commis	For the crimes I have committed
Seigneur me sera t'il permis	O Lord, will I be permitted
De te faire entendre ma plainte	To submit to you my complaint?
Ah! Je voy bien que la douleur	Ah! I realise that my pain
N'est pas assez vive en mon cœur	Is not great enough within my breast
Pour satisfaire ta vengeance	To satisfy your vengeance
Mais malgré mes vœux languissans	Yet in spite of my languishing wishes
J'ose esperer que ta Clemence	I dare to hope that your clemency
Te fera recevoir mes desirs impuissans	Will allow you to accept my helpless desires
Helas tu connois le martire	Alas, you know well the martyrdom
Que souffre mon cœur abatu	Endured by my beaten heart
Je soupire aprez la vertu	I long for virtue
Mais c'est en vain que je soupire	But I long in vain
Je fais mille projetz divers	I plan a thousand schemes
Je jure de rompre mes fers	I vow to break my bonds
Suivant l'ardeur qui me transporte	As I am transported by my zeal
Déja je crois t'estre soûmis	Already I believe to be in your power
Mais un je ne sçay quoy m'emporte	But then something overcomes me
Qui me fait oublier ce que je t'ay promis	Which makes me forget my promise to you
Si tu voulois te servir de ces charmes	If you were to exercise your charms
Qui te font triompher des cœurs	That make you triumph over hearts
Mes sens ces superbes vainqueurs	My proudly victorious senses
N'auroient plus que de foibles armes	Would only have feeble defences
Alors mes fers seroient brisez	Then my bonds would be broken
Et tous les maux qu'ils m'ont causez	And all the injuries they caused me
Seroient gueris par ce remede	Would be healed by this remedy
Mais las en l'état ou je suis	But alas in my present state
Implorer humblement son aide	Humbly to implore his help
Soûpirer et gemir c'est tout ce que je puis.	To sigh and to moan is all I am able to do.]

Musically, however, this *récit* has four sections of approximately equal length, A (bars 1-24) B (bars 25-44) C (bars 45-66) and D (bars 67-83): A corresponds to the first ten-line stanza and B to the second, while C corresponds to the first seven lines of the third

⁶² 'a *récit* in the manner of an opera scene, to prove that I am not limited to writing ordinary *airs* only' (Bacilly [1688], 'Avis', pp.9-10).

and D to the last four; these are extended by the immediate repetition of the first hemistich within the last line and by the repetition of the entire, extended final line of the stanza. The first three musical sections are separated by a double bar. Section C is an open-ended ternary air, complete with double bar, which leads without tonal closure directly into the last section. Each section has a new metre indication (2, C, 3 and 2) and all but section C contain changes in metre within the section. While the *récit* is written mainly in a declamatory, arioso style, section C coincides with the decasyllabic line of the third strophe and contrasts with its neighbouring sections through a change of metre and tempo from a solemn 2 with minim beat to a faster and regular 3 with crotchet beat. There is also a change from the minor to the major mode, which coincides with a more exalted mood in the text. This section is in the style of a ‘petit air’. The prescribed ornamentation is visibly restricted.

EXAMPLE L [Bacilly 1688, vol.1, p.59]

The musical score for Example L consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a basso continuo line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, accidentals, and ornaments. The basso continuo line includes figured bass notation (numbers and accidentals) and some rhythmic markings.

System 1: [4] Sai - sy de tris - tes - se et de crain - te Pour les

System 2: [7] cri - mes que j'ay com - mis Sei - gneur me se - rat'il per - mis De te fai - re en - ten - dre ma

System 3: [12] plain - te Ah! je voy bien que la dou - leur N'est pas as - sez vi - ve en mon

System 4: [17] cœur Pour sa - tis - fai - re ta ven - gean - ce Mais mal - gré mes vœux lan - guis -

Figured bass notation for System 1: #, b5, b, b

Figured bass notation for System 2: b, #, 7, 6, 6, 4, #

Figured bass notation for System 3: 6, #4, 6, 7, #6, b5, b

Figured bass notation for System 4: 6

20] 2



- sans J'o-se-es-pe - rer que ta cle - men - ce Te fe - ra re - ce - voir mes de - sirs ... im - puis -

6 46 4 4 6 4 7 4 3

25]



- sans He - las tu con - nois le mar - ti - re Que souf - fe mon cœur a - ba - tu Jesou -

b 4 3 b

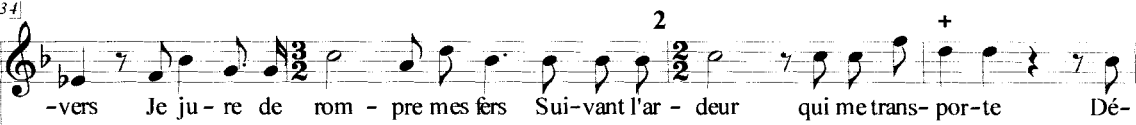
30]



- pire a - prez la ver - tu Mais c'est en vain que je sou - pi - re Je fais mil - le pro - jetz di -

b 6 7 6

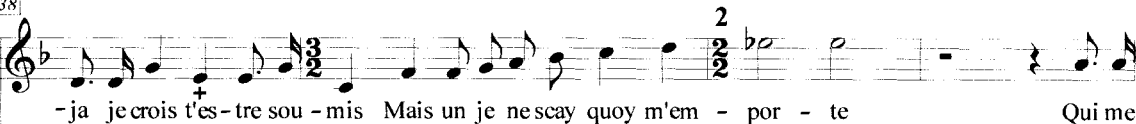
34]



- vers Je ju - re de rom - pre mes fers Sui - vant l'ar - deur qui me trans - por - te Dé -

b 5 6 6

38]



- ja je crois t'es - tre sou - mis Mais un je ne scay quoy m'em - por - te Qui me

42]



fait ou - bli - er ce que je t'ay pro - mis Si tu vou - lois te ser -

4 3 4

47]



- vir de ces char - mes Qui te font tri - om - pher des cœurs Mes sens ces su -

6

55 [4]

-per- bes vain- queurs N'au- roient plus que de foi- bles ar- mes A- lors mes

61

fers se- roient bri- sez Et tous les maux qu'ilz m'ont cau- sez Se- roient gue- ris

66

par ce re- me- de Mais las en l'é- tat ou je suis Im- plo-

71

-rer hum- ble- ment son ai- de Sou- pi- rer et ge- mir [Sou- pi- rer et ge-

76

- mir] c'est tout ce que je puis Sou- pi- rer et ge-

80

-mir [Sou- pi- rer et ge- mir] c'est tout ce que je puis

What we have here is, as Bacilly suggested, a solo *recit d'opera*, in the form of a short scene of lyric recitative with interposed 'petit air'⁶³ comparable to the monologue airs found in Lullian *ballets de cour* (from around 1670) and operas (from 1673 to

1687). These were, as here, in mixed verse and declamatory style which dictated the rhythm and shape of the vocal line: it is characterised by repeated notes at the same pitch and, as in the air, the rhyme and caesura always fall on principal beats.

The term 'récit' was used to designate a number of vocal genres⁶⁴ (the *récits* in the earlier *ballets de cour* such as *Le mariage forcé* of 1664 are in fact solo airs in binary form, often with a *double* and with long instrumental ritornellos, rather than recitatives).⁶⁵ Rosow⁶⁶ has pointed out that the melodic tendencies of the type of lyric recitative illustrated by Bacilly, and conversely the declamatory character of certain airs, led to a blurring between the two; thus 'récit', a general designation for any vocal solo, could be used to avoid making a clear distinction between airs and recitative.

The changes in metre in this *récit*, as well as the frequent changes during the course of the *airs sérieux* so that the shifting poetic accents of mixed verse fall on strong beats, pose a complex problem to the modern performer. One has to decide the purpose of a change of metre and the metrical relationship between each binary (ϕ , 2) ternary ($3, \frac{3}{2}$) and quadruple (C) metre. Added to this is the notion that the metre, or *mesure*, also implies a tempo. The issue is complicated by the disagreement of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources on the subject such as Rousseau (*Méthode claire* 1679), Loulié (*Eléments* 1696) and Saint-Lambert (*Principes* 1702). However, it has been generally agreed⁶⁷ from analysis the seventeenth-century repertoire that ϕ , also called 'le mineur', is normally equivalent to 2 (which indicates two minim beats, as in $\frac{2}{2}$) and therefore that a minim in ϕ is of equal value to a minim in 2 (although Saint-Lambert advocated a doubling of tempo between ϕ and 2,⁶⁸ and Rousseau⁶⁹ implied that 2, beaten 'à deux temps vites' is faster than ϕ , beaten 'à deux temps lents').⁷⁰ When either of these metres alternates with $\frac{3}{2}$, the minim beat remains constant (though Rousseau suggests a metrical change in the ratio of 3:2).⁷¹ While the pulse remains constant

⁶³ Duron (1991), pp.99-106, categorises the different styles of recitative in Lullian opera as *récit sec*, *récit d'action* and *récit lyrique* according to its function and style; the *récit lyrique* is in arioso style. On p.98, he explains that the structural function of these inserted airs within the dramatic context is unclear.

⁶⁴ See Perrin's 1666 definition on p.211, fn.107 of the present translation.

⁶⁵ Massip (1999), pp.77 and 197.

⁶⁶ 'Recitative' article in Benoit (1992), pp.602-3.

⁶⁷ See Borrel (1931), Seares (1974), Fajon (1978), Wolf (1978), Rosow (1990) and Benoit (1992), p.603.

⁶⁸ Saint-Lambert (1702), p.18.

⁶⁹ Rousseau (1710), p.35.

⁷⁰ Fajon (1978), p.61 has suggested the possibility that ϕ acted as an intermediary metre between C and 2.

⁷¹ Rousseau (1710), p.36. Later, in 1736, Montéclair wrote that a duple metre is beaten more slowly in ϕ than in 2 (in Arger [1921], p.8).

between ϕ , **2** and C, also called ‘le majeur’, the value of the beat changes: a minim in ϕ or in **2** is equivalent to a crotchet in C and also to a crotchet in **3** (when this implies $\frac{3}{4}$). This process significantly varies the speed of delivery of, for instance, the anapaestic rhythm of an alexandrine in a bar of C and in one of ϕ . Another treatment of this relationship involves keeping the crotchet constant between these two metres; the interpretation and reduction of a bar notated in ϕ to one of $\frac{2}{4}$ would result in a constant pace of delivery.⁷² Scholars agree that these general relationships are not always appropriate: each example must be considered individually and a decision taken based on the function of the *mesure* and the flow of the textual delivery. Ultimately, the performer is left to decide on the implications of the *mesure*.

This *récit* is a case in point. The alternations during the course of the first section between **2** and $\frac{3}{2}$ (in the order of **2**, $\frac{3}{2}$, **2**, $\frac{3}{2}$, **2**) suggest a constant minim beat. The second section begins with C but then also alternates between $\frac{3}{2}$ and **2** (C, $\frac{3}{2}$, **2**, $\frac{3}{2}$, **2**). This initial metre indication can imply one of two things. The minim beat can be kept constant so as to preserve the flow of the textual delivery in comparison to the previous section and to what comes after bar 34. On the other hand, there are reasons for varying the flow of the textual delivery: if the minim beat of the previous section in **2** is of equal value to a crotchet beat in the new C metre, as is generally accepted, there is a change of pace at bar 25 resulting in a slower textual delivery; this reflects the contrast between the hopeful mood at the end of the first section back to a sorrowful expression. There would then be a sudden quickening in the delivery at bar 34 where the metre changes to $\frac{3}{2}$, which may be considered suitable to the increasing fervour of the text.⁷³ The third section keeps a constant **3** which, though a minim in **2** usually corresponds to a crotchet in **3**, could be taken as $\downarrow = \downarrow$ in relation to the previous section to achieve the faster pace suited a lighter style. The last section again alternates **2** with C between bars 67 and 69. Again, as at the beginning of the second section, the minim beat could be kept constant so that the rhythm of bar 69 is identical to that of bar 67. But if we took the minim in **2** to be equal to a crotchet in C, the result would be an extremely slow final section and thus a significantly slower and sustained delivery of the plaintive final line of the *récit*, ‘to sigh and to moan is all I am able to do.’

⁷² See Wolf (1978), pp.31-41.

⁷³ Fajon (1978), p.63 agrees that the speed of delivery accelerates and decelerates in direct proportion to the intensity of the dramatic situation.

Saint-Lambert confirmed that every *measure* indicated not only how many beats there should be in a bar but also their tempo.⁷⁴ In his two 1668 volumes of airs, Bacilly used three different *mesures* to indicate three minim beats in a bar: 3, ϕ 3 and C3; 3 is by far the most frequent (though it is also occasionally used to indicate three crotchet beats in a bar). The difference between these three metres lies in their indication of a tempo: the addition of ϕ in front of the 3 points to a faster tempo while a C suggested a slower one.⁷⁵ Each *measure* is chosen to reflect the character of the air. And yet, Saint-Lambert wrote that composers frequently ignored the theoretical tempo implications of the *measure* and that tempo-metre relationships ought not always to be taken literally. To compensate for the inability of a *measure* to render an accurate idea of tempo, Saint-Lambert suggested the use of verbal indications such as ‘fort vite’ and ‘lentement’.⁷⁶ But Bacilly was already aware of the problem that the metre indication alone cannot properly convey a tempo for in the *Remarques* he recommended that one should hear the composer perform his own airs so as to know ‘la véritable mesure’.⁷⁷

What is the function, then, of each new *measure* in ‘Saisy de tristesse’? It seems that the internal changes within the first two sections between 2 and $\frac{3}{2}$ accommodate the poetic accents. A new *measure* is also used to distinguish one section from another and coincides with a textual change in mood. This explains the C metre at the beginning of section B at bar 25; similarly, the change in the final section at bar 69 coincides with the return of the minor mode indicated by the restoration of the B \flat in the key signature: not only does it slow the pace of declamation but it also reinforces this modal change.

Bacilly’s *récit* has the flexibility of a free-metered composition and the breadth of a dramatic work; he proved that he was capable of writing such substantial works. However, as a ‘musicien de la ville’ rather than an official court composer, his *récit* would not have been written for performance in a dramatic context. Moreover, it is a *récit spirituel*: as Bacilly envisaged a particular pedagogical function for such devotional works, its performance context may have been further limited, though this does not necessarily exclude the collection of *airs spirituels* from the context of salon performance.

⁷⁴ Saint-Lambert (1702), p.15.

⁷⁵ See Rousseau (1710), p.35. Bacilly uses ϕ and C for his airs in duple and quadruple time, while 2 only occurs during the course of an air and not at the beginning. Those in ϕ seem to be the lighter, faster airs than those few in C.

⁷⁶ Saint-Lambert (1702), pp.24-5.

⁷⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.27/ 182.

It is hardly surprising that a composer so experienced in writing *airs sérieux* should have tried his hand at recitative: the link between the two genres has been suggested by Prunières⁷⁸ and more recent scholars such as Anthony⁷⁹ and Massip, who identifies the increasing stylistic freedom of the *air sérieux* during the course of Lambert's career as one of the factors responsible for Lully's creation of French opera.⁸⁰ The *air sérieux* explored most of the dramatic passions and emotions which were to become the mainstay of opera. What recitative specifically owes to the *air* in general is a respect of prosody, i.e. the rhyme in mixed verse, resulting in the frequent changes of metre, and a concern for declamation, expressed through the regards of syllabic quantity, which shapes each phrase; this debt had already been observed by Méneestrier in 1681:

‘C’est par les petites chansons qu’on a trouvé le fin de cette Musique d’action, & de Theatre, qu’on cherchoit depuis long temps avec si peu de succes, parce qu’on croyoit que le Theatre ne souffroit que des Vers Alexandrins, & des sentiments Heroïques semblables à ceux de la grande Tragedie.’⁸¹

He then identified a particular type of air as a significant factor in the creation of dramatic music:

‘Il y a plusieurs Dialogues de Lambert, de Martin, de Perdigal, de Boisset & de Cambert, qui ont servi pour ainsi dire d’ébauche & de Prelude à cette Musique que l’on cherchoit, & qu’on n’a pas d’abord trouvée. [...] Ce sont ces petites manieres de chansons que l’on a heureusement imitées en ces actions Dramatiques.’⁸²

Bacilly did not write any dialogues, but Lambert did: his dialogue between Philis and Tirsis at the end of his 1666 book of airs (pp.80-82), for two *dessus* and basso continuo, was written in 1641 and is the only one he wrote which was not part of a dramatic work.⁸³ Like the air, this dialogue is in binary form with repeats: the voices alternate in the first part (which distinguishes the dialogue from the two-part air) and sing together in the second, in the same flexible style as the ordinary *air sérieux*. His later dialogues, contributions to the *ballets de cour* of the 1660s, are more complex and are included in

⁷⁸ Prunières (1975) p.xliv.

⁷⁹ Anthony (1997), p.417.

⁸⁰ Massip (1999), p.283.

⁸¹ ‘It is thanks to these little songs that we perfected dramatic music, something we had sought to do for some time with little success because we thought only Alexandrine verse and heroic thoughts, such as those found in tragedy, were suitable for the theatre’, Méneestrier (1681), p.178.

⁸² ‘Several dialogues by Lambert, Martin, Perdigal, Boisset and Cambert served as a draft and a prelude, so to speak, to this [dramatic] music which we sought and did not find at first. [...] It is these little vocal pieces which were fortunately imitated in these dramatic works.’ (Méneestrier [1681], p.178.) Bonnet borrowed from Méneestrier for his *Histoire de la Musique* (Amsterdam, 1743) and in Ch.1, p.18, goes further in saying that these dialogues helped to create not just dramatic music but recitative in particular.

⁸³ Massip introduction to Lambert (1666).

his 1689 volume of airs.⁸⁴ This type of air in dialogue form is likely to be the source for Lully's idea of structuring a dramatic scene from a succession of dialogues, such as the seven consecutive short dialogues in the opening scene of Lully's *Amadis* (1684).⁸⁵ Such dialogue airs also played a part in the development of the eighteenth-century French cantata.⁸⁶

Lully is officially regarded as the creator of French recitative, but as its governing principles were brought about in the first place by Nyert's reform in singing and were practised by Bacilly and Lambert in their airs, the *Remarques* is an equally valuable document for the performance of recitative in the 1670s and 1680s.⁸⁷ This is confirmed by an observation of the specific connection between Bacilly's work and dramatic music in Ménéstrier's 1681 *Des représentations en musique anciennes et modernes*: he holds the rules for quantity in declamation and singing given in the treatise as the fundamental characteristic of French dramatic music;⁸⁸ the date is important because it shows that the *Remarques* were regarded as relevant to a genre created after the publication of the treatise.

⁸⁴ Massip (1999), p.161.

⁸⁵ This has been suggested by J.R. Anthony in Benoit (1992), pp.233-4.

⁸⁶ Tunley (1997), pp.1-2, pointed to Lambert's airs in the 1689 volume, which contain *ritornello* interludes, as part of a tendency towards the end of the 17th century to create multi-partite structures. Massip (1999), p.165, similarly remarked on the structure and *concertante* approach in Lambert's airs as paving the way to the French cantata. Anthony (1997), p.418 and 'dialogue' in Benoit (1992), p.234, points to the composite structure of Montéclair's 'Adieu de Tircis à Climène' in his *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire* (1695) as an example, which features a recitative followed by an air, another recitative and a duet. The dialogue at the end of d'Ambruis' 1685 book of airs is another example. While the 18th-century cantata was for solo singer, its structure is prefigured in that of these dialogues.

⁸⁷ Seares (1974), pp.12-13 examined a passage of recitative from Lully's *Amadis* and found that there is a strong correlation between the rhythm of Lully's declamation and Bacilly's rules for quantity.

⁸⁸ Ménéstrier, (1681), p.145-6.

CHAPTER 4

MUSIC AND RHETORIC

I. The Principles of Rhetoric in Music

The number of treatises on eloquence and expression in rhetoric reflect a concern in seventeenth-century France with the mastering of this skill. It is clear that Bacilly's primary aim is to provide a work in the same vein focusing on the art of delivery, as the subtitle of the *Remarques* suggests ('Ouvrage tres-utile, non seulement pour le Chant, mais même pour la Declamation').

The notion of establishing a link between the art of delivery through music and an orator's performance provided theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century with a vehicle by which to express the communication of feelings through music: the principles of classical rhetoric with the power to move the passions, or affects, of the listener, which were used in poetry to make a text expressive, could be applied to music to meet the same end: as poetry manipulated the passions of the listener by the application of rhetorical structure and devices, so did music employ the principles of rhetoric for the same purpose.

Bacilly's rules in the *Remarques*, however, only address one part of rhetoric in detail, that is, its delivery or 'pronunciatio'. The treatise presents singing as a form of declamation; accordingly, the rules given for pronunciation and quantity in the second and third parts of the treatise are as applicable to the delivery of French poetry and prose as to singing. For him, the two share the same practical rules of delivery.¹

In his *Compendium musicae* of 1618 (not published until 1650 in Utrecht), Descartes believed that the aim of music was to please: it had to be expressive, which, like poetry, it achieved by moving, or 'persuading' the passions of the listener:

'[L]a fin [de la musique] est de plaire, et d'émouvoir en nous des passions variées.'²

'[la poetique], comme notre musique, a été inventé pour exciter les mouvements de l'âme.'³

¹ Bacilly (1668), pp.328-31/ 389-90. ('s'il est question de reciter agreablement des Vers, les Chanter, mesme les declamer, il est certain qu'il y a des longues & des bréfves à observer, non seulement dans la poésie, mais aussi dans la prose'.)

² Descartes (1987), pp.54-5. 'The goal [of music] is to please and move different passions in the listener.'

³ Descartes (1987), p.136. '[Poetry], like our music, was invented to excite the movements of the soul' (i.e. the passions, or emotions, see Descartes [1992], *Des Passions de l'âme*, p.723).

Following the same principle, German writers from Praetorius (1571-1621) to Quantz (1697-1773), in formulating their *Affektenlehre*, establish the link between musical performance and an orator's skill. This performance, however, is of a piece whose very composition is dictated by the rules of rhetoric. German treatises, such as Joachim Burmeister's *Musica Poetica* (Rostock 1606), established rules for music by basing themselves on the categories and vocabulary of the 'ars rhetorica'.⁴ For these writers, rhetoric proved to be a natural model for establishing the rules of a musical poetic. They accept a similarity between the structure of verbal and musical discourse; the process of 'inventio', for instance, can be related to the initial choices made regarding elements of a piece of music such as style or mode, and 'dispositio', which distinguishes between the different parts of the discourse (such as 'narratio', 'propositio' and 'confutatio') according to their function, relates to the formal construction. In *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (1739), Mattheson gave a detailed account of how the compositional process in music can be organized as a rhetorical piece both in structure and content.⁵ He recommended the study of Descartes' doctrine of the passions to learn how these might be manipulated in composition.⁶

In France, Mersenne explained music with a scientific approach in the *Harmonie universelle*. He compared consonance in music to the proportions of an oration, which must be respected if the listener is to be moved, and likened musicians to orators.⁷ At the same time, the French were also pursuing the aesthetic of Aristotelian mimesis: rhetoric provided a means of attaining this ideal, for by adopting rhetorical structure and devices as in poetry, music could be fully mimetic of that art. Le Cerf expressed his belief in the link between them:

'J'ai pris la méthode d'éclaircir & de prouver ce que je pense de la Musique par des inductions tirées de la Rhetorique de la Poësie, & des autres beaux Arts auxquels la Musique ressemble, & puisque la ressemblance est certaine, ma méthode ne peut pas être mauvaise.'⁸

He was equally clear that music, in imitating rhetoric, shared the same aim:

⁴ See also Johannes Nucius, *Musices Poeticae* (Neisse 1613) and Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (Rome 1650).

⁵ Mattheson (1981), pp.470-7.

⁶ Lenneberg (1958), pp.47, 51.

⁷ Mersenne (1936), 2, Bk.1, p.106 and Bk.6, p.362.

⁸ Le Cerf (1705), III, p.51. ('The inspiration for my method of explaining and of proving my thoughts on music has come from conclusions drawn from rhetoric, poetry and the other fine arts to which music bears resemblance, and since this resemblance is well established, my method cannot be wrong.')

‘[...] on ne chante que par la même raison qu’on parle, parce qu’on a quelques sentimens à exprimer.’⁹

For all of these writers, music must move the passions in the manner of discourse. However, there is an absence in France of a corpus of theoretical works comparable to that of Germany. Unlike the Germans, French theorists never took it upon themselves to push the parallel between the two forms of communication to the point of proposing some fundamentals for a musical rhetoric by theorising a connection between music and classical rhetoric. The term ‘rhétorique’ itself rarely makes an appearance in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French treatises on music. Even later in the eighteenth century, in *L’Esprit de l’art musical* (1754), Charles Henri de Blainville still hoped for the formulation of ‘une espèce de rhétorique pour le chant comme il en est dans le discours’.¹⁰ While establishing a link with oration, Mersenne’s remarks remain vague and do not comprise a systematised model. Bacilly demonstrates through his rules for declamation that his immediate concerns with rhetoric in singing are more practical than theoretical.

While Bacilly’s attention to the practical aspects of declamation is explicit, and is explored in detail in the second part of this chapter and in Chapter 5, a respect for rhetorical principles in the basic compositional process of his airs, while not addressed at length in the *Remarques*,¹¹ is implicit in the airs themselves. It is important to distinguish between the principles of rhetoric in performance and those of rhetoric in composition. Although French theorists did not address the issue in the manner of German writers, musicians demonstrated the use of rhetorical principles in their compositions: music resembled an oration not just in its delivery; the rhetorical organization of lyric poetry discussed in Chapter 2 of this essay had direct implications on the musical construction of airs. Elizabeth Gordon-Seifert’s thesis¹² explored the relevance of rhetorical theory in the poetry and its representation in the music of the airs

⁹ Le Cerf (1705), II, pp.159-60. (‘[...] one sings for the same reason as one speaks, because one has feelings to express.’)

¹⁰ In Benoît (1992), p.610.

¹¹ Bacilly does mention certain principles in the general compositional process covered in Chapter XI such as placing cadences at the caesura and certain figures like repetition which are discussed below; none of these constitute a theory of composition based on rhetorical principles.

¹² Gordon-Seifert (1994).

of Lambert and Bacilly, which she considered to be the most representative of their genre and of the conventions inherent in compositions of this kind.¹³

The restricted themes that defined the conventions of lyric poetry and the specific vocabulary that these themes demanded necessarily limited the variety of affects such poems contain ('We have in our French airs, as I have already said, a restrictive set of words and expressions, which always refer to the same themes').¹⁴ This had consequences on the process of 'inventio'. While respecting the need for 'natural' expression, composers had to consider the affects that would set the tone of the entire piece. On page 121 of the *Remarques*, Bacilly stressed the importance of considering the meaning and purpose of the whole poem, and not just of individual words, when composing an air. This limited the number of modes available to composers, for modes were associated with particular affects.¹⁵ The overriding affect of a text also affected the tempo established by the *mesure* of an air: a fast *mesure* was associated with lighter airs and expressions of joy, while a slower *mesure* was more often associated with the *air sérieux* and expressions of pain or sorrow. In his *Compendium* Descartes commented on this method of affective representation:

'En ce qui concerne la variété des passions que la musique peut exciter par la variété de la mesure, je dis qu'en général une mesure lente excite en nous également des passions lentes, comme le sont la langueur, la tristesse, la crainte, l'orgueil, etc., et que la mesure rapide fait naître aussi des passions rapides, comme la joie, etc.'¹⁶

¹³ While Gordon-Seifert sought to establish the conventions of style and musical language inherent in the airs of the period, her study is based exclusively on the airs of Lambert's 1660 volume and the first volume of Bacilly's 1668 airs. It would therefore be difficult to claim that all composers of airs during this period were as methodical as she claims Bacilly and Lambert to have been in view of the absence of a theory of composition to act as a guide.

¹⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.103.

¹⁵ Bacilly makes no comment in his treatise on the affective properties of modes. Composers used the eight modes or church tones that Nivers explained in his treatise on composition (Nivers [1961], p.19) and demonstrated in his 1665 *Livre d'orgue*. Almost half of Bacilly's airs in the two 1668 volumes are in the 6th (major) mode (final on F, dominant on A), one quarter of them are in the 1st (minor) mode (final on D, dominant on A), a dozen in the 2nd (minor) mode (final on G, dominant on B flat), nine are in the 5th (major) mode (final on C, dominant on G) and one each in the 3rd (minor) mode on A and the 8th (major) mode on G. In his singing tutor, Rousseau dispensed with this system of modes; however, he lists the affective character of the major and minor modes of A, C, D, F and G, and of E minor, which he relates to the church tones ([1710], p.85). Like Bacilly (p.110/ 224), Rousseau, as well as using the terms 'majeur' and 'mineur', refers to 'b quarre' (or 'bécarre' in its modern French spelling), which derives from the 'B quadratum', or 'square B' of medieval notation, to determine the major mode, while 'b mol' (bémol), or 'soft B', the modern B flat, determines the minor mode. On p.73 he ascribes to these specific affective qualities: the major ('b quarre', or B natural) and minor ('b mol', or B flat) are 'deux voix ou Modes [...] le b mol est un Mode propre pour les chants doux, tendres et languissants; & quand on dit b quarre, c'est comme si l'on disoit b gay, parce que le quarre, est un Mode propre pour les chants gais [...] ('two voices or modes [...] the mode of 'b mol' is suited to gentle, tender and languorous melodies; and 'b quarre' is the equivalent of saying 'b gay', because this mode is suited to cheerful melodies [...])'.

¹⁶ Descartes (1987), pp.62-3, 'As regards the variety of passions that music is capable of stirring through different *mesures*, I will say that in general, a slow *mesure* will stir within us equally slow passions, such as languor, sorrow, fear, pride, etc., and that a fast *mesure* also awakens fast passions, such as joy, etc.'

In terms of overall structure ('dispositio') the two sections of a binary-form air correspond to the two halves of a strophe; further subdivisions correspond to parts of the discourse outlined in Chapter 2 of this essay.¹⁷ What is particularly interesting is the role of the *double* within this structure. The 'propositio', which corresponds to the opening of an air, and therefore the start of the *simple*, or first verse, is usually a clear, straightforward statement. However, the *double* normally begins the 'confirmatio'. Rhetorically, this process amounts to a more forceful restatement of the 'propositio'. This is reflected in music, for the ornamentation and embellishment present in the second verse of an air serve not only to avoid the straight musical repetition imposed by a strophic poem but also to intensify the affect of the text. If we refer back to Figure 2, Bacilly's air 'Je voy des amans chaque jour' there is a clear correlation between the words that begin the second verse and the music:

'Chacun peut donner un beau tour au discours'

The words 'un beau tour' imply the embellishment of the oration to increase its persuasiveness; this coincides exactly with the beginning of the *double*, an embellished version of the *simple*.

Rhetorical principles not only dictated the overall structure of an air, but also its internal structure. We have already seen in Chapter 3 of this essay how the *rime* and caesura are respected in the phrase structure of an air. Theorists commented on this link throughout the century, such as Mersenne in his discussion of the effect of music and of the voice on the soul by means of the art of rhetoric:

'[les] chants [...] doivent en quelque façon imiter les Harangues, afin d'avoir des membres, des parties, & des périodes, & d'user de toutes sortes de figures & de passages harmoniques, comme l'Orateur.'¹⁸

Furetière referred to the equating of the musical cadence with the semicolon by Nivers,¹⁹ which echoed Descartes' comparison in the *Compendium* between the cadences in music and pauses during an oration,²⁰ and Michel de Saint-Lambert

¹⁷ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.26, has linked Mersenne's discussion (in Mersenne [1636], 2, Bk.1, p.106) of the arrangement of musical material to heighten the expression of the music to the rhetorical process of 'dispositio', and his discussion of the style of an oration, or 'elocutio', to that of a musical work.

¹⁸ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.365. ('vocal music [...] must in some way imitate an oration, so that it is made up of members, parts and sentences, and use all kinds of figures and harmonious moments, such as the orator does.')

¹⁹ 'les cadences sont au chant ce que les points virgules sont au discours', 'cadences are in singing what semicolons are in oratory'. (Furetière [1690], 'cadence' article.)

²⁰ Descartes (1987), p.134.

likewise drew a clear parallel between a piece of music and elements of a rhetorical speech.

‘[...] Une piece de Musique ressemble à peu près à une Pièce d’Eloquence, ou plutôt c’est la pièce d’Eloquence qui ressemble à la Pièce de Musique: Car l’harmonie, le nombre, la mesure, & les autres choses semblables qu’un habile Orateur observe en la composition de ses ouvrages, appartiennent bien plus naturellement à la Musique qu’à la Rhétorique [...] les notes répondent aux lettres, les mesures aux mots, les cadences aux périodes, les reprises aux parties, & le tout au tout.’²¹

As the purpose of the air was to express the text, the musical setting of a song text was governed by the meaning of the words in addition to their organization. In contrast to the Italians, however, French composers generally paid less attention to individual words than to the whole phrase or the entire lyric.²² Bacilly criticised composers who believe that ‘un chant est mal appliqué aux paroles, s’il n’exprime le sens de chaque mot en particulier’.²³ Although there is therefore very little word painting in Bacilly’s and Lambert’s airs, an acknowledgement is made in the *Remarques* of the existence of a repertoire of such illustrative devices as in Chapter XI, page 120, Bacilly comments that some composers believe that certain musical symbols (‘marques de musique’) ‘are specifically assigned to the meaning and expression of words’. But Bacilly discouraged any systematic use of the devices that he listed: for instance, he recommended that one should not consider the use of sharps and flats as exclusive for highlighting a tender and passionate expression, and that it was quite acceptable to use them on words which do not seem particularly significant and to omit them on words which some people may consider require one.²⁴ Similarly, one does not

²¹ ‘[...] A piece of music resembles more or less an oration, or rather, an oration resembles a piece of music: for harmony, number, pace and other similar things which a skilled orator will observe in his works are more naturally pertinent to music than to rhetoric [...] notes correspond to letters, bars to words, cadences to sentences, sections to the parts [of the oration] and the whole to the whole.’ (Saint-Lambert [1702], Ch.VIII, p.14: ‘Des signes qui marquent la mesure et le mouvement’.)

²² Le Cerf commented on the Italian habit throughout the seventeenth century of representing every word in a musical setting: ‘Les Compositeurs Italiens ont l’attention de s’attacher à peindre chaque mot en particulier, & ils n’en rencontrent aucun, auquel ils ne donnent quelque coup de pinceau en passant. [...] Ils oublient, ils affoiblissent l’expression du Verset & de la pensée, pour s’amuser à cette expression particuliere du mot...’ (1705), III, p.129. (‘Italian composers are careful to devote themselves to painting each individual word and there is none to which they do not apply their paintbrush on the way. [...] They forget and weaken the expression of the strophe and of the poetic thought simply for the sake of expressing the words individually...’)

²³ Bacilly (1668), p.121: ‘a melody is ill-suited to the words if it does not express the meaning of each individual word’. Legrand (1998) nevertheless believes that it is possible to use rhetoric as a tool to approach the question of the musical significance of these figures in French operas; looking at figures in Lullian recitative, he believes that French composers, though ignorant of the German treatises on the subject, did use rhetorical figures such as hypotyposis and gradation in their works.

²⁴ Bacilly (1668), pp. 121-2/ 232. Bacilly later specifies that performing an ornament on a sharp is unavoidable in a descending phrase; in an ascending phrase, however, they are not always appropriate and

always need to insert rests before or after the word 'sighing' purely for rhetorical purposes. Bacilly also considered it an affectation to sing weakly or stop singing altogether on words such as 'je suis mort' and to use visual devices such as a succession of alternating notes on the word 'wave'.²⁵ Certain exceptions are made, for on pages 123-4 Bacilly draws attention to the onomatopoeic device of setting words such as 'to go', 'to walk' and 'to run' to a faster tempo, whereas the words 'slowly' and 'a long time' should be set to a slower one, so as better to convey the meaning of such words.

It was however the overriding affect of a text, as illustrated in Chapter 2 of this essay, which influenced composers' settings more than the illustration of individual words. Words had a principal meaning, which could be represented literally in music by the picture they paint as mentioned above, but words in the vocabulary defined by 'l'usage' of the salons also had a conventionalised accessory meaning, one which evoked a particular passion.²⁶ Not only did this accessory meaning help define the overall sentiment of the air, such as those outlined in the lyric poems in Chapter 2: as the broader rhetorical structure of poetry affected musical structure, so did individual words in its vocabulary affect the very construction of the melody.

In practice, this portrayal of the affects underscoring the words of a text was achieved through a repertoire of musical devices. The vocabulary of lyric poetry was rich with rhetorical figures, or as Bary described them, 'ornaments of speech' to manipulate the affect.²⁷ Most of the texts of airs contemporary with Bacilly make use of these; for instance, many begin with an interrogation such as 'Pourquoy', or an exclamation such as 'Ah!' These were respected in composition by associating musical figures with rhetorical figures and with the specific passions they evoke.²⁸ Yet it is also interesting to compare Lamy's description of an exclamation such as *Ah!* as 'une voix poussée avec force' ('a voice projected powerfully')²⁹ with the suggestion in the *Remarques* that the singer should increase the volume on the same exclamation, in order to achieve a more powerful expression:³⁰ for the use of dynamics as a rhetorical device

the singer must rely on good taste for no rules can be given: 'if singing could be regulated in this way, there would be little point in writing this treatise' (p.146/ 254-5.)

²⁵ Bacilly (1668), pp.202/ 299, 125/ 235.

²⁶ Gordon-Seifert (1994), pp.39-41, 186; she examines how the primary and accessory meaning of a text together represent the active and passive actions and thoughts of the narrator in the poetry.

²⁷ Bary (1673), p.271.

²⁸ See Chapter 5 on the function of ornamentation.

²⁹ Lamy (1699), p.114.

³⁰ In fact, Bacilly writes that on a sorrowful 'Ah!', the mouth should be more widely open than on 'Ha!', which is less forceful (pp. 259-260/ 337-8). Although opening the mouth does not strictly indicate an increase in volume, some cross-references suggest that this is implied: on page 199/ 297 we learn that

is another similarity between an orator's delivery and singing. An orator moderates the volume of his voice in accordance with the passion expressed in the text; Bacilly advocates this for dramatic or illustrative purposes. Another example of this is given on the words *haut* and *bas* when they mean 'strong and 'weak' rather than 'high' and 'low' (the latter meanings can be illustrated through the use of pitch); for when this occurs, one must project or moderate the voice, as the expression requires.³¹

German theorists such as Bernhard and Mattheson addressed the use of musical figures in composition, drawing on the repertoire of rhetorical figures. Bernhard described the figures of 'ellipsis', 'retardatio', 'heterolepsis', 'quasitransitus' and 'abruptio' in the composition of music belonging to the *stylus theatralis*, or recitative,³² and Mattheson's 'figurae sententiae', which provide embellishment in composition, 'concern the whole phrases, their variations, imitations, repetitions etc.'³³ French musical theorists, however, never discussed melodic figures in association with a rhetorical function. Bacilly mentions repetition in Chapter XI of his treatise, a device which also corresponds to the rhetorical figure of gradation when words or phrases are immediately repeated in the musical setting for emphasis, but he is only concerned with vocabulary and not with explaining the function of such devices: he explains that in French song poetry, only significant words of 'a certain sweet and familiar nature' may be repeated where appropriate, in contrast to Latin and Italian where repetition is frequently indiscriminate.³⁴

Gordon-Seifert has explored in detail the rhetorical figures used in the composition of an air³⁵ as well as the repertoire of conventional melodic devices which she believes characterised the shape of a phrase by being linked to a particular passion: they were more fundamental to the compositional process and are evident in the airs. The source for these melodic figures were the 'accents' of the passions expressed in the rhetorical figures: in declamation, rhetoricians were concerned with the inflexions of the

when sustaining a long note such as in final cadences or on words followed by a question mark or exclamation mark, the strength of the voice needs to be increased; this has implications for the advice given on p. 259/ 337, where we are told that when an A occurs on a long note such as in final cadences, the rule of gradually opening the mouth applies; these two references together would suggest that this particular interjection does indeed require a more powerful delivery.

³¹ Bacilly (1668), pp.125-6/ 235.

³² Bernhard (1973), pp.110-118. Bernhard provides descriptions and illustrations of 'figures' in both of his treatises on composition, the *Tractatus* and the *Bericht*. Their names are directly linked to rhetorical figures, though no indication is given as to what passion each figure best conveys.

³³ Mattheson (1981), p.481.

³⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.92/ 213.

voice, the ‘accents’, which provided the indication of a vocal pitch with which to deliver certain words and figures. Descartes had explained in *Les Passions de l’âme* how each passion was stimulated by the internal movement of fluids, and how these were accompanied by external symptoms such as sighs and sobs.³⁶ Mersenne also explored the ‘accents’ as representations of the vocal manifestations of the passions.³⁷ Both he and later rhetoricians believed that representations of these could provide a tool in oratory to aid the communication of the passions to the listener:

‘Tous les sentimens ont chacun un ton de voix, un geste, & une mine qui leur sont propres.’³⁸

Hindret made an association between these and pitch in singing:

‘L’accent est un certain ton de voix qui tient un peu du chant, qui est inutile dans la prononciation.’³⁹

These ‘accents’ of the passions, associated with a certain vocal pitch, could be imitated melodically, a process already suggested by Mersenne who linked these ‘accents’ to melodic intervals in vocal composition.⁴⁰ They provided one way of representing the passions as melodic figures in musical composition.⁴¹ Pitch is only mentioned in the treatise in connection with the literal device of word painting on words suggesting a high or a low elevation, such as the stars⁴² or the earth, a practice whose systematic use was again criticized by Bacilly.

³⁵ Gordon-Seifert (1994), has identified, for instance, the use of ‘abruptio’ and of ‘antithesis’ in Bacilly’s and Lambert’s airs (pp.304-5, 94).

³⁶ Descartes (1992), p.747. Other outward signs are eye movement and facial gestures, changes of complexion, shaking, fainting, languishing, laughing and crying.

³⁷ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.367-73.

³⁸ Lamy (1699), first published 1675, p.366. ‘Each passion has a tone of voice, a gesture and a facial expression proper to it.’ Hindret (1687), ‘Discours’, differentiated between the pitch of words in a delivery, the ‘accent’, and their ‘prononciation’ in terms of vowels, consonants and quantity: (‘The accent is a certain tone of voice which is a little like singing, but which is irrelevant to pronunciation.’)

³⁹ Hindret (1687), unpaginated ‘Discours’. (‘The accent is a certain tone of voice which is a little like singing, but which is irrelevant to pronunciation.’) Later, Olivet still considered this one of the elements of declamation. ‘[...] il y a par conséquent diverses inflexions de la voix, les unes pour élever le ton, les autres pour le baisser: et c’est ce que les Grammairiens nomment Accens,’ (‘consequently there are different vocal inflections, some raising the tone, others lowering it; this is what is called *accens* by grammarians’), from Olivet, *Traité de la prosodie françoise*, Paris 1736, pp.5-6, in Verschaeve (1997), p.26. The other two elements he names as ‘aspiration’ (what Bacilly calls ‘prononciation’) and ‘quantité’, both of which are discussed in the second part of this chapter.

⁴⁰ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, pp.371-2.

⁴¹ Gordon-Seifert (1994), pp.307-14 explored the motivic material derived from the ‘accents’ used by Bacilly and Lambert such as ascending and descending minor and major thirds. For example, Bacilly uses descending thirds or fourths on the exclamation ‘*hélas*’ when it expresses sorrow, which, according to rhetoricians such as Grimarest and Bretteville, require an elevated pitch and frequently embody a sigh.

⁴² In his 1666 *Recueil de paroles de musique*, Perrin listed the stars as an example of words whose image could move the passions when set to music, in this case by conveying joy or admiration (Perrin [1986], ‘avant-propos’, p.ix). Although he gives no clue as to how these were to be represented musically, Bacilly has answered the question by mentioning that certain composers insist on setting the word ‘stars’ to a

The only device addressed in detail in the *Remarques* which is linked to a rhetorical function is that of ornamentation, which was classed by Bernhard as providing ‘superficial’ figures and will be discussed in the following chapter: yet even this is not clearly systematised. There is no mirroring in the *Remarques* of the precise and complex techniques of oratory and no musical equivalents of devices such as exhortation, exaggeration, gradation or ellipsis are specified by Bacilly in his treatise. The closest he comes to the vocabulary of rhetoric is a reference to two rhetorical devices, an hypothesis and an optative phrase (on pages 381-2), on which he recommends pausing slightly to reflect the rhetorical nature of the words. Although Bacilly touches upon rhetorical devices in the compositional process in Chapter XI, his concerns with rhetoric in the treatise centre on rhetoric in performance, hence his concentration on declamation, involving pronunciation and the quantity of syllables.

II. Singing as Declamation or *L’Art de bien chanter*

Declamation provides the fundamentals of Bacilly’s singing technique, which cultivates the art of delivery. Pierre de Nyert⁴³ had a profound influence on Bacilly and it is in large part his singing technique which Bacilly, using his considerable ability in the domain of linguistic analysis, aimed to codify.

Prunières⁴⁴ listed contemporary writings which mention Nyert and show that he had studied in Rome between 1633 and 1635, an event which resulted in the viol player André Maugars (c. 1580-1654) crediting Nyert, in his 1639 *Réponse faite à un curieux*, with introducing an Italian-influenced vocal technique to solo song on his return to France.⁴⁵ His prominent position at court and his influential teaching helped to disseminate this technique through the fashionable and cultured milieu.

Nyert’s singing clearly made a significant impression on his pupil Bacilly, who claimed in his ‘Réponse’ that ‘rien n’est bon dans le Chant que ce qu’il a jugé tel’,⁴⁶ and that Nyert continued to exert influence even in his old age (he would have been eighty-two or eighty-three when the ‘Réponse’ was published in 1679). We can therefore

high note. Perrin also mentions the image of running lightly, which Bacilly similarly reveals can be set to a faster tempo.

⁴³ See Essay Ch.1, p.14.

⁴⁴ Prunières (1975), p.xliv.

⁴⁵ Maugars (1639), p. 27.

⁴⁶ ‘nothing is considered good in singing unless he has judged it to be so’, Bacilly (1679), p.10.

assume that Bacilly's singing technique owes much to his teacher.⁴⁷ Michel Lambert, also a pupil of Nyert, was as admiring of his teacher as Bacilly, dedicating his *Airs de Monsieur Lambert* (1660) to Nyert, in which he calls him a 'dieu du chant'.

We may say that together, Nyert, Bacilly and Lambert are the principal exponents of their particular style of singing, which will be explored below; this link can throw light on the background to Bacilly's treatise. The prominence of Nyert and Lambert in contemporary life and literary texts shows that the value of the technique codified by Bacilly was widely recognised; Lambert's court position lent considerable prominence to his singing technique. He was reputed as a singer, teacher and composer whose works were regularly performed at court⁴⁸ and who was in charge of training the 'enfants de la chambre' until 1693⁴⁹ as well as teaching (and performing alongside) the singers responsible for court entertainments.⁵⁰ Prunières and Gérold have pointed to references to Lambert, together with another of Nyert's pupils, Hilaire Dupuy (one of the leading female singers of her time and a close colleague of Lambert) in the writings of Tallemant des Réaux,⁵¹ La Fontaine⁵² and Boileau.⁵³ The scarcity of references to musicians in such sources serves as an illustration of Lambert's prominent position in Parisian life. In addition, Le Cerf made specific references to the popularity of Lambert's singing technique and its influence on French and foreign singers,⁵⁴ and Loret invented the adjective 'Lambertiquement' in describing the singing of Hilaire

⁴⁷ A comment in the *Mercure galant* testifies to the fact that the two musicians had much in common when it recorded that '[...] l'on attribuoit à Mr. de Niert tout ce qui estoit de Mr. de Bacilly', 'People attributed everything Bacilly wrote to Mr. de Nyert'. (*MG* 1st June 1684.)

⁴⁸ Brossette noted in his *Mémoires* that Lambert's airs were sung for the king at Versailles at the 'diner du Roy' and more private performances (at the 'couché du Roy') by his pupil, Mlle Le Froid: '[Leuffroy] avait préparé une douzaine des plus belles chansons de Lambert, pour les chanter au Roy [...]'. One of these airs was to words by Boileau: 'Mlle de Leuffroy m'en a donné une copie notée de sa main, sur l'original même de Lambert, qu'elle a.' (Ben Messaoud [1998], p.27.)

⁴⁹ Benoit (1971), vol.2, p.11-12, has published the surviving lists of payments made to the 'musiciens du roi'; the earliest source for payments made to Lambert for the upkeep of the three 'enfants' (trebles) dates from 1664, where, amongst the singers of the Musique de la Chambre, Lambert is listed as 'Maître des enfans'.

⁵⁰ An examination of the list of the court's expenses and the various payments made to Lambert reveal his services rendered to an itinerant court: in 1670 we find him sharing a coach with Lully, his son-in-law since 1662, when the Musique de la Chambre was ferried to Chambord and Saint-Germain-en-Laye to perform a *divertissement*; he was paid for two months of rehearsals and performances of the *Ballet du Triomphe de l'Amour* at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in 1680; and he performed at the queen's funeral in the royal abbey of Saint Denis in 1683. Lambert is still performing as a soloist for the king in 1688. (Benoit [1971], vol.2, pp.32, 76, 90, 114.)

⁵¹ Tallement (1932-4), vol.vi, pp.126-136.

⁵² *Le songe de Vaux* (1658) and *Epistre à M. de Niert* (1677).

⁵³ *L'art poétique* (1674); Boileau also comments on Lambert's habit of failing to keep engagements in his *Satire* no.3 of 1665 (Boileau [1840], p.187).

⁵⁴ Le Cerf (1705), II, p.77.

Dupuy.⁵⁵ We may add that in 1678, Jean Rousseau dedicated his *Méthode claire pour apprendre à chanter la musique* to Lambert, in which he praised Lambert's singing method and claimed that it was admired by everyone.

Bacilly, however, was a less prominent figure: in contrast to Lambert, he did not hold a position at court, nor is he recorded as having appeared alongside others in public entertainment. There is evidence that he performed in private households,⁵⁶ but not on the same scale as Lambert.⁵⁷ Less frequent references to Bacilly in literary sources could also be explained by the statement in the *Mercure galant* announcing his death,⁵⁸ which remembered Bacilly for his works, but did not mention his vocal skills. That Bacilly was not as gifted a singer may in part explain why he did not obtain a position as a 'musicien du roi'.

What exactly Nyert's achievements were is reported in a few sources which, though in agreement with each other as to what the new singing technique achieved, are rather short on detail as to what exactly was involved. Tallemant des Réaux (1619-92) expands a little on Maugars' thoughts of 1639 in documenting Nyert's influence on Lambert with the following:

'De Niert prit ce que les Italiens avoient de bon dans leur manière de chanter, que Lambert pratique aujourd'hui, et à laquelle peut-être il a ajouté quelque chose: avant eux on ne savoit guère ce que c'étoit que de prononcer les paroles'.⁵⁹

In 1668, the same year as the publication of the *Remarques*, the *abbé* Michel de Pure wrote on the importance of good pronunciation in singing:

'Rien ne m'a donné aussi plus d'estime pour ces nouvelles manières que nous pratiquons depuis peu sous le nom de *chanter de méthode* que cette exactitude et ce

⁵⁵ Loret, 19th February 1661, (Loret [1970] p.126). In reporting on the *Ballet d'Alcidiane*, Loret (16th February 1658) describes her voice as 'douce, nette et claire' ([1970], p.124), which Massip has suggested may conform to a vocal type fashionable throughout the 1660s and may be one aspect of the 'lambertian' style of singing ([1999], p.75).

⁵⁶ Bacilly's dedicatory preface in his *Second livre d'airs bachiques* (1677) reveals that he performed these airs for the Maréchal Duc de la Ferté-Senectère: the duke patronised Bacilly, as the preface reveals, 'en me permettant de manger quelquesfois à vostre Table [...] C'est là, Monseigneur, où j'ay pris la liberté de vous chanter ces airs que vous avez écoulez avec joye [...]', ('by occasionally inviting me to your table [...] And there, my lord, I took the liberty of singing these airs to which you listened with such joy [...]').

⁵⁷ Jean Loret noted in *La Muze historique*, Jan.1651, that Lambert received a pension from 'Mlle. de Montpensier' (Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans, duchesse de Montpensier, 1627-1693, also known as 'La Grande Mademoiselle') and was required at all fashionable events (Loret [1970], p.123). In addition to being frequently received in noble salons, Lambert and Hilaire Dupuy were among those who regularly appeared in royal chapels and in ballets at court.

⁵⁸ See Ch.1, p.15.

⁵⁹ 'Nyert adopted what was good in the Italian manner of singing, which Lambert uses these days, and to which he has probably added something: before [Nyert and Lambert] people hardly knew how to pronounce words properly', Tallement (1932-4), vol.vi, p.127.

soin de conserver les paroles dans le chant et d'empescher que le sens ne s'égare dans les fréquens et trop longs roulemens de la voix'.⁶⁰

Le Cerf corroborates the change effected in vocal practice in this description of the so-called new style of singing, with his perception of individual achievements:

'Bailli commença donc à introduire une méthode de chanter nette et raisonnable. Après lui vint Lambert, le meilleur Maître qui ait été depuis plusieurs siècles, du consentement de toute l'Europe [...]. Dès que les Opéra furent florissans, tous les chanteurs sçurent ouvrir la bouche et se faire entendre, et tous les auditeurs, sensibles à la beauté des paroles et voulant les goûter conjointement avec la musique, sçurent demander qu'on ne leur en dérobât rien. Surquoy Bacilly, homme d'un génie borné, mais exact, donna la dernière main à la propreté de notre chant, pour laquelle il avoit sans contredit un talent singulier'.⁶¹

The emphasis in these accounts is on a clearer delivery of the words, in the manner, so Tallemant des Réaux explains, of Italian performances. This application of the Italian style of singing to the French language and French musical taste had been anticipated by Mersenne three years before Maugars' 1639 report; in advising his readers to familiarise themselves with Caccini's *Nuove musiche* (1601/2), Mersenne pointed to a regard for quantity as an attribute of the Italian technique,⁶² based on a declamatory style of delivery:

'[Caccini] ajoûte qu'il faut seulement faire les passages & les roulemens de la voix sur les syllabes qui sont longues, & que la voix doit estre affoiblie, ou renforcée sur de certaines syllabes pour exprimer la passion du sujet; ce que l'on fait naturellement sans l'avoir appris, pour peu de jugement que l'on ait. Mais nos chantres s'imaginent que les exclamations & les accents dont les Italiens usent en chantant, tiennent trop de la Tragedie, ou de la Comedie, c'est pourquoy ils ne veulent pas les faire, quoy qu'ils deussent imiter ce qu'ils ont de bon & d'excellent, car il est aisé de temperer les exclamations & de les accomoder à la douceur Française [...].'⁶³

⁶⁰ 'I add that nothing has more earned my admiration for these new ways of singing which we have recently begun to use, called 'singing with technique', than the precision and care with which the words are preserved in singing, and avoiding losing the meaning of the words amidst embellishments that are too long.' *Idées des Spectacles anciens et nouveaux* (1668) quoted in Gérold (1921), p.213.

⁶¹ 'Bailly thus began to introduce a clear and reasonable singing technique. Then came Lambert, the best master we have had for several centuries, by consent of the whole of Europe [...]. As soon as opera began to flourish, all singers knew how to articulate and make themselves heard, and the audience, sensitive to the beauty of the words and wanting to appreciate them at the same time as the music, were knowledgeable enough to request that every single word be heard. At which point Bacilly, a man of limited but precise skill, gave the final touch, for which he had, without a doubt, a singular talent, to the clarity of our singing.' (Le Cerf [1705], II pp.76-7.)

⁶² Caccini, both singer and composer, explains in his preface to the *Nuove musiche* that he aims at a clear understanding of the words and a respect for the poetry in song, 'attenermi à quella maniera cotanta lodata da Platone, ed altri Filosofi, che affermarono la musica altro non essere, che la favella, e'l rithmo, ed il suono per ultimo, e non per lo contrario', Caccini (1601/2), preface. ('[...] to conform to the manner so lauded by Plato and other philosophers [who declared that music is naught but speech, with rhythm and tone coming after, not vice versa]', trans. Hitchcock in Caccini [1970], p.44), for, as he also writes, singers 'non potevano esse muovere l'intelletto senza l'intelligenza dee parole', Caccini (1601/2), preface. ('[...] could not move the mind without the words being understood', trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.44). See also Plato *The Republic* (Plato [1987], Part 3, book 3, 398 d, p.158).

⁶³ (1636), 2, Bk.6, p. 357: '[Caccini] adds that *passages* and improvised ornaments should only be done on long syllables and that the voice should be lightened or strengthened on certain syllables to express the

Both Mersenne (who at the time of the *Harmonie universelle*, credited Bailly⁶⁴ with bringing good pronunciation to singing),⁶⁵ and Maugars expressed their desire to see the Italian style of singing stripped of its extravagance and adapted to French singing and composition.⁶⁶ Maugars indicated that Pierre de Nyert effected this convergence in which French ‘bon goust’ played a leading part.

The new singing style imported and adapted by Nyert therefore involved a concern with diction; this is not to say that singers at the turn of the century had pronounced badly, as Tallemant suggests, but new considerations had come into play: more precisely, a concern with pronunciation and quantity, as in declamation. This is what Bacilly inherited as a principle from his teacher. Le Cerf’s description above of Bacilly’s assets as ‘un génie borné mais exact’ is therefore accurate to the extent that he was codifying a technique which was already in use; this, so Prunières, Gérolde and Caswell believed, explains the genesis of the *Remarques*.

However, merely to call Bacilly a codifier of an existing technique fails to recognise the significance of the system which Bacilly devised in order to establish his rules. Bacilly’s considerable merits lie in the process of codification itself. We must not forget that Bacilly’s treatise was written almost thirty years after Nyert’s Italian voyage, by which time French writers were refining their ideas on the art of delivery, something Bacilly, in wanting to illustrate his singing technique through the art of declamation, could not fail to incorporate into his work. None of the above writers on Bacilly sought to explore the position of the *Remarques* in relation to contemporary works on declamation. Yet these help to illustrate how, while retaining Nyert’s principles, Bacilly’s detailed rules for proper singing in his treatise are formulated according to the principles of a particular type of declamation, which will be described below.

French writers on the art of rhetoric during the first half of the seventeenth century focus principally on the rhetoric of pronunciation, which flourished as a vehicle to express the passions. The main works on rhetoric were, as in Germany, by Jesuit

passion in the text; this is done naturally without being taught, however little judgement one has. But our singers imagine that the exclamations and accents used by the Italians in singing belong too much to Tragedy or Comedy, which is why they will not do them. They should imitate what is good and excellent in [Italian] singing for it is easy to moderate exclamations and to accommodate them to the tenderness of French singing [...].’

⁶⁴ See Ch.3, fn.32.

⁶⁵ Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.356.

⁶⁶ Maugars (1639), p.29.

writers.⁶⁷ These theorists concentrated on eloquence: the colouring of the voice to render the passions which the orator wishes to awaken in his listeners, the clarity of diction and the force with which a speech is delivered.

This tradition influenced the elaboration and cultivation of speech in France during the second half of the century, when Bacilly was formulating the *Remarques*. Ideas on rhetoric were put forward in grammar manuals and manuals on rhetoric. The grammatical approach to pronunciation, already explored by Mersenne in 1636 and Vaugelas in his 1647 *Remarques sur la langue françoise*, consisted of establishing the identity of the French language by its phonology, based on cultivated speech, and ultimately the accent of the court, which was considered ‘l’usage commun’.⁶⁸ In proposing a ‘rhétorique de la conversation’, handbooks for polite, *mondaine* conversation considered discourse at a more elevated level, namely declamation, and explored an even closer relationship between the passions and the efficiency of the voice in rhetoric. This is illustrated in works such as René Bary’s *Méthode pour bien prononcer* (1679) and in Duport’s *L’Art de prêcher* (1682), where each of the passions requires a particular tone of voice in declamation.⁶⁹

The art of declamation explored in these treatises and manuals was necessary to a range of professions involving public speaking from preachers to lawyers and actors and to members of *mondaine* society such as Mme de Sévigné, whose entertainments involved the private reading of new plays, as she records in her *Lettres*. Reciting plays, poems and letters in the salons, where the culture of the voice was pursued, was common practice; indeed, one of the most popular manuals for rhetoric of the time, Bary’s *Méthode* of 1679, is aimed at salon society. Declamation was therefore practised in a variety of contexts. Grimarest’s definition of declamation in his *Traité du Récitatif* (1707) would have been acceptable to most of these seventeenth-century writers:

‘La déclamation, dans le sens qu’on la prend aujourd’hui, est le récit ampoulé que l’on fait d’un discours oratoire, pour satisfaire l’esprit, & pour toucher le cœur des spectateurs. D’où il s’ensuit qu’un sermon, une Oraison, une Tragédie, une Comédie peuvent être l’objet de cette partie de la rhétorique.’⁷⁰

⁶⁷ These included Nicolas Caussin, *Eloquentia* (1619), le Père de Cresolles, *Vacationes* (1620) and Pierre d’Aulberoché, *Eloquentiae pantarba* (1626).

⁶⁸ See Hindret (1687), pp.1-19; also Mornet (1929), p.314 and Salazar (1990), p.197.

⁶⁹ ‘Quand on excite la tristesse, il faut que la voix soit basse, plaintive, & quelquefois traînante & entrecoupée de soupirs’, Bk.V, chap.XIII, p.262, in Salazar (1995), p. 144. (‘When one wishes to convey sadness, the voice must be low [in pitch], plaintive and sometimes trailing and broken with sighs’.)

⁷⁰ ‘Declamation, as we understand it today, is the pompous delivery of an oration, in order to satisfy the minds and touch the heart of the audience. It follows that a sermon, a public address, a tragedy and a comedy can all be made the object of this branch of rhetoric.’ (*Traité du Récitatif*, 1707, p.120, as quoted in Green [1990], p.291.)

As in these manuals, Bacilly distinguishes between the conventions of ‘la déclamation’, a branch of rhetoric, and those of ‘le langage familier, mesme des plus polis’⁷¹ in the *Remarques*, and explains that singing has much in common with declamation (‘il faut chanter [...] comme on parle en Public’),⁷² which is why he claims that his treatise is as useful to singers as for public speakers. The different levels of discourse are established in the *Remarques*: delivery in singing is similar to public speaking rather than ordinary speech (Vaugelas’ ‘usage commun’ which acts as a reference),⁷³ which is different again from ‘le Parisien vulgaire’ and provincial pronunciation. Singing is comparable to theatrical declamation as a heightened form of delivery,⁷⁴ something to which later writers also turned as an example.⁷⁵ That the rhetoric of a singer is founded on the basic principles of public speaking is clear when one compares the language used in treatises for rhetoric with that of Bacilly’s treatise. For instance, Bary defines rhetoric thus:

‘La définition dit que [la rhétorique] découvre les moyens de persuader, [...]. La définition dit encore, qu’elle découvre les moyens d’émouvoir [...]. La mesme définition découvre enfin les moyens de plaire [...].’⁷⁶

An orator is therefore expected to persuade, move and please his audience, in the same way as a singer is expected to communicate to his audience:

‘Le Chant a pour but de contenter l’oreille’⁷⁷

and

‘Le Mouvement [...] est une certaine qualité qui donne l’ame au Chant, & qui est appelée Mouvement, parce qu’elle émeut, je veux dire elle excite l’attention des Auditeurs [...] [et] tient toujours l’Auditeur en haleine, & fait que le chant en est moins ennuyeux.’⁷⁸

⁷¹ Bacilly (1668), p.252/ 334. This distinction is equally made in Hindret’s treatise *L’Art de bien prononcer et de bien parler* (1687): he writes principally about what we can call ‘ordinary’ pronunciation, but often differentiates between the two types of pronunciation: ‘[...] mais en lisant ou en parlant en public [...]’, in Green (1990), p.288.

⁷² ‘one should sing [...] as one speaks in public’, Bacilly (1668), p.250.

⁷³ Bettens (2000), Ch.2, ‘La norme phonétique...’, p.1, has pointed out that the modern *Petit Robert* dictionary of French bases its pronunciation on ‘la conversation soignée du Parisien cultivé’.

⁷⁴ Bacilly (1668), pp.248-9/ 332.

⁷⁵ Bérard, for example, wrote ‘[...] le chant n’est qu’une déclamation plus embellie que la déclamation ordinaire [...]’ ([...] singing is merely an embellished form of ordinary declamation [...]), Bérard (1755), pp.50-1.

⁷⁶ ‘By this definition, [rhetoric] reveals the means of persuasion, [...]. By the same definition, it reveals the means of moving [the audience] [...] Finally, the same definition reveals the means of pleasing [the audience].’ Bary (1673), p.2.

⁷⁷ ‘the aim of singing is to please the ear’, Bacilly (1668), p.9.

⁷⁸ ‘*Mouvement* [...] is a certain quality which gives singing its soul, and is called *mouvement* because it moves people, I mean it arouses the listener’s attention [...] [and] holds the listener spellbound and prevents singing from becoming tiresome’, Bacilly (1668), p.200-201.

However, despite this parallel with theatrical declamation and the fact that Bacilly had the approval of public speakers in publishing his work,⁷⁹ the type of declamation at the heart of his treatise, and which acts as a reference for all other types, is of a very specific nature. In the ‘Réponse’, Bacilly jettisons a comparison with the declamatory style of singing used in the theatre (as in recitative) and instead recommends a less affected type of declamation suited to salon singing.⁸⁰ Bacilly is not contradicting himself: he is giving clearer specifications of his style. The style of declamation principally advocated by Bacilly was that used in the privacy of the salons for recitation, something in between public speaking and ordinary, cultivated speech; it is aimed primarily at a very select circle of people (‘Je me suis borné à [...] divertir quelques Personnes plus éclairées & plus appliquées à ces curieuses Recherches [...]’),⁸¹ who were pursuing the art of declamation through the cultivation of intonation and the choice and sound of words, or, as Salazar puts it, the ‘cultural autonomy of the voice’.⁸² The *Remarques* uniquely combine an awareness of contemporary debates in the use of language with a precise attention to the technicalities of musical performance; the result is a treatise with a social role to play in defining the performance and declamation of an elite part of society.

Bacilly distinguishes himself by recognising two fundamental elements in the codification of his style of declamation. The first of these is pronunciation, that is, the sound and weight of vowels and consonants; the necessity of establishing rules for it is justified by Bacilly by his complaint not only that singers did not know how to pronounce French properly,⁸³ but also that a particular pronunciation ought to be employed in singing of which few singers were aware. Bacilly notes that ‘ordinary’ pronunciation (that of cultivated people as spoken at court, as opposed to any kind of regional pronunciation, which Bacilly, among others, abhors),⁸⁴ often failed to observe a

⁷⁹ Bacilly (1679), p.4 (see Appendix 2).

⁸⁰ Bacilly (1679), p.11 (see Appendix 2).

⁸¹ ‘I have confined myself to the aim of arousing the curiosity of the more enlightened people who are more inclined towards these interesting pursuits’ [...]. (dedicatory epistle, p.[ii]/ 163.)

⁸² Salazar (1995), p.177.

⁸³ Bacilly (1679), p.6 (see Appendix 2).

⁸⁴ Bacilly (1679), p.30, ‘[...] un parler Provincial, [...] est le poison du chant François’ (‘[...] a provincial parlance, [...] is the scourge of French singing’). This view was supported by writers of manuals for courtly civility: Bouhours (1674, unpaginated foreword), who was himself from Brittany, wrote ‘les délicatesses du langage sont réservées pour ceux qui hantent la cour, [...] Quelque effort que fassent les Provinciaux pour bien parler, ils se sentent toujours de la Province’ (‘The subtleties of the [French] language are reserved for those who haunt the court, [...] However much effort provincial people make to speak correctly, they still feel provincial’), and added: ‘Et j’ose vous dire, Messieurs [de l’Académie

number of letters which nevertheless remained visible in orthography (such as the affectation of omitting the *l* and the *r* from the end of ‘il’ and ‘toujours’ and the *c* from ‘avec’,⁸⁵ or truncating whole syllables in imitation of the ‘Parisien vulgaire’). The type of pronunciation reserved for rhetoric, on the contrary, involved giving maximum attention to every letter, consonants in particular, and realising the greatest number of latent letters, such as the ‘mute’ *e*, usually omitted in ordinary speech; evidently, a thorough knowledge of orthography was required in order to perfect this art.⁸⁶ Bacilly’s details of pronunciation are so precise that Salazar⁸⁷ has suggested that the ‘académiciens’ who Bacilly claims in his ‘Réponse’⁸⁸ supported the treatise may have considered Bacilly as their pronunciation theorist for a projected *Rhetorique* which never materialised. Bacilly’s comparisons between the spoken language and declamation is as informative to linguists on how people spoke in seventeenth-century France as it is to musicians on how people sang; Bacilly’s treatise has been a valuable source in French linguistic and cultural studies.⁸⁹

In deciding on matters of pronunciation, one must firstly consider whether the performance is a private or public one and bear in mind the type of air being sung, in which case pronunciation may vary in accuracy and forcefulness.⁹⁰ Although Bacilly is primarily concerned with salon pronunciation, he also uses it as a point of comparison with other types of pronunciation; it acts as the constant, or control, with which to compare the performance of dramatic music or popular song. Pronunciation will be affected by tempo, for in *airs de mouvement* (light, fast airs with a regular beat) the tempo cannot be disrupted, so one must assess whether there is time to pronounce (for instance) the final *s* of a plural noun in order to communicate its plural identity.

Also of great importance is the effect of pronunciation on the ear of the listener. One must be aware of what sounds pleasant, which is a principal force behind Bacilly’s rules for pronouncing certain compound vowels: for example the *n* of ‘an’ (and of ‘en’ when it sounds like ‘an’), pronounced as a denasalised vowel, must only be sounded at

Françoise], que pour un Provincial je sçai assez bien mon Vaugelas’ (‘And dare I say, Gentlemen [of the Académie Française], that for a provincial man, I know my Vaugelas quite well’). In the preface to his *Remarques* (1647), Vaugelas placed ‘les provinciaux’ on the same footing as foreigners (Marzys ed. [1984] p.20).

⁸⁵ Bacilly (1668), pp. 300, 314, 323-4/ 365, 378, 387.

⁸⁶ Bacilly (1679), p.6 (see Appendix 2).

⁸⁷ Salazar (1995), p.175.

⁸⁸ Bacilly (1679), p.4 (see Appendix 2).

⁸⁹ Examples include Salazar (1995) and Bettens (2000).

⁹⁰ Bacilly (1668), p.287/ 355-6.

the very end of the vowel, for prolonging the *n* would result in singing through the nose, which sounds very unpleasant.⁹¹ On the other hand, the compound vowel ‘on’ cannot be denasalised, so one should avoid a long note or diminution on it for this would also result in a nasal sound. The same applies to ‘ou’ on page 227, which would sound too much like howling. Bacilly revels in sound: it is clear that the sound of a vowel, consonant or syllable is as important in communication as its meaning.⁹² And these sounds, some naturally pleasing, others naturally harsher, can be harnessed for expression as an affective device; for instance, Bacilly recommends on page 293 a forceful pronunciation of the letter *r* if the expression of the text requires it, such as a pressing question, an invective, a reproach. Bacilly pays the most attention to the device of ‘gronder’, or ‘rumbling’, which involves suspending certain consonants, namely *m*, *n*, *f*, *v*, *s* and *j* at the beginning of a word that requires a more powerful expression, a device which, almost one hundred years later, Bérard claimed as his own.⁹³ For instance, one must linger on the *m* of ‘mourir’, ‘malheureux’ and ‘miserable’ before moving on to the vowel.⁹⁴ This device is in fact included in Bacilly’s list of ornaments at the beginning of Chapter XII; their function as musical rhetorical figures is explored in the following chapter.

The spelling of the word and grammatical structure of the sentence is of course an important factor to consider in pronunciation. For example, Bacilly writes that one must decide whether it calls for the sounding of the *r* at the end of infinitives and of certain nouns where it is not usually pronounced, so as to distinguish between infinitives and past participles and illustrate points of grammar as well as the meaning of the text.⁹⁵

On a more practical note, one has to take into account whether the singer will be taking a breath or not as regards the pronunciation of final consonants,⁹⁶ for, as Bacilly explains in Part 2, Chapter VII, ‘souvent cela est libre dans le chant [...]’.⁹⁷

Bernard Lamy noted that pronunciation could not be learnt through books.⁹⁸ Fortunately for us, Bacilly proves to be an excellent phonetician: he provides detailed

⁹¹ Bacilly (1668), Pt.2, Ch.III, arts.1 and 2.

⁹² For instance, Bacilly writes that ‘[the vowel] *u* [...] brings much delicacy to French singing’ (p.278/350) and ‘Of all the consonants, none contributes more charm to singing than the *n*’ (p.302/368).

⁹³ Bérard (1755), pp.92-5, 99-100.

⁹⁴ Bacilly (1668), pp.136/246 and pp.307-11/371-6.

⁹⁵ Bacilly (1668), p.295-6/361.

⁹⁶ Bacilly (1668), pp.319/283, 322/385.

⁹⁷ ‘which is often left to the singer’ (Bacilly [1668], p.320/384).

instructions as to how each vowel, consonant and syllable should be pronounced with an exactitude that did not escape Le Cerf. His attention to the precise placing of each vowel in the mouth gives us a particularly good idea of what he is describing. In his on-line linguistic study on French pronunciation in singing during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque, Olivier Bettens,⁹⁹ who recognises Bacilly's treatise as a unique source of information on the subject, has transcribed Bacilly's vowels into a graphic illustration.¹⁰⁰

Bacilly addresses the problem of describing the sound of a vowel by establishing two principal elements: the mouth aperture and the posterior (guttural) or anterior (forward) placing of the vowel along a horizontal plane in the mouth. For each vowel, the mouth is more or less open than for others and each one is more or less forward than the others. Bettens has used our modern understanding of the production of vowel sounds to interpret seventeenth-century pronunciation: Bacilly does not mention the position of the tongue in his descriptions of vowel sounds, but it is now recognised as the essential element in vowel production.¹⁰¹ This is particularly useful when Bacilly describes mouth aperture, for 'aperture' can be recognised as a description of the height of the tongue, a more precise way of referring to the amount the mouth should be open. Thus when Bacilly describes *a* as the vowel that requires the most open mouth, this technically indicates the flattest tongue position, and places the *a* at the bottom of the aperture scale: the mouth is the most open, the arch of the tongue is the most flat.

Bettens creates an illustrative two-dimensional trapezoidal system, taking the accepted rules of phonetics of standard modern French as a reference with which to compare the vowel sounds of Bacilly.¹⁰² His system is built along two axes: the 'aperture' along the vertical axis represents 'mouth aperture' as described by Bacilly but in respect of actual sound production reflects the height of the arch-shaped tongue at its highest point in relation to the palate. The horizontal axis ('avant' – 'arrière') represents

⁹⁸ Lamy (1699), Bk. V, Ch.XXI, p.366: '[...] la peine qu'on prendra à ce qu'il se trouve dans la prononciation, ne sera ni vaine ni inutile. Mais cette étude ne se fait que vainement dans les livres: les Regles de la prononciation ne se peuvent enseigner que par un Maître vivant.' '[...] the trouble one will take over matters of pronunciation will be neither in vain nor useless. But this study is done in vain if it is done in books: for the Rules of pronunciation can only be taught aloud by a teacher.'

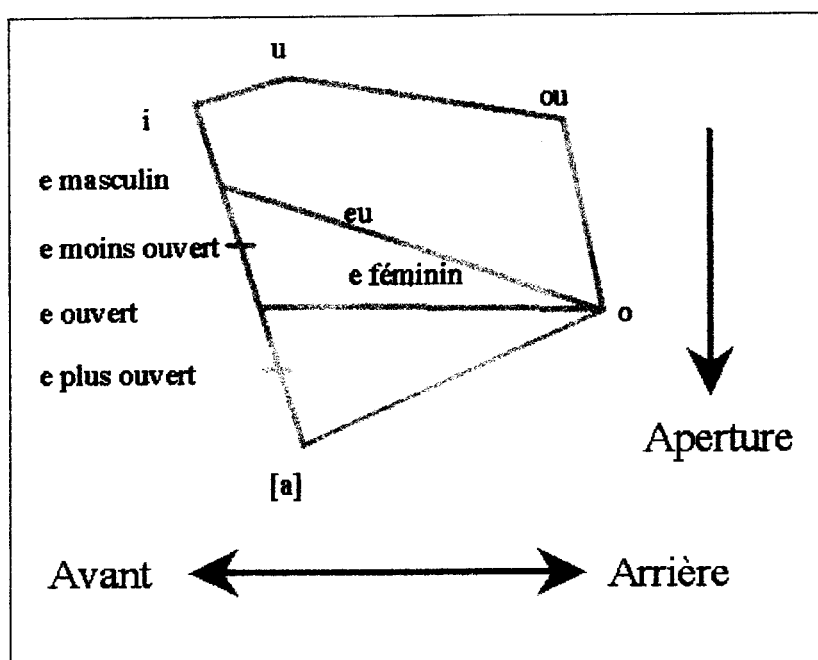
⁹⁹ Bettens (2000). (See under 'On-line publications' in bibliography)

¹⁰⁰ Bettens supplies an historical comparison between the vowels of modern French and those of classical Latin, mediaeval French and seventeenth-century French; for the latter, he regards the system which Bacilly devised as definitive of pronunciation in singing.

¹⁰¹ Bettens (2000), Ch.3, p.1. As a comparative study, Bettens refers to received opinion on phonetics throughout his work.

the same raised point of the tongue in relation to the back of the mouth (at the point of the soft palate) and the front (just behind the front teeth). This system is reproduced here as the graphic illustration of the descriptions in the *Remarques*, for the combination of the placing of each vowel along the vertical and horizontal axis results in an exact point in the mouth. Its shape is all the more helpful as it can be considered representative of the shape of the mouth itself.

FIGURE 10: [Betten's representation of Bacilly's vowel sounds and their production]¹⁰³



Along the vertical axis, the ‘aperture’ or the position of the tongue is very high, or very arched, on the vowel sounds ‘ou’, ‘u’ and ‘i’, and becomes progressively flatter through the different types of *e* to the vowel *a*. As for the vowel *e*, the more open the vowel (progressing from the masculine *e*, or ‘é’, to ‘è’), the more open the mouth,¹⁰⁴ hence the flatter the tongue. Bacilly’s advice on page 277 for the vowel *u* is that out of all the vowels, ‘il est nécessaire de tenir [la bouche] presque fermée’, which Bettens takes as an indication that the tongue is at its highest and places it accordingly at the extreme of the aperture scale. Along the horizontal plane, the position of the arch for the vowel *o* is far back in the mouth, while that of *i* is the furthest forward: again, Bacilly does not

¹⁰² Aquien (1995), p.67, for example, refers to the same classification of anterior/posterior, closed/open vowels.

¹⁰³ The square brackets around the ‘a’ indicate a variable sound: this is explained below.

¹⁰⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.264/ 342.

mention the tongue position, only that the vowel *o* is the furthest back in the throat ('une voyelle tout à fait *gutturale*'),¹⁰⁵ and *i* the furthest forward (Bacilly writes that it must be 'refined' as much as possible yet without producing a whistling sound, page 286, and that it is 'thinner and sharper' than the anterior vowel *e*, page 269). The compound vowel 'eu' and the feminine, or 'mute' *e*, are placed in the middle as an intermediate set to distinguish them as 'rounded' or 'labialised' vowels (the lips are brought forwards and rounded, as for *u* and the posterior vowels *o* and 'ou'). They are slightly further back on the horizontal axis than the anterior vowels.¹⁰⁶ This is according to Bacilly's description in the *e* article of Part 2, Chapter III, which he mostly devotes to the question of the 'mute' *e*: he connects its sound to that of 'eu', for which the lips must be drawn together, but is slightly more open; the two are therefore distinct from the other types of *e* vowels. Bacilly reinforces the distinctions between vowels by describing their expressivity: the anterior, closed vowel sounds ('i', 'u' and 'eu') are 'delicate' and the posterior sounds ('o' and 'ou') have 'force', while the open anterior vowels (*a* and *e*) seem to have a neutral timbre.

When compared to modern French, what is missing from Bacilly's descriptions is a clear indication of the posterior *a* vowel, or 'â'; however, Bacilly does make a distinction between two 'a' sounds in the exclamations 'Ah!' and 'Ha!' - his description suggests one is further back than the other.¹⁰⁷ There could therefore be some variation in the sound of the vowel *a*. This variability, not firmly established by Bacilly, may explain why Bettens refers to it as a sound in square brackets rather than a fixed vowel on his diagram. Also different is the placing of the vowel *i*; while Bettens places it at the top of the aperture scale in modern French, his interpretation of Bacilly results in the vowel *u* claiming that position. However, a closer inspection of text reveals that this may not be the case: although Bacilly does indeed claim that the mouth should be almost completely closed for this vowel, he adds 'otherwise it would sound like the diphthong *eu*'.¹⁰⁸ This comparison with the labial compound vowel 'eu' suggests that Bacilly is referring to the aperture of the lips rather than one which reflects the height of the tongue: the lips are rounded both for 'eu' and 'u' but even more close together to form 'u'. It therefore seems that there is not sufficient proof for placing the vowel *u* above *i* on the aperture scale and that *i* should retain the same placing on the aperture

¹⁰⁵ Bacilly (1668), p.273/ 347.

¹⁰⁶ Bacilly (1668), p.267/ 343. Aquien (1995), p.67, identifies these as anterior labialised vowels.

¹⁰⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.258/ 337.

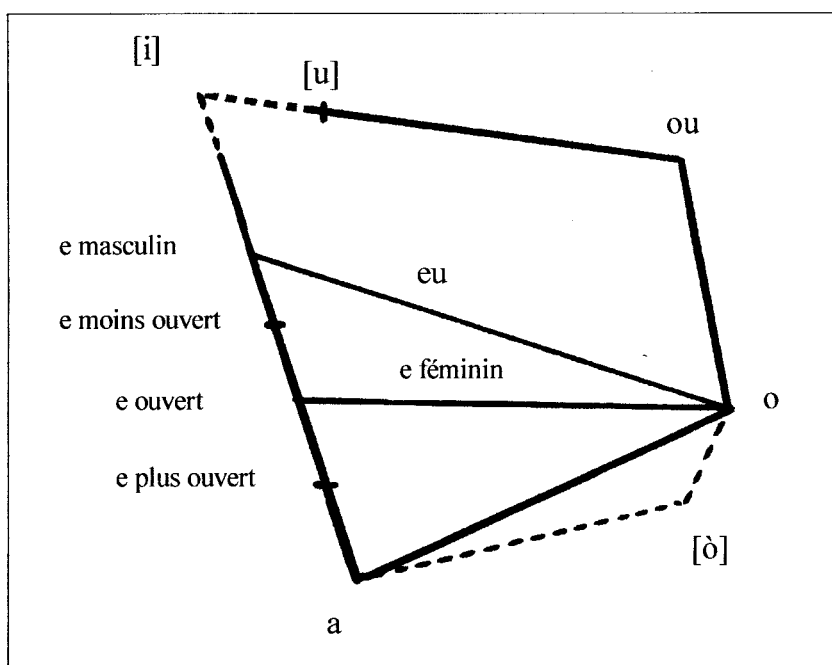
scale as it has in standard modern French. Bettens also claims that Bacilly does not differentiate between an open *o* (as in the French ‘botte’, or the English ‘holiday’) and a closed *o* (as in ‘tôt’, to which the closest sound in English is ‘or’, but is shorter and slightly more open).¹⁰⁹ Though Bacilly seems more concerned with finding the correct aperture for the six anterior vowels (particularly the four *e* vowels), one of his points on the pronunciation of the vowel *o* does indicate that he also had the open *o* in mind. This occurs in fact on the pronunciation of the compound vowels ‘on’ and ‘om’ in the words ‘bonne’ and ‘comme’, where Bacilly suggests that ‘a small *u*’ should be inserted between the two letters.¹¹⁰ Although what this means exactly is not immediately obvious, there is the suggestion that the *o* in these vowels can be, in effect, denasalised. Bacilly does write that this other pronunciation of *o* in ‘bonne’ and ‘comme’ is an exception to the rule that ‘il faut fort ouvrir le gosier pour bien prononcer l’*o*’ (page 275). This full opening of the throat (as opposed to the mouth) refers to the posterior position of *o*. There is therefore a less guttural *o*, namely the open *o*; his reference to the Greek letter omicron seems to confirm this. The open *o* is missing from Bettens’ diagram, the lower half of which can be amended as follows, to show the open *o* (represented as ‘ò’), both more forward in the mouth along the horizontal axis and further down the aperture axis. Also amended is the upper half showing *i* higher than *u* on the aperture scale.

¹⁰⁸ Bacilly (1668), p.277/ 350.

¹⁰⁹ Bettens (2000), Ch.3, p.5. Bettens does note that singers would not have pronounced every ‘o’ sound in the same manner, but that far more attention is paid to distinctions between other vowel sounds.

¹¹⁰ See Bacilly (1668), p.275/ 347-8.

FIGURE 11 [Bettens' diagram with amended lower and upper half showing the *i*, *u* and the approximate position of the open *o* (ò)]



Of Bacilly's five 'diphthongs', or compound vowels discussed in Chapter IV, the first two are straightforward; 'ai' is generally pronounced as an open *e* ('è'), which can vary between 'e moins ouvert' and 'e fort ouvert', the same distinctions which he uses for the vowel *e*. The compound vowel 'au' is pronounced as a closed *o*. 'Eu' is comparable to the mute *e*, while 'ou' is much further back in the mouth. However, the compound vowel 'oi' is more complicated for modern readers, for not until the 18th century does its modern pronunciation ('wa') enter the language of polite society, only to be confirmed in its use at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹¹¹ In the seventeenth century, the compound vowel 'oi' is generally pronounced 'wè', but was beginning to be pronounced 'ai' for certain verb endings which eventually came to be written as 'ais'.¹¹² Bacilly provides a phonetic description of it: first comes an *o* which is almost an 'ou', then an 'è' or 'ai' sound (he settles on rendering it as 'oüai'), so that it consists of one sound from the throat followed by one at the front of the mouth. The result is a sound which travels across the horizontal posterior/anterior axis in one vowel sound. Upon reading Chapter IV of Part 2, one has constantly to bear in mind the

¹¹¹ Bettens (2000), Ch.2, 'Les niveaux du discours', p.3.

¹¹² The ending of the conditional and imperfect tense of verbs in particular, written as 'ois', was pronounced 'ai'. The pronunciation of 'ois' as 'ai' was not applied to the ending of nouns and proper nouns such as 'un François' or 'un Anglois' until the 18th century (Verschaeve [1997], pp.40-1).

pronunciation of 'oi' as 'ouai', otherwise the text would make little sense to a modern reader.

Bacilly devotes three chapters of Part 2 to the pronunciation of consonants.¹¹³ Unlike the chapters on vowels, these contain no physiological descriptions of their production, as there is not more than one way of producing them; only in Chapter VI does Bacilly mention that the *m* is pronounced with the lips, which makes the 'suspension' of that consonant the most obvious. Instead, Bacilly concentrates on the force and duration of their pronunciation, or whether they should be pronounced at all (which differed from the conventions of the spoken language), so as to make the meaning of the poetry as clear as possible. It should be noted, however, that the consonant *r* was apical, or trilled, both in spoken and sung French, whereas today, while most singers still pronounce a trilled *r*, the spoken *r* is dorsal.

Some scholars are cautious about adhering strictly to seventeenth-century rules for modern performances of seventeenth-century music. Gundrun Ryhming¹¹⁴ is of the opinion that Bacilly's repertoire should be sung in modern French instead of adhering to the principles of declamation; for doing so, she believes, would contradict Bacilly's own opinion that one should always refer and adapt to 'l'usage' as a guide in matters of pronunciation. This argument ignores the fact that Bacilly, as well as grammarians such as Vaugelas and Bouhours, had little idea of how much their language would change. In addition, Bacilly's rules for ornamentation and embellishment, which rely as heavily on pronunciation as on quantity, would be distorted.

Other scholars are very aware of the considerable adjustments that need to be made on behalf of modern singers in order to perform this repertoire. On matters of pronunciation, Barnett¹¹⁵ has noted that modern singers place more importance on vowels than on consonants; in the seventeenth century, however, singers placed significant weight on consonants, as illustrated by the practice of suspending consonants (Bacilly's 'grondement'). Vowel sounds may also be a problem, for modern singers are frequently taught to mix French vowel sounds, especially 'i' and 'u', and to brighten 'è' by raising the tongue.

¹¹³ Ch.V, in three articles, covers the consonants *r*, *l* and *n*; Ch.VI, the device of 'grondement' (the suspension of certain consonants before a vowel, mentioned above), and Ch.VII, the pronunciation of final consonants.

¹¹⁴ Ryhming (1982/2), p.6.

¹¹⁵ Barnett (1981), p.342.

What must be taken into account is that seventeenth-century French is almost a different language from its modern counterpart: the meaning of words, both principal and accessory,¹¹⁶ has changed, and our understanding of them can be entirely different from that of a seventeenth-century performer or audience; many points of grammar observed by Bacilly, which need to be reflected in certain pronunciations of the letters *s*, *r* and *l* in Ch.VII of Part 2, for instance, are equally alien to modern French. However, sung French was again different, and judging by the *Remarques*, seventeenth-century singers had as many difficulties with it as modern singers. The rules which governed sung, or declaimed French were clearly distinct from those of spoken French. If this is the case, the original pronunciation of this music ought to be respected, in order to make it clear that a modern audience cannot approach it in the same way as a modern sung text. William Christie has long recognised the importance of preserving Bacilly's pronunciation in his performances of the French baroque repertoire; the problem, however, lies with the audience who, according to Christie, has resisted the use of seventeenth-century pronunciation in performance. René Jacobs' recording of Bacilly's *Je suis bien las d'entendre*,¹¹⁷ is a good illustration of the problem. The second strophe begins as follows:

Le nom de Celimène
Et celui de Cloris
Ne produisent que peine,
Que rigueur, que mépris.¹¹⁸

If the 'rime' is to be respected, the final *s* of 'mépris' at the end of line 4 should be sounded in order to rhyme with 'Cloris' in line 2; the sounding of the *s* is all the more desirable as it comes at the end of the line, a point discussed by Bacilly in the final chapter of Part 2. To a modern audience, this terminal pronunciation would sound absurd; Jacobs, though aware of seventeenth-century performance practice, accordingly does not pronounce the final *s* of 'mépris'.

If modern audiences can be persuaded to consider the repertoire in new terms, that is, as a different language, perhaps seventeenth-century pronunciation will become more widespread. William Christie, however, believes that it will take another twenty to thirty years for it to become widely accepted as audiences become more accustomed to hearing it in performance.

¹¹⁶ See Gordon-Seifert (1994), pp.39-41.

¹¹⁷ *Airs de cour*, René Jacobs, Harmonia Mundi 1901079 (1981).

The quantity of syllables in declamation is the second element involved in Bacilly's singing technique; it forms an essential part of the type of private declamation which he is codifying. The respect for quantity in singing may well have been a notion introduced by Nyert, but Bacilly's rules are precisely formulated in relation to French declamation, something for which we have no evidence that Nyert is responsible.

Several scholars have suggested that Bacilly's rules for quantity follow the tradition of 'vers mesurés' as established by Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532-1589), who founded the Académie de Poésie et de Musique in 1570 for the purpose of experimenting with the application of Classical metrical verse to French poetry. Caswell¹¹⁹ claimed that Bacilly's concerns with quantitative prosody give ample evidence that he was influenced by Baïf's humanist activities. Similarly, David Tunley¹²⁰ argued that Baïf's notion of quantitative measures and 'musique mesurée' had a lasting influence, traceable from Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle* (1636) through Bacilly's *Remarques* (1668) to Grimarest's *Traité du récitatif* (1707). Notions of quantity in fact predate Baïf's experiments: 'vers mesurés' can be found in Michel de Boteauville's *L'art de metrifier françois* (1497),¹²¹ one of the earliest attempts at applying ancient Greek and Latin metrical versification, which measured poetry in feet, to French poetry, which was metrified syllabically and relied on the use of the rhyme. Baïf was the first to advocate the setting of 'measured' poetry to music, a task undertaken by composers such as Joachim Thibault de Courville (d.1581)¹²² and Jacques Mauduit (1557-1627),¹²³ in which syllables which were long metrically were set to long notes, and short syllables to short notes; the resulting 'musique mesurée' had repercussions on the prosody of the early seventeenth-century air.¹²⁴

Mersenne considers at length the quantity of syllables, and his rules are written entirely in the context of Latin and Greek prosody: Mersenne was proposing rules for the composition of French 'vers mesurés' in accordance with Baïf's particular and complex system of writing, even though experiments with 'vers mesurés' were no

¹¹⁸ The full text, from Bacilly (1664) fol.34v-35, is provided as Fig.1 in Chapter 2.

¹¹⁹ Caswell (1964), pp.127, 139.

¹²⁰ Tunley (1984), p.281.

¹²¹ Reproduced in Thomas (1883).

¹²² A colleague of Baïf's, Courville co-founded the Académie de Poésie et de Musique in 1570 and set some of Baïf's own measured verse to music.

¹²³ Mauduit is mentioned by Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, pp.393 and 419; see also Yates (1988), p.53-6.

¹²⁴ See for instance Walker (1948), pp.141-163, who examined its influence in the music of such composers as Guédron (1575-1620); Verchaly (1954/1 & 2, 1961); Durosoir (1991, 1996); Brunel (1996).

longer popular by the 1630s, when poets were writing *précieux* poetry¹²⁵ which was metrified syllabically and followed the principle that in French versification only two accents exist: the rhyme and the caesura. Although the use of ‘vers mesurés’ in poetry was even less common by the time Bacilly came to publish the *Remarques*, it had not entirely gone out of fashion: this was illustrated by Bernard Lamy, partisan with those who did not find them a satisfactory tool for writing poetry in a language to which the opposition of long and short syllables is not pertinent:

‘Henri Estienne [...] prétend qu’on peut faire des vers François semblables aux vers Latins. [...] Henri Estienne trouvoit ces [...] vers François fort beaux, mais je ne crois pas que plusieurs soient de son avis. [...] C’est pourquoi nous sommes obligez de donner de l’harmonie à nos paroles d’une autre manière que les Grecs et les Latins. Nôtre Poësie ne consiste que dans un certain nombre de syllable, & dans les rimes [...]’¹²⁶

In fact, Bacilly mentions ‘vers mesurés’ only once in his treatise,¹²⁷ saying that they were used for the purpose of Latin verse.

Although Caswell and Tunley were correct in regarding ‘vers mesurés’ as still an issue in Bacilly’s day, if a marginal one,¹²⁸ they failed to note Bacilly’s assertions in the *Remarques* that he was not concerned with the quantity of syllables as used in the classical metres of ‘vers mesurés’, but that he wanted to establish rules for quantity in declamation:

‘Or il faut remarquer qu’en établissant des longues et des brèves, je ne prétens point de parler de la composition des Ouvrages, soit en Prose, soit en Vers, mais seulement de la déclamation; & lors qu’il est question de les faire valoir en public, & leur donner le poids qui leur est nécessaire.’¹²⁹

Bacilly’s rules in the third part of the treatise are based on the principles of syllabic quantity in declamation, a tradition distinct from that of ‘vers mesurés’ in poetry:

¹²⁵ Verchaly (1961), p.67, quotes from a letter of Agrippa d’Aubigné (1552-1630) stating that the writing of ‘vers mesurés’ was only practised by a small number of people.

¹²⁶ ‘Henri Estienne [...] claims that French verses can be written in the same manner as Latin verses. [...] Henri Estienne thought these [...] French verses were very good, but I do not think that many people shared his opinion. [...] That is why we are obliged to make our words harmonious by means that are different from those of Greek and Latin. [...] Our poetry is only concerned with the number of syllables and the rime [...]’ (Lamy 1699, Bk.III, XXI, pp.226-7.) Henri Estienne (1528-98) belonged to the dynasty of scholar-printers active in Geneva and Paris from 1502 to 1674.

¹²⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.245/ 330.

¹²⁸ See Aquien (1995), p.12, who notes some of the figures who persisted in imitating classical metrification in French prosody.

¹²⁹ ‘I have to point out that in establishing long and short syllables, I am not speaking of the composition of works, be they in prose or in verse, but only of declamation, when it is a question of emphasizing these works with due forcefulness in view of a public performance.’ (1668), p.328.

‘[...] & comme le chant est une espece de Declamation, comme j’ay dit cy-devant, il ne faut point douter que l’on n’ait grand égard à la Quantité des syllabes, sans laquelle le Chant seroit fort imparfait.’¹³⁰

The presence of these rules in the *Remarques* not only establishes quantity as a critical constituent in a newly codified singing technique but moreover, it is the first time that such detailed rules appear in print, in relation to both singing and declamation.

However, the existence of syllabic quantity in declamation seems to have been as contentious as the issue of ‘vers mesurés’: declamation is a stylised form of speech, an amplification based on the rhythms of French; yet there is no unanimous agreement, neither in contemporary literature nor historical works, on the natural linguistic rhythm of French,¹³¹ let alone a rhetorical rhythm. Bacilly agrees with his critics that quantity was not an issue when writing French poetry, yet insists that declamation, both of poetry and prose, was a different matter:

‘s’il est question de reciter agreablement des vers, les chanter, mesme les declamer, il est certain qu’il y a des longues & des bréfves à observer, non seulement dans la Poësie, mais aussi dans la Prose;’¹³²

Hindret also believed in defining the rhythms of declamation through quantity, which he discussed in his treatise; though he considered the length of individual syllables, penultimate syllables, vowels, consonants and diphthongs, he did not come close to the sort of systemisation provided in the *Remarques*.¹³³

Some musicians evidently also found the idea of respecting quantity in singing at best unappealing:

‘On dit que j’ay fait des Regles pour la Quantité des Syllables Françaises qui souvent sont contraire à l’Agrément du chant’.¹³⁴

To this criticism, Bacilly counters that since it is the text rather than the melody which dictates the application of ornamentation, which in turn gives a melody its charm, these rules for quantity can in no way be contrary to the beauty of a melody. Bacilly made high claims for his technique, but it seems that quantity was its most controversial element.

¹³⁰ ‘And as singing is a type of declamation, as I have said above, there is no doubt that one must pay great attention to the quantity of syllables, without which singing would lack perfection.’ (1668), p.328.

¹³¹ See Bettens (2000), preface, ‘Le verbe, le rythme et la voix’; also Aquien (1995), p.71.

¹³² ‘when it comes to reciting, singing or declaiming poetry pleasantly, there are definitely long and short syllables to observe, not only in verse but also in prose;’ (1668), p.328.

¹³³ Hindret (1687), Ch.III, p.132.

¹³⁴ ‘Some say that I have devised rules for the quantity of French syllables that are often prejudicial to vocal ornamentation’, Bacilly (1679), p.15.

The syllables which Bacilly quantifies are classified according to the letters contained in a syllable and the position of that syllable in a masculine or feminine word: the consonant *n*, for instance, renders a syllable as long as possible if it occurs after a vowel.¹³⁵ Similarly, syllables (monosyllables in particular) ending with the consonants *s*, *z* or *x* are also very long,¹³⁶ but there are many factors which cause exceptions to Bacilly's rules, making quantity quite a complicated issue: quantity can alter depending on the nature of the following syllable, or on the position of syllables or monosyllables in the verse. In this respect, the strategic principle of 'retrograde symmetry' comes into play.¹³⁷ To add to the complexity, there are degrees of quantity: syllables can be very long, long, semi-long, short, very short, or not quite as short, and although lists of monosyllables, masculine words and feminine words of two or more syllables are provided for many of the rules, there are many exceptions determined only by taste, or 'bon goust', that elusive factor which so few are said by Bacilly to possess.¹³⁸ Versification must also be considered for it can dictate quantity: the caesura in each line of poetry was observed in composition with a cadence or a long note;¹³⁹ thus syllables which may otherwise be short are always long if they occur at the caesura or the end of the line (the rhyme).¹⁴⁰ Bacilly gives three verses on page 422 in which the length of the syllable that falls at the caesura is affected. Although no reference to a musical example is made, these three lines are found in the Lambert 1666 volume of airs and the first of the two Bacilly 1668 volumes; these clearly illustrate the use of a long note on the caesura in the two alexandrines and the octosyllable, making the syllable which falls on it also long in accordance to his rule.¹⁴¹

Only rarely does Bacilly refer to the meaning of a word as a factor in determining quantity.¹⁴² While the rhetorical function of certain monosyllables can determine length (exclamations, interrogations and interjections are always long monosyllables)¹⁴³ meaning does not, in fact, contribute to establishing the rules and as

¹³⁵ Bacilly (1668), p.336/ 393.

¹³⁶ Bacilly (1668), pp.337/ 393 and 423-4/ 442.

¹³⁷ Bacilly (1668), Pt.3, Ch.II, from p.339/ 394, and p.416/ 439. 'Symmetry' can help determine which, out of two short monosyllables, should be longer or shorter, taking as a point of departure syllables whose quantity is not in question; as these are frequently those at the end of the verse, one must count backwards, hence Bacilly's term 'retrograde symmetry'.

¹³⁸ A discussion on 'bon goust' is included in Ch.5 of this essay.

¹³⁹ See Ch.3 on the musical structure of the airs.

¹⁴⁰ Bacilly (1668), p.328/ 389.

¹⁴¹ See present translation pp.441-2, exx. xxxvii, xxxviii and xxxix.

¹⁴² See Bacilly (1668), pp. 374/ 415 and 398/ 430.

¹⁴³ Bacilly (1668), p.333/ 392.

such is more detached from quantity than from pronunciation, where meaning can elicit a more ‘powerful’ or ‘delicate’ pronunciation of certain letters. Bacilly has already discussed the words used in poetry in the first part of his treatise: Parts 2 and 3 deal separately with two issues of their delivery, so as to add the extra level of communication to the text in order to persuade and move the listener.

The overriding function of quantity in singing is to define the rhythm of declamation. In this way it could help clarify the sense of the poetry by distinguishing between certain words which could sound the same, but whose quantity would be different.¹⁴⁴ But most of all, it could be used to amend the melody of the second and subsequent verses in a solo air, whose words do not always fit the melody of the first verse in terms of quantity; it must equally be used in first verses when the composer has disregarded the proper quantity of syllables. Bacilly sees this as one of the most important skills a singer ought to possess in order to ensure that, for example, a long syllable is not sung to a short note.¹⁴⁵ Grimarest echoed this concern on behalf of opera singers in his 1707 treatise on recitative, when he writes:

‘Le compositeur [...] étant souvent contraint par les règles de son art, de déranger la quantité des silabes, c’est à un habile Acteur à suppléer à ce défaut, en faisant longues les silabes qui doivent l’être, et breves celles qui sont breves, sans faire attention à la longueur, ou à la brièveté de la note, à laquelle elles sont assujetties. [...] il faut absolument observer, pour bien chanter, que l’Acteur doit connoître parfaitement les regles de la quantité [...]’.¹⁴⁶

However, in relation to airs, this advice can be problematic, for a conflict arises between the rhythm of declamation and that of the music. Syllabic quantity is only one of the elements which determine rhythm, for versification and musical rhythm play as great a role. Bacilly gives an example of a line of poetry in which all the syllables (they are all monosyllables) are technically long; and yet he admits that one cannot write an air with just long notes, so some will have to be shorter (or ‘semi-short’), though still long enough for an ornament and sung with more weight than a short syllable.¹⁴⁷ Amending second verses is much more restricted in airs with a fixed metre: whereas in the

¹⁴⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.384/ 421, gives the example of differentiating between ‘ses coups’ and ‘sept coups’ by knowing that ‘ses’ is a long monosyllable while ‘sept’ is not.

¹⁴⁵ Bacilly (1668), p.219-223/ 309-314.

¹⁴⁶ ‘As the composer [...] is often obliged, by the rules of his art, to disturb the quantity of syllables, it is the duty of the actor to make up for this defect, by ensuring that long syllables are long and that short ones are short, without observing the length of the note to which these syllables have been set. [...] In order to sing properly, it is important to note that the actor must have a thorough knowledge of the rules of quantity [...]’. (Grimarest, *Traité du récitatif*, 1707, p.218, in Barnett [1981], p.339.)

¹⁴⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.352-3/ 400-401.

declamatory *airs sérieux* the free metre accommodates the quantitative rhythm of the syllables, airs with a fixed metre can only be amended with difficulty if a dance rhythm, for instance, is to be respected. Quantity therefore plays a far less important part in determining rhythm in such airs:

‘l’ordre de la quantité [...] est preferable à celui du Mouvement, spécialement dans les Chants sérieux; car pour les Airs qui ont leur Mesure réglée, on n’en use pas avec tant d’exactitude, & l’on préfère souvent le Mouvement à la Quantité, quoy que toujours avec la considération qu’il faut avoir pour elle.’¹⁴⁸

The varying degrees to which quantity can be applied are comparable to the conditions of pronunciation, which are subject to change according to the different levels of discourse: light airs have a less marked pronunciation and fewer possibilities for strict quantity, while in *airs sérieux*, salon pronunciation and the principles of quantity can be applied more fully. In dramatic recitative, the most amplified form of declamation and that which Bacilly had in mind when drawing a parallel to the theatre, pronunciation was more marked, an exaggerated, public version of that of the salons, and quantity governed the rhythm of declamation entirely.

Although Bacilly indicates at the beginning of Part 3 that quantity is a performance related issue, it is apparent that syllabic quantity should not only be observed in singing but also in composition.¹⁴⁹ But, as in performance, this can be difficult to apply in airs with set rhythms without affecting the character of the piece, especially when the words are written after the music.

Bacilly’s compositions reveal the viability of the rules in the *Remarques*: the theory offered in the treatise is practically applied. He is able to provide an example from one of his own airs to illustrate how the melody of the *double* should be amended in consideration of the quantity of the words.¹⁵⁰ However, in his performance notes in the Fuzeau reprint of Bacilly’s 1668 airs, Saint-Arroman immediately identified a contradiction between theory and practice in the first air of Bacilly’s first volume, ‘Puisque Philis est infidelle’:¹⁵¹ he provided Bacilly’s recommendation that a short note should occur on the last syllable of the word ‘revoltons’, which is a short syllable, and yet in the air it is set to a long note [Ex. M 1]. Saint-Arroman identified a similar

¹⁴⁸ ‘the rule governing quantity [...] is more important than the *mouvement*, especially in *airs sérieux*; in airs with a regular metre, it is more difficult to apply the rules of quantity precisely, and one is tempted to give more importance to the *mouvement* than to quantity, but never to the extent of not respecting it.’ Bacilly (1668), p.354-5.

¹⁴⁹ Bacilly (1668), pp.331-2/ 390.

¹⁵⁰ Bacilly (1668), p.221/ 313.

¹⁵¹ Bacilly I (1668), p.4; Bacilly-Saint-Arroman (1996), vol.1, p.10.

discrepancy on the words ‘la plus belle’ from ‘Auprez des beaux yeux de Silvie’ [Ex. M 2].¹⁵² According to Bacilly, the monosyllable ‘plus’, normally long, should be short when it is paired to another word following it, in this instance, ‘belle’. In the air, however, not only is ‘plus’ set to a minim, but the presence of an ornament makes the syllable even more significant in terms of quantity.

Example M 1 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.4]

Example M 1 is a musical score for a vocal piece. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The vocal line starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 3/2. The lyrics are: [tré]pas Mon cœur re - vol - . The bass line has a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 3/2. The lyrics are: [tré]pas Mon cœur Mon cœur re - vol - . The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: -tons nous con - tre el - - le. The bass line has a 6/4 time signature, then changes to 3/2. The lyrics are: - tons nous con - tre el - - le. There are various performance markings, including a '+' above the first note of the vocal line in the second system, and a '6' above the first note of the bass line in the second system.

Example M 2 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.48]

Example M 2 is a musical score for a vocal piece. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The vocal line starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 3/2. The lyrics are: Mais la plus bel - le vi - - e. The bass line has a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 3/2. The lyrics are: Mais la plus bel - le vi - - e. There are various performance markings, including a '+' above the first note of the vocal line in the second system, and a '6' above the first note of the bass line in the second system.

It would seem that there is a blatant contradiction between Bacilly’s theory and his practice. However, although these performance notes are written for the 1668 *Trois livres d’airs*, Saint-Arroman has drawn from Bacilly’s 1679 ‘Discours qui sert de réponse à la critique’ for the author’s comments.¹⁵³ What is not made clear in Saint-Arroman’s notes is that in the ‘Réponse’, Bacilly implies that these discrepancies have been corrected. We have here, in fact, a reference to a missing 1679 edition of the *Trois livres d’airs* in which, presumably, these corrections were made.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Bacilly-Saint-Arroman (1996), vol.1, p.18

¹⁵³ Bacilly ‘Réponse’ (1679), pp.24-5.

¹⁵⁴ See Editorial Notes, pp.158-9.

The other remarks selected by Saint-Arroman to help the modern performer clearly demonstrate the practicality of Bacilly's rules and his concern in reconciling theory and practice both in performance and composition. That Bacilly should have corrected airs that did not observe the rules of quantity further demonstrates his belief in the practical application of the rules. Yet Bacilly was not intractable in his formulations: the 'Réponse' also shows that he kept an open mind and was willing to adapt and change some of his rules.¹⁵⁵

'[...] l'on se perfectionne tous les jours quand on veut s'appliquer à bien examiner les choses [...]'¹⁵⁶

Bacilly considers French song as one particular mode of rhetorical expression of a text through declamation; he applies the principles of declamation to singing, the aim of which, as a form of rhetoric, is to express the passions ('le Chant [...] ayant pour but d'exprimer les passions').¹⁵⁷ It is declamation which dictates the precise conditions for the use of ornamentation and embellishment, which, applied with a deep respect for the text, therefore play a key role in articulating his system of communication. The singer is the orator and must exercise his own rhetoric through his vocal technique, by breathing in the right places and adding at each verse new ornaments which are applied according to the requirements of expression (pronunciation and quantity, coupled with gesture) and taste; a grasp of these is essential, and it is these principles which lie at the heart of 'chanter lambertiquement', as Loret put it, and which Bacilly attempts to explain in the *Remarques*. Saint-Evremond agreed that French singers required study and guidance to grasp the principal qualities necessary for good singing in his essay *Sur les opera* (1669-70):

'il y en a peu qui entendent moins la quantite et qui trouvent avec tant de peine la prononciation; mais apres qu'une longue estude leur a fait surmonter toutes ces difficultez et qu'ils viennent bien à posseder ce qu'ils chantent, rien n'approche de leur agrément.'¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ See, for examples, Bacilly (1679), pp.18-19, where certain final syllables which he wrote should be made short on pp.420-3 of the treatise he now believes ought to remain long. He also mentions on p.32 a matter of pronunciation regarding the compound vowel 'in' which he failed to mention in the treatise (see Appendix 2).

¹⁵⁶ '[...] one improves every day when one takes the trouble to study things carefully [...]', Bacilly (1679), p.19.

¹⁵⁷ Bacilly (1679), p.12 (see Appendix 2).

¹⁵⁸ 'Few people are worse at understanding quantity and have such trouble in achieving correct pronunciation; but once they have surmounted these difficulties, following a long period of study, and have managed to gain a thorough knowledge of what they are singing, nothing matches their charm.' Saint-Evremond (1684), pp.108-9.

In a salon culture, Bacilly assumes the role of the only, true teacher of proper singing through declamation, that is, the correct expression for the cultured milieu of the salon.¹⁵⁹ This may well have played a large part in provoking the criticism levelled at the *Remarques* by its detractors, which motivated Bacilly to write the ‘Réponse’. Among his critics was the publisher Christophe Ballard, son of Robert Ballard. He claimed that there were in fact many competent singing teachers in Paris (a point strongly disputed by Bacilly) and that it would be absurd to imagine that Bacilly was alone in being able to teach ‘la belle manière de chanter’.¹⁶⁰ This will be addressed in the section of this essay on the critical reception of the treatise and of Bacilly’s aspirations.

¹⁵⁹ In the foreword (p.[iii]), Bacilly writes that he has completed a work ‘qui peut avoir quelque consideration par sa nouveauté [(] je veux dire par la raison que personne n’a jamais traité de cette matiere) si ce n’est par son excellence’, ‘whose novelty is of some interest (meaning that no one has dealt with this subject before) if not by its quality’. In the ‘Réponse’, he says that he anticipated the criticism he received for having written out rules for singing which no one had ever attempted to produce before (see Appendix 2).

¹⁶⁰ Ballard (1679) preface (see Ch.6, p.139).

CHAPTER 5

ORNAMENTATION & EMBELLISHMENT: IDENTITY, FUNCTION and APPLICATION

One of the principal characteristics of seventeenth-century solo vocal performance in France was the addition of improvised ornamentation and embellishment to the melodic line of an air and particularly to second verses, the *doubles*. This aspect of the *air sérieux* is the second defining characteristic of the style of singing introduced by Nyert and developed by Lambert and Bacilly, yet relies heavily on the first: a scrupulous respect for prosody both in terms of pronunciation and quantity.

The ornaments (Bacilly uses the terms ‘ornemens’ and ‘agrémens’ interchangeably)¹ and embellishments included in the *double* are not only significant to the study of vocal music: Caswell² explored their important role in the development of instrumental ornamentation and demonstrated that Bacilly’s codification of vocal ornaments provided a model on which seventeenth- and eighteenth-century instrumental treatises on the subject are based. The relationship between the two is illustrated by Jean Rousseau in his viol treatise of 1687: Rousseau praised the technique of his teacher Sainte-Colombe through which he managed to imitate perfectly the ornaments and refinements of singing.³ Bacilly himself had firmly stated the supremacy of vocal music over instrumental music, which the latter can merely strive to imitate.⁴ Instrumental music was therefore governed by the same principles as vocal music; Saint-Lambert showed that in the absence of lyrics, instrumental music can draw on the same rhetorical principles as vocal music,⁵ and in his 1665 volume of organ music, Nivers suggested that the study of vocal music can help the performance of his instrumental pieces.⁶

The *double* itself became a feature of instrumental music; Benoit cites Lully’s lack of appreciation of his singers’ employment of the *double* as the main cause of its demise,⁷ after which it was relegated to instrumental (particularly keyboard) music, and

¹ In his chapter on ornaments, however, he refers to them as ‘ornemens’.

² Caswell (1964), p.135.

³ Rousseau (1687), dedicatory epistle. (See p.329, fn.379 of current translation.)

⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.244/ 329-30.

⁵ See Chapter 4, p.92.

⁶ Nivers (1665), preface. ‘[...] on doit consulter la methode de chanter, par ce qu’en ces rencontres l’orgue doit imiter la Voix.’ (‘[...] one should consult the method of singing, because in all these matters, the Organ should imitate the voice’.)

⁷ Benoit (1992), p.246; apparently, Lully found that the *double* hindered the dramatic pace of his representations.

came to be known as the variation. By the 1730s, Mattheson was referring to the *double* as an instrumental aria.⁸

As instrumental music referred to vocal music as a measure of good taste, the *Remarques* is not only central to understanding the complex issue of vocal ornamentation and embellishment in seventeenth-century France but also to the subsequent development of instrumental *agréments*.⁹

As we have seen in Chapter 3, few airs were usually published along with their *double* as these were normally confined to improvisation. For the same reason, vocal ornaments generally lacked classification. Although the *Remarques* is the primary source of seventeenth-century vocal ornamentation and embellishment, which Bacilly discussed in two separate chapters, Bacilly is similarly careful not to deny ornaments and embellishments their flexibility, hence his occasional reluctance to provide definitive descriptions for all his ornaments and his emphasis on their placing; this is also one of his reasons for not choosing to illustrate them in the treatise.¹⁰ The other reason is that although some diminutions are illustrated in the musical examples to which Bacilly refers, their full complexity in performance could not be conveyed in print; this is even more true of the smaller ornaments, most of which could not be realised at all in notation.

Nevertheless, Bacilly put considerable effort into his verbal descriptions of the principal ornaments and their sub-types that he did attempt to describe: a careful reading of the text can in most cases identify ornaments and embellishments which, with the benefit of modern notation, can be reproduced (although the obscurity of one or two of them defies all interpretation). A detailed technical examination of these figures is, of course, best done within the treatise itself, by drawing out of it each text-specific point. However, at this stage one needs to indicate the significance of the *Remarques* as the first source to mention the existence of the *doublement du gosier*; this would appear to be the vocal origin of what later French general theorists call a *balancement* or *tremolo*,¹¹ evidence to add to the notion that instrumental ornamentation was founded on vocal practice. There is also a description of what seems to be an Italianate note-

⁸ Lenneberg (1958), p.67.

⁹ It is interesting to note in this respect that Lambert, so praised by Bacilly for his skill at ornamentation and embellishment, was involved in the musical training of instrumentalists, notably two organists, Claude Poinson and Charles Piroye (see Massip [1999], p.91).

¹⁰ See Bacilly (1668), p.140/ 249.

¹¹ These include Loulié (in 1696) and Montéclair (in 1736). See Bacilly (1668) pp.196-7/ 295 and fn.308.

reiteration, or *trillo*, which is one of two ways in which to perform Bacilly's *double cadence*. This may have been imported from Italy into French music by Pierre de Nyert, but nevertheless attests to the influence of Italian practice in French performance. The treatise also records the diverse nature and flexibility of the vocal *tremblement* which can be of extremely variable length and which can be approached with a variety of preparations, as well as the rhythmically complex aspect of certain diminutions due to the introduction of successive dotted notes, whereby a subtle 'rubato' effect is achieved.¹²

Stenographic symbols with which to indicate notes requiring ornamentation were limited around the time Bacilly was writing the *Remarques*: the only symbols used were a cross or a small 't' to indicate a *cadence* or *tremblement*, which were necessary as ornaments could not be satisfactorily rendered in notation.¹³ One exception is the *port de voix* which was occasionally written out, though only in a primitive fashion which, according to Bacilly, did not reflect the true manner of its performance.¹⁴

However, Bacilly also uses wavy lines (chevrons) of differing length in his two books of airs of 1668, but makes no reference in the treatise as to how they differ from the cross. Lambert did not use them in his 1666 book, in spite of engaging the same engraver as Bacilly, neither did Millet in 1666 nor Rousseau in 1678; in fact, in the seventeenth century the chevron is mostly employed in keyboard music, for example by Nivers in his *Livre d'orgue* of 1665, by Chambonnières in his first book of harpsichord pieces in 1670 and by d'Anglebert in a similar book of 1689.¹⁵

Neumann¹⁶ has suggested that Bacilly's chevron indicates a *double cadence*, perhaps basing his assumption on Nivers' definition, or on the fact that it reappears in

¹² Bacilly (1668), p.236/ 324-5.

¹³ Small crosses appear throughout the volumes by Bacilly and Lambert; Rousseau (1710), pp.53-6, used a small 't'. In 1755, Bérard still found himself facing a similar problem; the four types of *cadence* which he lists (Bérard [1755], p.113) are all indicated by a small cross, while there is no symbol to indicate other ornaments such as the *accent* and the *flatté*.

¹⁴ Examples of these can be found amongst the musical examples given in Ch.XII, art.1 of the current translation.

¹⁵ Nivers (1665), preface, distinguishes three wavy lines of varying length under his sub-heading 'Des Cadences et tremblements', which stand for the *agrément* (a short trill), the *cadence* (a longer trill), and the *double cadence* (an even longer trill with two-note suffix). Later, Couperin and Rameau used the wavy line in their keyboard music to differentiate it from their use of the cross in other media. (See Neumann [1983], pp.273 and 601.)

¹⁶ Neumann (1983), p.247.

vocal music in d'Ambruis 1685 book of airs under that name,¹⁷ but adds that the obscurity of Bacilly's description of the *double cadence* makes any precise definition impossible. Claude Duneton is the only other writer to mention Bacilly's use of this particular stenographic symbol.¹⁸ He suggests it may indicate the *flexion de voix* (a very quick *tremblement*), without any qualification or further explanation.

There are in total twenty such wavy lines in the two books in octavo, occurring above or below notes which vary in length from a semiquaver to a minim, suggesting that they may in fact represent anything from a quick *flexion de voix* to a *doublement* or *tremblement*. The lines themselves are of variable length (though these are sometimes quite roughly engraved), and one of them, in the first book *in octavo*, is clearly terminated by an upward tail.¹⁹

EXAMPLE N (Bacilly I, 1668, p.9)²⁰



The question is whether the variable length of these lines indicates the length of an ornament: there are instances of a short line under a dotted crotchet, and a long line over a semiquaver, suggesting, through the inconsistency of its appearance, that perhaps the length of the line is not after all significant.

Bacilly's rules for quantity can be of some help on the matter: all but three of these symbols occur on a syllable which, according to Bacilly's rules of quantity, is long.²¹ Therefore, contrary to what Duneton has suggested, this indicates that the ornament can in fact be long, either a form of *tremblement*, an *accent* or a *doublement*, according to Bacilly's definitions.

¹⁷ Ambruis (1685). Neumann (1983), p.248, describes d'Ambruis' *double cadence* as a trill with a two-note suffix.

¹⁸ Duneton (1998), p.592.

¹⁹ For d'Anglebert, this indicated an upward turn finish to the trill (d'Anglebert [1689], ornaments table).

²⁰ Fragment from Fuzeau facsimile edition (see Bacilly-Saint-Arroman [1996]).

²¹ The words are: 'Ah!', 'ce', 'plus', 'mort' (twice), 'fleurs', 'rigueur', 'naistre', 'cause' (twice), 'flatte', 'dire' (twice), 'bocage', 'qu'attendez', 'davantage', 'esperance'; however, 'ne', 'le' and the last syllable of 'ingrate' are short.

Whether these wavy lines refer to a specific ornament at all is difficult to establish. However, nine of these symbols occur on a note preceded by another at the same pitch, often beamed together (as in Example N above). Perhaps this could indicate a main-note start *tremblement*, different from the *tremblement* with full preparation and the *cadence*, which are usually indicated by a cross. Although Neumann has called this symbol an indeterminate type of *double cadence*, which does not correspond to Bacilly's definitions of that ornament, he agreed that this preceding note at the same pitch indicates that this ornament has a main-note start with a long preparation, or *soutient*.²²

There is insufficient evidence to offer a more specific solution to this stenographic problem. However, Bacilly's wavy lines in the first 1668 volume in fact first appeared in Bacilly's *Nouveau livre d'airs* of 1661, which forms the basis, with some additions and minor amendments, of the first volume of the 1668 *Trois livres d'airs*. As this pre-dated Nivers's publication by four years, the claim that Bacilly played a key role in the development of the French *agrément* is considerably reinforced.

Bacilly's ornaments and embellishments operate on several levels of communication. Firstly, ornaments and embellishments have an aesthetic value: they were inserted to increase the beauty of a melody. Bacilly emphasised this point throughout the treatise. Making an analogy with the embroidery on a good quality fabric, Bacilly wrote 'if simplicity is beautiful, that which is adorned and enriched is even more so'.²³ Bacilly also commented on page 223 that 'listeners pay more attention to what flatters the ear than to what gratifies the mind [...] they are more interested in ornaments than in the meaning of words'.

Secondly, ornaments and embellishments clarify the meaning of the words by helping to distinguish between long and short syllables; for instance, if two monosyllables sound the same, ('ses', when followed by a vowel, and 'seize', for example), an ornament on 'ses' will distinguish it from the word 'seize' which, according to Bacilly's rules of quantity, is a shorter monosyllable.²⁴

²² Neumann (1983), p.247.

²³ Bacilly (1668), p.211/ 304, 'si l'un y est quelque chose de beau, ce qui est brodé & enrichy, l'est encore davantage'. Bacilly made this comment on the subject of melodic embellishment, finding diminution the most important and most frequently performed ornament in singing. (p.203/ 300).

²⁴ Bacilly (1668), pp.384-5/ 421.

Thirdly, the use of ornaments and embellishments can remedy a melody when the words of the second verse do not fit the melody of the first verse in terms of quantity, or where the quantity of the words have been disregarded altogether. For instance, by displacing syllables either backwards or forwards in the bar with the use of diminution, the offending syllable can be shortened or lengthened. Bacilly calls this readjustment the ‘transposition’ of syllables.²⁵

All of these levels indicate that ornamentation is part of the process of charming the listener,²⁶ for by clarifying the meaning of words and by increasing the beauty of a melody, the passions of the text are more clearly communicated. The addition of ornaments, and making time for them when necessary, can add affect to airs which by nature have none, such as dance pieces.²⁷ There is an undeniable link in the treatise between ornamentation and embellishment and the expression of the passions, which is its overriding function. Included in the middle of the list of vocal ornaments at the beginning of Chapter XII is ‘expression’: Bacilly adds that this ‘is usually called “passionner”’, which indicates that he is referring specifically to the expression of the passions. He also discusses *mouvement* in article 5 of his chapter on ornaments. This he associates with the soul,²⁸ whose movement, provoked by the internal movement of fluids, is for Descartes synonymous with the passions. If a singer can add *mouvement* to his performance, or sing with emotion, he will be able to communicate directly the effect of the passions in the listener’s soul.

Although composers will often indicate where an ornament should be performed, the singer is expected to add many more at his own discretion. How is he, or she, to know where to place them?

A table of ornaments or a definitive guide for placing ornaments is impossible if we consider that ornaments reflect the affect not just of individual words but of an entire phrase or couplet and do not rely on particular notes or intervals. Indeed, in the ‘Réponse’, the principle of placing ornaments according to the pattern of intervals in a melodic line is discouraged, although both Rousseau and Millet rely on this procedure: Rousseau wrote, under the subtitle ‘Regles pour apprendre ou il faut faire la Cadence

²⁵ See Bacilly (1668), pp.214-5/ 305 and 217/ 307-8.

²⁶ Bacilly (1668), p.135, ‘une Piece de Musique peut estre belle, & ne plaira pas, faute d’estre executée avec les ornemens necessaires [...]’ (‘a piece of music may well be beautiful but may not charm the listener if it is not performed with the required ornaments’).

²⁷ See Bacilly (1668), p.108/ 223.

²⁸ Bacilly (1668), p.199/ 298.

lorsqu'elle n'est point marquée', that they should be placed, 'at every descent from a short note to a long note a semitone immediately below it',²⁹ while Millet advocated the placing of the *reste du son* 'indiscriminately on the main notes of the melody'.³⁰ But for Bacilly, ornaments cannot be divorced from the sense, affect, sound and quantity of words:

'Il est vray que je ne puis assez admirer l'imbecilité de ceux qui s'imaginent que l'ont peut donner des Regles certaines, pour orner un chant qui est noté simplement (comme on a de coûtume de faire) suivant les intervalles de tierce, quarte, quinte, sixte, octave, comme si cela ne dépendoit pas absolument du sens des paroles, de leur quantité, de leur expression;'³¹

This reliance on the text is what differentiates vocal ornamentation from instrumental ornamentation. Bacilly recommends that the singer should always bear in mind that ornaments would be entirely inappropriate if they made nonsense of the words, a concern shared by Bernhard, who believed that 'the anger of learned listeners is therefore all too frequently aroused by singers who [...] place an ascending run on [a word] like *abyssus*, bringing their ignorance to the light of day'.³² Similarly, if the passion expressed by the word or phrase does not need to be heightened, then ornamentation is not necessary.

Both the nature of words and the affective role of ornamentation and embellishment are addressed in the first part of the treatise (Chapters XI, XII and XIII), but Bacilly's rules of pronunciation and quantity, the conventions of which Bacilly attempted to establish in the second and third parts of the treatise, provide the most systematic basis for the placing of ornamentation and embellishment in the *Remarques*. Certain ornaments and embellishments are only suitable on long syllables, others only on short syllables, just as certain vowel sounds cannot sustain any decoration because they would sound unpleasant. The Italian model of performance practice as transmitted through Pierre de Nyert may well have inspired Bacilly's aversion to indiscriminate ornamentation and embellishment, both in terms of composition and improvisation, a suggestion supported by Bernhard in his study of Italian vocal performance practice

²⁹ Rousseau (1710), p.58 ('à toutes les chutes qui se font d'une brève à une longue immédiatement au dessous d'un Semiton').

³⁰ Millet (1666), p.4 ('indifféremment sur les notes principales dans la suite du chant').

³¹ Bacilly (1679), p.25. 'In truth I cannot but admire the stupidity of those who think that one can make infallible rules according to the intervals of a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, or an octave for ornamenting a melody which (as is customary) is notated in a simple way, as if this did not entirely depend on the meaning of the words, their quantity and their expression'. He writes this in defence of his decision not to give rules of this kind for ornamenting the *dessus* part of the first verse of his airs, the *simples*.

³² Bernhard (1973), p.20.

from around the same time as it was studied by Nyert in Italy.³³ Bacilly's system of rules for quantity, however, are specific to the French language and its own principles of declamation. The ornaments and embellishments described by Bacilly are both subject to the conditions of declamation and play a key role in articulating it.

It is clear that Bacilly's ornaments share the same function as the figures used in rhetoric: namely, that of conveying the passions expressed in a text by highlighting the meaning and affect of words through rhetorical devices and thereby moving the audience. The Jesuit writer Bernard Lamy (whose interest in rhetorical figures is more in evidence than that of contemporary French rhetoricians, who concentrated more on pronunciation) was well aware of the significant role of figures in rhetoric in the communication of the passions.

'Il est evident que pour rendre nôtre discours efficace, il faut le figurer'.³⁴

Caccini had made the association between these figures of speech and musical ornaments in 1614 in the preface to his *Nuove musiche e nuova maniera di scriverle*.³⁵ Similarly, Bernhard wrote '[...] the art of music [...] may indeed be compared to a rhetoric, in view of the multitude of figures [...]'.³⁶

German scholars of the seventeenth century describe a *Figurenlehre*, a system of detailed rhetorical 'figures' such as explored by Bernhard,³⁷ who distinguished between 'figurae fundamentales' and 'figurae superficiales', that is between figures in music

³³ Bernhard shared the view that ornamentation, or 'singing with affect', relied on the text: '*Cantar alla napolitana*, or *d'affetto*, [...] consists [...] in the singers' diligent observation of the text, and in his regulating his vocal production in accordance with it. This happens in two different senses, as he takes heed, first, of the words alone and second, of their meaning. The words, once understood, suggest what affects, occurring therein, should be elicited.' (Bernhard [1973], p.20.)

³⁴ Lamy (1699), p.112. Lamy established the function of figures unequivocally throughout his treatise: 'ces tours qui sont les caracteres que les passions tracent dans le discours, sont ces figures célebres dont parlent les Rhéteurs'. ('These turns [of phrase], which are the characteristics traced by the passions in oratory, are these famous figures to which rhetoricians refer'.) (Lamy, [1699] Bk.2, Ch. VII, entitled '[...] Les expressions qui sont les caratères des passions sont appellées Figures', p.110.) See also Ch.XIII (p.144), which is entitled: 'Les figures sont propres à exciter les passions', ('Figures are suited to arouse the passions') and page 146, where Lamy writes '[Les figures] sont les instruments dont on se sert pour ébranler l'ame de ceux à qui on parle.' ('Figures are the instruments we use to move the soul of the listener.')

³⁵ 'Nella quale eloquenza alle figure, e a i colori rettorici assimiglierei i passaggi, i trilli, e gli altri simili ornamenti, che sparsamente in ogni affetto si possono allora introdurre.' ('To the figures [of speech] and the rhetorical flourishes in such eloquence correspond the *passaggi*, tremolos and other like ornaments [in music], which may occasionally be introduced here and there in every affect.' Trans. Hitchcock (Caccini [1978], p.45.) This volume has a greater number of songs and a much shorter preface than the 1602 *Nuove musiche*.

³⁶ Bernhard (1973), p.90.

³⁷ See in particular Bernhard's first treatise, *Von der singe-Kunst oder Manier* (Bernhard [1973]).

which were structurally important and those which were purely decorative.³⁸ In his second and third undated manuscript treatises, Bernhard classed ornaments as rhetorical figures with Latin names, which were still used by German theorists almost one hundred years later.³⁹ For instance, an *accento* is a *superjectio* and a *cercar della nota* is a *quaesitio notae*.⁴⁰

By contrast, no such specific theories for the use of ornaments as rhetorical figures in music were elaborated in France. Thus Bérard's comment in 1755 on the association between figures in oratory and ornamentation in music remains a generality:

‘les agrémens bien exécutés sont dans le chant ce que les figures habilement employées sont dans l'Éloquence: c'est par elles qu'un grand Orateur remue à son gré les cœurs, les pousse là où il veut, & qu'il y jette successivement toutes les passions: les agrémens produisent les mêmes effets dans le Chant’.⁴¹

Yet we do find in Bacilly, and to a lesser extent, in Millet, the clear intention of employing ornaments for rhetorical purposes, that is, as expressive figures designed to illustrate the passions in the same way as they are used in oratory. In Chapter XII, article 5,⁴² Bacilly provides a list of those ornaments that can aid in representing two specific passions: sorrow (illustrated by the *accent* or *plainte*, the *tremblement étouffé*, a very slow *cadence* and the *port de voix coulé*) and joy (here he only lists one, the *doublement de gosier*). Also included in Bacilly's list of ornaments at the beginning of Chapter XII is a type of pronunciation, namely what Bacilly terms ‘rumbling’, or the suspension of consonants. In Article 5, it is listed as another device suited to the expression of sorrow. Indeed, the examples Bacilly gives in Part 2 of this device, involving the letters *m*, *f*, *n*, *s*, *j* and *v*, are all expressions of sorrow. This device is treated as an ornament because it heightens the communication of the passion in the text. The occurrence of these passions in the text therefore influence which ornaments are used. Bacilly's list suggests that the majority of his ornaments are reserved for the

³⁸ In his discussion on dissonances, Bernhard's ‘fundamental’ figures are mostly concerned with the positioning of notes in a melodic line in the process of composition. On ‘superficial’ figures, he writes that ‘singers as well as instrumentalists [...] have digressed somewhat from the notes here and there, and thus have given cause to establish an agreeable kind of figure.’ These amount to improvised ornamentation and embellishment. (*Tractatus* in Bernhard [1973], p.90.)

³⁹ Although his three treatises (written in German, unlike those of his predecessors which were in Latin) were only in circulation as manuscript copies, their influence lasted well into the following century in Germany as they appear in works such as Walther's *Musikalisches Lexicon* (1732) and Mattheson's *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (1739), (Bernhard [1973], pp.1, 9-10.)

⁴⁰ See Neumann (1983), p.106.

⁴¹ Bérard (1755), p.136, ‘Correctly executed ornaments are in singing what deftly used figures are in Speech: it is through them that a good orator moves the heart of the listener whatever way he likes, directs them where he will and casts all the passions in succession: ornaments in singing have the same effect’.

⁴² Bacilly (1668), p.201-2/ 298-9.

airs sérieux, for they are the ones in which sorrow is expressed, covering as they do the subject-types of ‘bitter-sweet’ and ‘painful’ love. The two volumes of airs confirm this, as it is apparent that the regular metre and faster pace of the lighter airs, often dance airs, which express ‘enticing’ and ‘joyous’ love, do not allow for the use of more elaborate and extensive ornamentation and embellishment.

However, Bacilly limits his list to two passions,⁴³ whereas rhetoricians explored a greater number of passions and Descartes listed the six ‘primitive’ passions from which all others derive as admiration or wonder, love, hate, desire, joy and sorrow.⁴⁴ Moreover, Bacilly’s list falls short of categorising all the ornaments mentioned in the treatise and as such he avoids formulating a comprehensive theory of affective ornamentation, a difficulty reinforced by the lack of an established theoretical principle regarding the conventions of musical representation of the affects in composition. The fact that Descartes, in a letter to Mersenne from 1630, expressed the notion that the perception of the passions is necessarily subjective,⁴⁵ and moreover, in *Les Passions de l’âme*, that the same cause can produce different passions in individuals,⁴⁶ further complicates such a formulation.

Nevertheless, more indications as to the figurative function of ornamentation and certain musical devices are scattered throughout the text. A short *tremblement* can be used to cut short certain words for dramatic purposes in declamation: for instance, on the last syllable of the word *commander*, which is set to a minim, the singer should perform a short *tremblement* and then insert a rest in order to preserve the original note value; for Bacilly considers a *tremblement* of normal length to be unsuitable to express the firmness and determination, and more forceful passions conveyed by the word *commander* (pp.185-6); Bacilly recommends a similar treatment of the monosyllables *oüy*, *non* and *va* (p.123). Another rhetorical device which finds musical representation in Bacilly is that of an exclamation: Bacilly suggests on page 191 that an *accent*, or a double *accent* called a *plainte*, can be performed on rhetorical exclamations such as *ô Dieux!*, for, though used sparingly and suited to sorrowful expression, the *plainte* has the function of creating a delay in the flow of the delivery: ‘[the *plainte*] holds up the song and prevents it from running smoothly [...]’; in Bacilly’s view, the meaning of the

⁴³ At the end of this list of ornaments expressing sadness and grief, Bacilly writes that they are very effective for expressing tender passions; whether any additional passions are included under the term ‘tender passions’ is not specified.

⁴⁴ Descartes (1992), p.728.

⁴⁵ Descartes (1992), p.925.

words, ‘which are all about complaining and rebuking’, seem to require such treatment.⁴⁷ What is more, Bacilly writes that the quantity of monosyllables in the form of rhetorical interjections, exclamations and interrogation can never be short,⁴⁸ and since a *plainte* can only be performed on a long syllable, it is all the more appropriate in this instance. However, Bacilly does not make a rule of applying this ornament on all exclamations, and emphasises that it should be performed infrequently and with care. The *accent* can by its very appellation be linked to the *accents des passions* discussed in Chapter 4 of this essay, which rhetoricians employed to vary the pitch of their delivery in representation of the passion being expressed. Its association with exclamations, though not exclusive, points to a corresponding illustrative role.

It is evident that in the *Remarques*, Bacilly is quite far from a strict systematising of ornaments as providing a vocabulary of rhetorical figures such as Bernhard, in dealing with Italian performance practice, had attempted to do. Instead, we find in the *Remarques*, in addition to the rules of declamation, a presentation of the tools for achieving the aim of declamation, that is, the expression of the passions.

In spite of his insistence that one ought to possess a perfect knowledge of the rules of pronunciation and quantity in order to know where to place ornaments and embellishments, Bacilly admits that rules ought not always to be followed to the letter: the singer is occasionally given the choice of whether or not to follow the rules, on the condition that he has in his possession, and makes ample use of, *bon goust*.⁴⁹

The notion of ‘goût’ is of primary importance in the *Remarques*, and yet it remains a vague quality. Bacilly refers to it no less than twenty-four times throughout the treatise: the performer is called upon to use it in all occasions.⁵⁰ Bacilly even

⁴⁶ Descartes (1992), pp.174-5.

⁴⁷ Bacilly (1668), p.192/ 292-3.

⁴⁸ Bacilly (1668), p.333-4/ 392.

⁴⁹ On whether one should perform a *tremblement* rather than a *port de voix*: ‘Il y a mille autres exemples, qui ne sont fondés que sur le bon goust, & dont on ne peut établir de regles certaine, à moins que de vouloir embrouïller les Esprits [...]’ (p.146); on how to know when to use a particularly complicated type of *port de voix*: ‘il n’y a souvent que le bon goust qui en soit la regle’ (p.153); on performing the *liaison*: ‘le bon goust en doit estre le juge’ (p.175); on performing the *tremblement* with no preparation: ‘le bon goust seul en doit estre le juge’ (p.179); on performing a *doublement* on certain words: ‘il faut que le bon goust en soit la regle’ (p.411).

⁵⁰ On the reasons why not to pronounce the final *s* of words: ‘le bon goust doit estre le juge’ (p.313); on quantity in general: ‘Il s’agit presentement de parler de leur quantité, & en établir des Regles certaines autant que faire se pourra; car il est constant que souvent le bon goust en doit estre le juge’ (p.386).

appears to let it override many of the rules he establishes;⁵¹ everything, it seems, is subject to it. The listener must also exercise it in judging the value of what he hears. Bacilly does not linger on the notion of 'goût'. He recognises it as something of an issue occasionally by using italics for it, but does not elaborate on its precise meaning.⁵²

From Bacilly's references to it, it would be easy to come to the conclusion that 'goût' was merely an intrinsic sense of stylistic judgement. However, the idea and definition of 'goût' occupied many literary and theoretical minds in the seventeenth and eighteenth century and was a fundamental aspect of contemporary French aesthetics; it was an essential tool in the search for the sublime in art both in terms of creativity and criticism. Several key works contributed towards its promotion: the characters in the novels of Madeleine de Scudéry discuss the notion at length, her acquaintance La Rochefoucauld tackled the question in his *Maximes* of 1665, La Bruyère in *Les Caractères* between 1688 and 1694 and Bouhours, Jesuit priest and friend of La Rochefoucauld, in *Les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* in 1671. Its definition was principally pursued in the salons and at court, and for this reason is closely linked to salon theories of civility and 'polite' conversation. Since it was such a key notion at the time Bacilly was writing his *Remarques*, and indeed in the treatise itself, it is necessary to establish, as far as possible, what contemporary writers understood by the term 'goût'.

It becomes rapidly apparent that, though a popular notion, an attempt to define 'goût' was clearly not an easy task. Claude Chantalat⁵³ has traced the transformation of the term 'goût' from denoting one of the five senses to a metaphorical or figurative term. Writers seem to have had few scruples in having recourse to the metaphorical use of the word; however, the multiplicity of figurative and contradictory meanings of the term⁵⁴ explains the difficulty faced by seventeenth-century writers venturing a definition of it and reconciling its implications: on the one hand, 'goût' can mean an individual

⁵¹ On the exception to the rule that the presence of a z in a syllable makes it a long syllable: 'Et cependant il faut rapporter cette observation au bon goust'.(p.425); on the rule that the last syllable of an imperative is almost always short: 'j'ay dit *presque toujours*, parce qu'il est certain que cela dépend souvent du bon goust, sans que l'on ne puisse donner aucune Regle certaine' (p.426).

⁵² Bacilly (1668), p.391, 'il faut s'en rapporter à ceux qui ont le *bon goust*'; also p.160, 'ceux qui n'ont pas le *goust bon*'.

⁵³ See Chantalat (1992).

⁵⁴ Chantalat (1992), pp.17-22. In literary and theoretical works, as well as the definitions provided by Furetière's dictionary (1690) and the dictionary of the Académie française (1694), we find that 'goût' denotes the faculty itself, the instinctive use of this faculty (in the form of a natural inclination for something, to 'have "goût" for something'), the use of this faculty to make a critical judgement and the

penchant or inclination for something, and as such is a relative and arbitrary quality which stems from the spontaneous nature and temperament of the individual. This meaning of ‘goût’ accounts for the majority of negative remarks on the term, such as those by La Rochefoucauld in his *Maximes* (1665):

‘Il y a des gens qui changent [de goût] par légèreté, et sont touchés de plaisir ou d’ennui sur la parole de leurs amis. [...] à parler généralement, il y a peu de gens qui aient le goût fixe et indépendant des autres; ils suivent l’exemple et la coutume, et ils en empruntent presque tout ce qu’ils ont de goût.’⁵⁵

On the other hand, ‘goût’ can also represent a form of judicious and infallible discernment with which to judge the qualities of something.⁵⁶ As distinct from arbitrary, individual ‘goût’, this type seems to be absolute and rational, and can therefore be associated with the Cartesian doctrine of universal reason, a belief which the majority of contemporary writers shared.⁵⁷ La Rochefoucauld acknowledged the difference between ‘goût’ as an inclination and ‘goût’ as a critical function of reason, which supposes a submission to rules and the control of reason over the passions:

Ce terme de *goût* a diverses significations, et il est aisé de s’y méprendre. Il y a différence entre le goût qui nous porte vers les choses, et le goût qui nous en fait connaître et discerner les qualités, en s’attachant aux règles: on peut aimer la comédie sans avoir le goût assez délicat pour en bien juger, et on peut avoir le goût assez bon pour bien juger de la comédie sans l’aimer. [...]⁵⁸

This conflict between the passions (the result of sensual perception) and the faculty of reason, seated in the mind, is illustrated in the texts of some of Bacilly’s airs, in which reason is powerless over the force of love.⁵⁹

In his treatise, Bacilly is in agreement with La Rochefoucauld’s second notion of regarding ‘goût’ as an infallible measure of discernment: as an illustration of Pierre de Nyert’s modesty and his habit of excusing the faults he finds in singing, he quotes him as saying

‘qu’il ne faut point disputer des gousts, que chacun a son sentiment [...]’⁶⁰

Bacilly obviously disagrees with this statement for he accuses Nyert of over-indulgence. Bacilly himself invokes this proverb in Chapter XI, adding that it is a completely

manner in which something is constructed (‘avec goût’) or the character of a certain work; the expression ‘bon goût’ in particular was used to describe a creation which responded to precise ideals of perfection.

⁵⁵ La Rochefoucauld (1993), p.178.

⁵⁶ According to Bouhours, this type of ‘goût’ recognizes the true value of something: ‘[le goût] fait connaître les choses telles qu’elles sont en elle-mêmes’. (Bouhours [1671], *Les Entretiens*, IV, p.193).

⁵⁷ See Chantalat (1992), p.43.

⁵⁸ La Rochefoucauld (1993), p.178.

⁵⁹ Bacilly I (1668), p.28 and II (1668), pp.46 and 76.

⁶⁰ Bacilly (1679), p.11; there are many more examples of this in the treatise: ‘Commençons par l’s finale, & faisons remarquer autant que faire se pourra, les abus qui se commettent dans la prononciation de cette consonne, se rapportant toujours au jugement de celui qui a le bon goust.’ (Bacilly [1668], p.312/ 377).

unfounded notion.⁶¹ La Bruyère expressed his understanding of the term in a similar fashion: addressing the issue in 1688, he believed that the recognition of beauty in art is not the result of a mere preference but rather of an absolute ‘goût’:

‘Il y a, dans l’art, un point de perfection comme de bonté ou de maturité dans la nature; celui qui le sent et qui l’aime a le goût parfait, celui qui ne le sent pas et qui aime en deça ou au-delà a le goût defectueux. Il y a donc un bon et un mauvais gout, et l’on dispute des gouts avec fondement.’⁶²

However, Bacilly also uses the terms ‘bon sens’, synonymous to reason,⁶³ and ‘raison’, both of which are also employed to make a critical decision,⁶⁴ and thereby differentiates between the faculty of reason and of ‘goût’. We have to look further than reason for a definition of ‘goût’ as Bacilly understood it.

Not everyone, in fact, accepted that ‘goût’ was linked to reason. Some, particularly in the salons where such analysis was encouraged, preferred to link it with ‘sentiment’, an innate feeling emanating from the heart, a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, in opposition to those who associated ‘goût’ with reason. Yet this alternative theory of ‘goût’, though impulsive and instinctive, was not subjective; theorists such as Bouhours and Boileau, aware of the contradictions inherent in the term, attempt a compromise in which ‘goût’ is a form of instinctive reason, variously called ‘sentiment’, ‘esprit’, ‘finesse’ or ‘goust’.⁶⁵ It was still founded on an objective and absolute sense of beauty and ultimately reached the same conclusions as those resulting from the employment of reason. It was this ‘goût’ which was employed to achieve the ideal of ‘natural’ expression through moderation and elegance, and which acted as a guide in the avoidance of anything exaggerated and artificial at the heart of salon activity.

If ‘goût’ is in fact instinctive to some degree, is it the result of a natural instinct or of a cultivated one? In one telling sentence in the *Remarques* we find Bacilly equating ignorance with a lack of ‘bon goût’.⁶⁶ In another, people with ‘bon goût’ are

⁶¹ Bacilly (1668), p.88, ‘il ne faut point disputer des gousts’. This is from the proverb ‘des goûts et des couleurs il ne faut pas disputer’, of medieval scholastic origin, ‘de gustibus et coloribus non disputandum’.

⁶² La Bruyère (1993), ‘Des ouvrages de l’esprit’, p.72.

⁶³ The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie* (1694) defines ‘raison’ by ‘bon sens, droit usage de la raison’.

⁶⁴ Bacilly (1668), pp.177/ 282 and p.174/ 279-80.

⁶⁵ Chantalat (1992), pp.61-71.

⁶⁶ Bacilly (1668), p.160/ 269, ‘[il ne faut pas] faire trois nottes sur *Cl[imene]* en montant, comme font plusieurs ignorans, ou plustost ceux qui n’ont pas le *goust bon*, veu que cette observation n’est fondée que sur le bon sens.’

mentioned in the same breath as ‘well-informed’ people.⁶⁷ This suggests that the superior powers of discernment enjoyed by those with ‘bon goût’ are not entirely arbitrary. In fact, the overwhelming message in the *Remarques* regarding all the issues Bacilly raises is that one needs both a natural, innate facility as well as experience, which can be gained through education; singing can only be mastered by frequenting the right teachers and performers. On the subject of applying the Art of Singing in general, Bacilly writes:

‘il n’y a souvent que le bon goust qui en soit la regle; & de mesme que dans le milieu des Vertus, il s’en faut rapporter au jugement d’un homme prudent, il faut aussi bien souvent se rapporter de mille circonstances de Chant, à ceux qui passent pour y avoir plus d’acquis, & qui par dérivation à ceux qui les ont plus pratiquez, & qui se sont trouvez avoir plus de genie & de disposition, pour profiter de leurs instructions.’⁶⁸

In short, one must have recourse to the social elite, a small minority of cultured and distinguished people, whose natural aptitudes have been developed through education and experience.⁶⁹ This points to the contradiction that ‘goût’ is a gift, yet the necessity of its proper cultivation makes it the prerogative of a specific milieu, to the exclusion of anyone else. As a result of this characteristic of exclusivity, ‘goût’ cannot be considered absolute, which distinguishes it from universally shared Cartesian ‘bon sens’. Indeed, Bacilly suggests that it is a rare thing to find a singer with infallible ‘goût’⁷⁰ – one who would therefore meet all the criteria. La Bruyère would agree:

‘Il y a beaucoup plus de vivacité que de goût parmi les homes, ou, pour mieux dire, il y a peu d’hommes dont l’esprit soit accompagné d’un goût sûr et d’une critique judicieuse.’⁷¹

As far as Bacilly is concerned, such education and experience largely consisted in the knowledge of language and the rules of declamation. He states plainly in his foreword that though one may possess ‘bon goût’, one may not necessarily possess the required knowledge of quantity.⁷² Therefore, although we are repeatedly told that ‘bon goût’ should assist the singer in certain matters of performance, rules are still necessary,

⁶⁷ On the subject of singers who are susceptible to a type of cough: ‘[...] les Sçavans, & ceux qui ont le bon goust, excusent volontiers ces petits accidents [...]’, (p.41/ 190-1).

⁶⁸ Bacilly (1668), p.29/ 183.

⁶⁹ Chantalat (1992), p.82-96, concludes that this understanding of ‘goût’ makes the largely held notion of a universal ‘goût’ a myth; for although it agrees with it in theory, the element of culture involved made ‘le bon goût’ exclusive to a chosen few belonging to the court of high Parisian society whose natural talents had benefited from initiation into the salon society.

⁷⁰ Bacilly (1668), foreword, p.[v]/ 165.

⁷¹ La Bruyère (1993), ‘Des ouvrages de l’esprit’, p.72.

⁷² To those who find rules for quantity unnecessary and claim that ‘ceux qui ont le goust bon sçavent assez la quantité des syllabes sans regles’, (foreword, p.[iii]/ 164), Bacilly replies that ‘c’est une temerité de se piquer de savoir la quantité des syllabes sans regles’ (foreword p.[v]/ 165).

thereby ensuring that their 'goût' is not defective, as a singer with perfect 'goût' is so rare.

It is because of the initial difficulty of explaining the meaning of the term 'goût' that it has been left as a French term and not translated in the current translation. Its rendition as 'taste' would be insufficient in conveying the cultural baggage carried by the word 'goût' as a result of its specific associations. Its treatment as a technical term therefore indicates the complexities inherent in its meaning.

We are led to conclude that Bacilly's 'bon goût' can be defined as a type of instinctive reason composed of a finely balanced mixture of a natural instinct and education. Once one is in possession of the rules, and after lengthy experience of putting this knowledge into practice, their use becomes instinctive. This seems to be Bacilly's proposed philosophy of singing, the thread which, as we have seen, runs through his treatise and which the reader is meant to understand and accept; something which his own contemporary readers must have had little problem in doing, as this attitude towards the cultivation of 'goût' was that of the salons.⁷³ The salons did not only foster such beliefs in the context of civility and refinement of comportment but this milieu equally played a considerable role during the second half of the seventeenth century in artistic creativity, as a result of its literary and musical pursuits. When Bacilly refers the singer to the opinion of people with 'bon goût', we must assume that it is to these members, and consummate performers, of the salons, and not the average, barely literate musician, whom he alludes; the same people whose poetic style he followed, the same to whom Bacilly made his musical contributions and the same whose philosophy, and notion of 'goût', he reflects in his writing.

⁷³ Chantalat (1992), pp.31 and 73, points out that whereas La Fontaine believed 'goût' to be a natural gift, Saint-Evremond represented the majority view in recommending that it should be acquired and improved by frequenting polite and cultured society. The salon milieu provided a particularly favourable context for this notion. In his *Pensées*, Pascal warns that 'goût' can be both improved and corrupted by the conversations of mondaine society.

CHAPTER 6

BACILLY AND THE *REMARQUES*: CRITICAL RECEPTION

Bacilly's reputation among his contemporaries and their reception of the *Remarques* indicate that Bacilly deserves considerable recognition as a musician and theorist, something on which subsequent music historians have agreed. Evidence of this is provided in a number of sources. A consideration of the influence and application of his singing technique also points to the significance of his work in the study of seventeenth-century French vocal performance.

It seems it took Bacilly little time to achieve success following his arrival in Paris around 1654: some of the airs which were to be published in his 1661 *Nouveau livre d'airs* were parodied by Berthod in 1658,¹ which indicates that these airs were in circulation in manuscript form at least three years before their publication. The last extant edition of Bacilly's airs was published by Christophe Ballard in 1703,² thirteen years after the composer's death, which shows that demand for Bacilly's airs spanned at least forty-five years.

The pages of the *Mercure Galant* are a rich source of biographical information on Bacilly. Its many comments leave the reader in little doubt that Bacilly's compositional and didactic skills were appreciated in Paris and that he had a considerable reputation as a distinguished musician. In fact the journal's patronage of Bacilly played a significant part in shaping and upholding his reputation as a popular teacher and composer. For example, it records that Bacilly's teaching was in great demand among the 'curieux', or the intellectual and cultural elite of the salons:

'L'illustre M. de Bacilly, [...] s'est résolu à les enseigner chez luy, afin que ces beaux airs [...] soient chantez par ceux qui voudront les bien savoir, suivant toutes les règles de son *Traité de l'Art de Chanter*, imprimé il y a déjà plusieurs années. Il l'expliquera de point en point aux Curieux, et leur donnera les exemples nécessaires pour l'entière intelligence de ces Règles.'³

The December 1678 edition illustrates that Bacilly was equally popular as a composer, confirming that his airs were widely sought:

¹ *He livre d'airs de devotion à deux parties ou Conversion de quelques uns des plus beaux de ce temps en Airs spirituels par le R.P. Berthod*, Paris, R. Ballard 1658.

² This is the *Second livre d'airs spirituels de feu M. de Basilly à deux parties. Nouvelle édition*.

³ 'the illustrious M. de Bacilly [...] has decided to teach [his *airs spirituels*] at his home, so that these delightful airs [...] may be sung by those who wish to learn them properly, according to all the rules given in his *Traité de l'art de chanter*, published already some years ago. He will explain them point by point to those who are interested and will give them examples necessary for a complete understanding of these rules', (*MG* April 1681, p. 360).

‘Je vous ay toujours veüe rechercher les Airs de Bacilly avec tant de soin, que j’ay lieu de croire que vous ne serez pas fâchée d’en voir un de la composition de M. Daniel, qu’il [Bacilly] a choisy comme un digne sujet pour luy mettre entre les mains tout ce qu’il avoit de gens de la première qualité à instruire dans la belle manière de chanter.’⁴

The *Mercure* also recognised Bacilly’s skill as a lyric poet supplying his own verses to set to music:

‘Voicy un Air d’une nouveauté singuliere. Il est de l’illustre Mr de Bacilly, qui en a fait les paroles, ainsi que de tous les autres airs de sa composition’.⁵

However, not all comments concerning Bacilly are as complimentary as those of Donneau de Visé. One of the most prominent personalities with whom Bacilly had disagreements was Christophe Ballard. In the first year that the *Mercure galant* started publishing Bacilly’s airs, it announced:

‘[...] vous les aurez corrects, au lieu qu’en les surprenant comme on fait pour les insérer dans les livres de differens Auteurs, on les defigure par mille fautes.’⁶

Here the journal was alluding to the counterfeiting of Bacilly’s airs, the circumstances of which are explained on page 9 of the ‘Avis de consequence’ prefacing his *Airs spirituels* (1688). Bacilly was presenting a new, corrected edition of his airs, which had originally been published in 1672 and 1677 (volume 1 and 2 respectively)⁷ and mentioned how these volumes had been counterfeited in 1679 (with the title *Premier/ Second livre d’Airs spirituels de differents auteurs à deux parties*) before the expiry of his royal privilege - a significant risk on the part of the counterfeiter. The ‘Avis’ of 1688 reveals that Bacilly took no action against the offending publisher and boasts of the wide circulation of his music:

‘[...] Les uns m’ont accusé de trop d’indulgence de ne me pas plaindre à la Justice de cet attentat, & d’une impression qui m’estoit si préjudiciable [...]. Les autres m’ont congratulé en ce rencontre, en me disant qu’il estoit glorieux pour moy qu’après huit années que le debit de mes Livres gravez s’est fait par tout le Royaume, on ait bien voulu hazarder une impression en caracteres ordinaires au danger d’un procès que l’Imprimeur ne pouvoit éviter de perdre, d’une amende & d’une confiscation des exemplaires, pour avoir contrefait des Livres dont il ne pouvoit ignorer l’Auteur [...].’⁸

⁴ *MG*, Dec. 1678, p.103. ‘As I have noticed that you always search so carefully for Bacilly’s airs, I am led to believe that you will not be displeased with one composed by M. Daniel, whom [Bacilly] has chosen as a worthy subject to whom to pass on all his highest ranking pupils so that he may teach them the art of proper singing.’

⁵ *MG*, June II, 1684, p.260.

⁶ ‘where you will find them accurately printed, contrary to when they are counterfeited and inserted into volumes by various authors, where they are disfigured by hundreds of mistakes’, *MG*, 1st October 1679.

⁷ *Les Airs spirituels de M. de Bacilly sur les stances chrestiennes de Monsieur l’Abbé Testu avec la basse continue, & les seconds couplets en diminution*. Paris, G. de Luyne, 1672; *Les Airs spirituels de M. de Bacilly avec la basse continue, les chiffres pour l’accompagnement, & les seconds couplets en diminution, seconde partie*. Paris, G. de Luyne, 1677.

⁸ Bacilly (1688), p.9: ‘[...] Some people have accused me of being too indulgent by not taking legal action regarding this attack and an edition which was so unfavourable to me [...]. Others congratulated

‘L’imprimeur’ in question was in fact Christophe Ballard, who claimed in his own preface that his edition was printed more clearly and was generally an improved version of the original: it had punctuation and capital letters at the beginning of each line of poetry, the underlay was printed accurately below the notes, the repeats were marked; in short, Ballard concluded that the existing edition was ‘presque pas chantable’.⁹ Could Ballard’s hostility towards Bacilly have been fuelled by his contempt for Bacilly’s edition, published by Guillaume de Luyne? He was evidently proud of the superior quality of his own counterfeit (though neither the *Mercure* nor Bacilly shared his opinion). Bacilly by all accounts did not enjoy as good a working relationship with Christophe Ballard, who had published his first Bacilly volume, the *II. Livre des Meslanges de chansons, airs serieux et a boire, à 2 & 3 parties* in 1674, as he had done with the publisher’s father Robert and Bacilly often took his business elsewhere, particularly since the end of the Ballard monopoly on music printing in the 1660s. Ballard may have resented this action on Bacilly’s part and taken the opportunity of reproaching the composer. After the composer’s death, however, Ballard finally gave Bacilly his due, by publishing the two volumes of *Airs spirituels de feu M. de Bacilly* in 1692, followed by a new edition of each volume in 1693 and 1703 respectively.

The other notable negative remark directed at Bacilly is found in Sébastien de Brossard’s¹⁰ 1724 *Catalogue* in which he comments that Bacilly was incapable of writing music and needed the assistance of a scribe.¹¹ Where Brossard gathered this information is not known. Prunières and Rhyning both agree that this claim can be safely dismissed upon reading the treatise,¹² which leaves one wondering why Brossard, whose catalogue entry number 114 is a 1671 edition of the *Remarques*,¹³ did not reach

me on this event, telling me that it reflected gloriously on me that after eight years, during which time my engraved volumes [of airs] have been distributed throughout the kingdom, someone has hazarded to produce an edition in [musical type print] while being aware of the danger of a court case that this publisher could not hope to win, of a fine and of the confiscation of his copies, all for having counterfeited volumes whose author he could hardly fail to know [...].’

⁹ ‘almost unsingable’, Ballard 1679, preface. See also Gallat-Morin (1997), p.21.

¹⁰ Brossard (c.1655-1730) was, like Bacilly, from Basse-Normandie. He attended the Collège des Jésuites in Caen and was ordained around 1677. Brossard also had Christophe Ballard as a publisher after Bacilly’s death: six books of airs by Brossard were published in Paris (1691-1698). See Moureau (1997).

¹¹ ‘[Bacilly] avait une espèce de musique naturelle qui lui fournissait de très beaux chants. Mais comme il n’avait pas assez de musique pratique, il était obligé de se servir de l’oreille et de la main d’autres pour les noter’ (Brossard [1994], p.42). (‘[Bacilly] possessed a sort of natural musicality which enabled him to write very beautiful melodies. But since he was insufficiently versed in music, he had to have recourse to the ears and pen of others in order to write them down’.)

¹² For instance, Bacilly demonstrates his grasp of musical notation by referring to specific pitches and note durations in examples of airs.

¹³ Brossard catalogue in Brossard (1994), p.69.

the same conclusion. Rhyning¹⁴ has also pointed out that there is no evidence in Brossard's catalogue, which largely testifies to Brossard's admiration for Italian music, that he possessed any of Bacilly's volumes of airs.¹⁵ Brossard was in Paris for nine years (1678-1687) before moving to Strasbourg, during which time he befriended the theorist Etienne Loulié¹⁶ and contributed airs to the *Mercure galant*;¹⁷ it is certainly possible that he witnessed performances of Bacilly's music and may have acquired his copy of the *Remarques* at this time. One possible explanation for Brossard's hostile remarks about Bacilly may be that both men were on opposing sides in the debate between the relative merits of French and Italian music: Brossard was overtly pro-Italian in his musical tastes while Bacilly's attempt at codifying a French style of singing placed him firmly in the French camp.

An assessment of the critical reception of the treatise, however, may be more problematic than that of Bacilly's music. The *Mercure* attests to the renown of the *Remarques* sixteen years after its first publication:

‘[...] son livre de *L'Art de chanter*, si vanté de tout le monde [...].’¹⁸

Added to this, the fact that the *Remarques* saw four editions would suggest that it was in great demand at least until the mid-1680s. Yet Laurent Guillo has raised a doubt on this subject; though the body text of the editions is identical in each case, the title was altered and a new prefatory essay, the ‘Réponse à la critique’, was added to the 1679 edition. In his opinion, these changes indicate that, contrary to a successful reception of the treatise initiating further reprints, the work may not have been easy to sell. This may indeed be so; on the other hand, the title was not dramatically changed: in 1671 it read *Traité de la méthode ou art de bien chanter par le sieur B.D.B.* [...], and in 1679 was merely shortened to *L'Art de bien chanter*, an abbreviation used on the embossed spine of at least one copy of the original *Remarques*.¹⁹ The change in title alone therefore does

¹⁴ Rhyning (1982/1), p.17.

¹⁵ Although none of Bacilly's personal volumes are present, entry no.502 (Brossard [1994], p.314) lists Ballard's *Airs de differents auteurs* of 1658, which contains airs by Bacilly. There is also a manuscript collection in Brossard's catalogue of airs for one voice without basso continuo entitled *Cantates et airs italiens et français*, dating from the end of the 17th century; it contains three airs by Bacilly, *Que les moments me semblent longs*, *Rochers je ne veux point*, and *Le printemps est de retour* (incomplete). It can be found as entry no.899 (Brossard [1994], p.480-1).

¹⁶ Etienne Loulié (1654-1702), a great admirer of Lully, is the author of the *Elements ou Principes de musique* (1696) and inventor of the ‘chronometre’. All his manuscripts on music theory, instruments, composition and music history he left to Brossard in 1702.

¹⁷ Brossard's first air in the *Mercure* of August 1678 was published using a pseudonym ‘Robsard de Fontaines’ (Brossard [1997], p.169).

¹⁸ *MG*, 1st June 1684.

¹⁹ British Library C.30.i.7.

not necessarily point to problems in the reception of the treatise. Indeed, its first year of publication saw two reissues of the work.²⁰

The evidence provided in the defensive ‘Réponse à la critique’ is a different matter. Together with the 1668 foreword, it clearly expresses Bacilly’s concern about the reception of his treatise. Bacilly was not universally admired, in spite of the *Mercure*’s glowing comments concerning him, and the treatise plainly had its detractors. Even the *Mercure* had to intervene in order to quash rumours started by Bacilly’s critics:

‘[...] ses Envieux qui luy veulent nuire, n’ont pas laissé de faire courir le bruit qu’il n’enseigne plus, & ils l’ont si bien persuadé, qu’on ne s’en détrompe qu’avec peine. Il est pourtant vray qu’il est plus capable d’enseigner, qu’il ne l’a encore esté, & qu’un long usage luy a donné de si grandes & de si vives lumieres, qu’en fort peu de temps il rend une voix capable de tout ce qui se pratique dans le chant.’²¹

Who these critics were is not known, with the exception of the outspoken Christophe Ballard. In his 1679 counterfeit edition of Bacilly’s *Airs spirituels*, he published a thinly veiled criticism of Bacilly, claiming that

‘le nombre dans ce bel art est a présent si grand, que ce seroit un presumption ridicule de s’estimer un Phœnix dans la belle maniere de chanter; & l’unique capable de la bien montrer.’²²

Whatever the relationship between the two men, Ballard did have a point in taking issue with Bacilly’s claim in his treatise of offering the only proper way of singing: the *Mercure galant*, as informative in its publicity of other musical personalities as of Bacilly, mentions plenty of contemporary musicians who are considered to be equally talented, among them ‘M. Daniel’, the husband of Bacilly’s niece, as well as Jean Sicard (‘qui chante, qui montre et qui compose très bien’),²³ M. de Longueil (‘un des meilleurs Maistres que nous ayons pour apprendre à bien chanter, et qui fait les plus habiles écoliers’)²⁴ and M de Riel (‘connu pour un des plus consommez que nous ayons dans la

²⁰ See Editorial Notes.

²¹ ‘Envious people who want to harm him have not refrained from spreading the rumour that he no longer teaches; they have been so persuasive that people are only convinced of the contrary with difficulty. And yet his teaching is better now than it has ever been, for he has gained such profound and illuminating knowledge from his many years of practice that he can make a singer master all aspects of singing in very little time.’ *MG*, 1st June 1684.

²² Ballard (1679) *Second livre [...]*, ‘Avis au lecteur’. (‘The number of people who practise this art is currently so great that it would be ridiculously presumptuous to believe oneself to be a Phoenix as regards the art of proper singing and to be the only person capable of teaching it correctly.’) See also Gallat-Morin (1997), p.21.

²³ ‘who sings, teaches and composes very well’, *MG* Feb. 1678, p.316.

²⁴ ‘who ranks among the best in teaching how to sing properly, and whose pupils are the most able, *MG*, Dec. 1678, p.126.

musique, et le premier élève de Lambert’).²⁵ These are just a few of the many teachers operating at the time, who may have had good reason to take issue with the exclusive tone, if not the content, of the *Remarques* and the doubt it casts on their competence. Ballard, however, had the advantage of being able to express his disagreement in print. Already in 1675, he had turned Bacilly’s observations back onto the composer: Chapter X begins with the censure of certain composers who only use their own compositions when teaching, but Ballard’s veiled attack in the preface to his 1675 *Recueil de chansonnettes de différents auteurs à deux parties* accuses Bacilly of such a practice. Ballard describes Bacilly as among

[...] ces Maistres qui n’ayment à chanter et à monstrier que les Airs qu’ils ont composez; ces gens-là sont trop préoccupez de leurs Ouvrages, et trop peu persuadez de la bonté de ceux d’autrui.²⁶

In 1684 the *Mercurie galant* defended Bacilly from such a charge.²⁷

Pedagogical arrogance is not what Bacilly wished to refute in publishing the ‘Réponse’. We have already seen in Chapter 4 of this essay how Bacilly regarded his provision of rules for declamation in singing as a novelty: these, he believed, would be the main source of contention among the cynics, and much of the ‘Réponse’ is an energetic rebuttal of specific criticisms on this subject and on the composition of airs.

‘Je n’ay donc point esperé qu’il eust une approbation generale, ayant bien préveu que l’Envie ou l’Ignorance de la pluspart des Maistres en cet Art feroit murmurer contre moy, de pretendre en donner des Regles par écrit dont personne ne s’estoit jamais avisé’²⁸

Yet it is not so much this dispute in the ‘Réponse’ that points to problems with the public acceptance of his singing technique so much as the telling comment on page 7 that his technique must be on the verge of a decline as its main exponents, those select few with the most skill in applying it, are advanced in years and without any likely successors to maintain the high degree of expertise to which they have brought this technique. Bacilly had already hinted at an imminent decline in 1668,²⁹ which appears not yet to have occurred by 1679. If these are his fears, it is possible that the reception of the treatise would not have been affected by problems with the public’s acceptance of

²⁵ ‘who is known for being among our most accomplished musicians and Lambert’s best pupil’, *MG*, Aug. 1678, p.354.

²⁶ In Massip (1999), pp.313-4. ([...] these teachers who only like to sing and teach airs of their own composition; such people are too preoccupied with their own works and unconvinced of the merit of those of other composers.)

²⁷ See Chapter X, p.60/ 200, fn.90.

²⁸ Bacilly (1679), p.4. (‘Therefore I was not hoping that it would meet with general approval, having rightly foreseen that the envy or ignorance of most teachers of this art would spread rumours against me for claiming to provide written rules for something no one had ever attempted before.’)

its novelty so much as the public's rejection of its conservatism: could it be that Bacilly's rules, however novel, were codifying a dying vocal tradition?

Bacilly belonged to the same aesthetic movement as Nyert and Lambert, namely that of the 'air galant', the French vocal art begun in the 1630s involving the technique of the improvised *double*. Massip has suggested that this aesthetic group is that which Perrault contrasted with that of the new operatic art (Lully's first *tragédie lyrique*, *Cadmus et Hermione*, was given in 1673, six years prior to the 'Réponse') in his *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes* (1692) and that, coexisting, they reflect each side of the debate between 'Ancients' and 'Moderns':³⁰ although Bacilly demonstrated modernity in writing an operatic *récit* (which is transcribed in Chapter 3 of this essay), Bacilly's main output centres on the air with *double*; moreover, opinions contemporary with the *Remarques* on the merit of the *doubles* were mixed and, as Bacilly expressed in Part I, Chapter XIII, some people even found them unnecessary because embellishment obscured the sense of the words. So despite Bacilly's insistence that the application of embellishments at the time was highly refined and no longer indiscriminate, the main case against them in 1668, and more so by 1679, was, in certain circles at least, that they were old-fashioned. Lecerf contributed retrospectively to this view by pitting Lully against his father-in-law's taste for embellishment and that of the singers, whom Lambert trained to perform Lully's works,³¹ and by hinting at the waning status of elaborate embellishment³² as the influence of Lully's preferences made an impact on vocal music. However, Le Cerf also admitted that the *double* was still popular and in demand amongst the general public of the early eighteenth century.³³

This paints a confused picture of the status of Bacilly's singing technique. How is it possible to reconcile Bacilly's belief in a groundbreaking treatise with the suspicion that he was wasting his efforts on a dying art? Perhaps it may not have been as close to the brink of decadence as Bacilly's comment in the 'Réponse' may lead us to think, and his remark as to the lack of worthy young successors was more a tribute to the stature (and advancing age) of Nyert and Lambert than a forecast of stylistic decline. In fact the number of singers employing the technique and their official functions and positions

²⁹ Bacilly (1668), p.13/ 174.

³⁰ Massip (1989), p.28; she claims that the character portrayed in vol.III, pp.239-242 of Perrault's work whom he opposes to Lully is probably Lambert (or possibly Nyert); these two could therefore be figureheads representing each side of the argument.

³¹ Lecerf (1705), II, p.198-9.

³² Lecerf (1705), I, pp.13-14.

³³ Lecerf (1705), II, pp.200-201.

point not only to the prominence of this technique but also to its perpetuation well beyond the publication of the *Remarques*. The important connection between Bacilly and Lambert is a key factor in this respect.

Although Lambert, as a court musician, did not share Bacilly's lifestyle or education, their singing technique, which they both inherited from Nyert, affected most of what was performed at the time, particularly at court, thanks to Lambert's position and his own role as a teacher; the latter involved the musical education and training of the three pages attached to the Musique de la Chambre du Roi. His earliest student was Riel who himself later published airs in the *Mercure galant*.³⁴ Massip has traced some of his other pupils. In the dedication of a 1697 publication of airs and instrumental music, Pierre Gillier recollects his early training as a page under Lambert and claims to have followed his master's method in his own compositions. His preface to the reader is unequivocal in his faithful regard for Lambert's notions, which accord exactly with those of the *Remarques*: he explains that incorrectly placed ornaments reduce the affective force of a text and that the best way to perform his airs is following the principles of 'l'incomparable M. Lambert.' And as late as 1714, Dubrueil de Vignencourt referred to himself as a 'worthy student of the famous Lambert',³⁵ a teacher dead for almost twenty years.

Hilaire Dupuy, Nyert's other notable pupil who was Lambert sister-in-law from 1641 and the godmother of Lully's daughter from 1663, began her public performances with the *Ballet de l'amour malade* (1657); her last was Lully's only *tragédie-ballet*, *Psyché* (1671).³⁶ The King's historiographer, Félibien, recorded her appearance as Climène in Lully and Molière's *Ballet d'Amour et de Bacchus*, part of the 1668 festivities in the gardens of Versailles.³⁷ We may also note that the singer Marthe Le Rochois (c.1650-1728), who created the role of Armide in Lully's last *tragédie lyrique* (1686) was possibly a pupil of Lambert. Her own career ended in teaching.³⁸ Both these singers helped diffuse Lambert's and Bacilly's style. All the contemporary professional singers at court would have shared Lambert's, and therefore Bacilly's, technique.

³⁴ *MG* Aug. 1678, p.354 (see above).

³⁵ In Massip (1999), pp.90-1.

³⁶ Hilaire was a regular performer in Lully's ballets of the 1660s and sang the part of Venus in Cavalli's *Ercole amante* (1662) with the mixed French and Italian troupe. (Massip [1999], pp.72-5.)

³⁷ Félibien (1994), p.46.

³⁸ Benoit (1971), p.258.

The publication of the *Remarques* codified a style of performance that, far from declining, was at its height in 1668. Chapter 3 of this essay sought to illustrate the repertoire to which the *Remarques* is immediately relevant. One must also ask how far it may be considered applicable to repertoire both prior and subsequent to 1668.

Although in the ‘Réponse’³⁹ Bacilly applied his rules for pronunciation to two airs by Boesset (‘Du plus doux de ses Traits’ and ‘Me veux tu voir mourir’), this does not reflect the style of singing of the 1630s and 1640s, so criticised by Mersenne for its lack of regard for the words, so much as demonstrate the application of the current rules of performance of the mid-1660s to an earlier comparable repertoire.

Bacilly’s authority in writing the treatise, based on his learning and reputation, has been explored in this essay. It would therefore be easy to say that the performing conventions applicable to Bacilly’s own repertoire, which is presented in Chapter 3, is equally applicable to the output of his contemporaries, due to stylistic similarities across the solo vocal genre. Gordon-Seifert chose to focus on Bacilly and Lambert for her thesis as the most representative of their genre at the height of its development,⁴⁰ owing to the prolific output of one and, presumably, the stature of the other. Bacilly himself observed in his treatise that it was difficult for a listener, even for an experienced musician, to ‘recognise the hallmarks of a composer at a precise point in an air’.⁴¹ Curiously, a comment in the *Mercure galant* of June 1684 suggested that Bacilly alone had no ‘mannered style’ (‘n’est point manieré’) whereas the style of other composers was easily recognisable in their airs.⁴² Ballard, on the other hand, apparently always ready for a dig at Bacilly, accused him (covertly) of lacking in variety in his compositions and of

[...] redire toujours ou souvent la mesme chose, (ce qu’on appelle Stile à quoy on le reconnoist, ou Caractere qui le distingue des autres.)⁴³

This comment yet again directly contradicts Bacilly’s observations in the *Remarques*.

In fact, the singers listed above point directly to the type of repertoire being performed using Bacilly’s and Lambert’s technique. Although Nyert must also have taught his pupils how to perform in Italian and Latin, Bacilly concentrated on the French repertoire, and more specifically on the French air. Bacilly says that his rules are

³⁹ Bacilly (1679), p.20 (see Appendix 2).

⁴⁰ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.11.

⁴¹ Bacilly (1668), p.133/ 245.

⁴² See current translation p.245, fn.183.

for those who practise ‘le chant des ruelles’, that is, private performances of solo chamber music. It was, as the rules of the treatise suggests, a technique nurtured in the salons, but this does not mean that aspects of public performance are necessarily precluded from the rules of the treatise. Bacilly mentions many different types of airs in Part 1, Chapter XI, some of which, such as the *air de ballet*, the *petit air* and the *Leçon des Ténèbres*, were part of a public musical event, and recommends that for these, a more forceful performance is required; one must, for instance, emphasize the pronunciation of certain vowels and consonants.⁴⁴ Indeed, the musicians at the forefront of the vocal performance scene who employed this technique performed both individual airs in private and those in public ballets and operas. Therefore not only are the rules in the *Remarques* as applicable to private as to public performances of the private and public repertoire, but this in turn implies that the treatise reflects both the art of the amateur and that of the professional singer.

We know that Lambert was active as performer and composer at court in both private⁴⁵ and public events. For instance, Lambert’s airs were combined with those of Lully (the two composers could have met as early as the 1640s,⁴⁶ though Loret first mentions their acquaintance in 1651)⁴⁷ in the court ballet *La Naissance de Vénus* (1665) and he was also involved in the creation of the highly successful ballet, *Le Triomphe de l’amour* of 1680-1.⁴⁸

Lambert and his colleagues at court also had Chapel functions. However, Bacilly was clear that he did not wish to discuss the sacred music repertoire; all the same, Lambert’s own *Leçons des Tenebres* (first cycle, c.1662-3, for solo voice and continuo) contain typical Lambertian embellishment, whose performance the *doubles* in the airs explained in the *Remarques* may help illuminate.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, the *air galant* fell out of fashion, but the lighter airs continued to be popular, as Ballard’s three volumes of *Brunetes ou petits*

⁴³ Ballard’s preface to his 1675 *Recueil de chansonnettes*, in Massip 1999, pp.315: ‘[...] often repeating the same thing (which is what we call the style by which he can be recognised, or the character that distinguishes him from other composers.)’

⁴⁴ Bacilly (1668), p.287.

⁴⁵ Although Lambert’s position as Maître de la musique de la Chambre du Roi only occupied him for six months every year (when the second Maître would take over), his duties as ‘chantre extraordinaire’ required him to be available to perform alone in the King’s private chambers. (See Benoit [1971], p.114.)

⁴⁶ Benoit (1971), p.267.

⁴⁷ *La muze historique*, 1st January 1651, in Loret (1970), p.149.

⁴⁸ This lavish ballets, which included 20 ‘entrées de ballet’ was part of the last festivities to be given at Saint-Germain-en-Laye before Versailles became the principal royal residence. The project also involved

airs tendres show.⁴⁹ They gather together the favourite songs published by Ballard during most of the seventeenth century, including some by Bacilly and Sicard as well as some of Lully's *airs de ballet*. Significantly, many of these airs are provided with a *double* and some even have two or three alternative versions.⁵⁰ Though some of the melodies were revised and simplified, and the bass line is frequently altered, the collections are still a testimony to the seventeenth-century repertoire. What is particularly worthy of note is that 'brunettes' from this collection reappear in eighteenth-century didactical works, as exercises in figured bass accompaniment in Dandrieu's 1718 *Principes de l'accompagnement* and in Montéclair's *Brunetes anciennes et modernes apropiées à la flûte traversière* (c.1721-1733). These didactical works may well have encouraged the republication of Ballard's collections, with minor alterations, during the course of the century.⁵¹ Poole has pointed out that these brunettes played a significant role in musical education during the first half of the eighteenth century, a legacy left by Bacilly and his colleagues.⁵² In addition to the Ballard collections, other eighteenth-century publications of lighter airs by a variety of composers are listed in RISM,⁵³ and include an eight-volume collection entitled *Nouvelles poésies morales sur les plus beaux airs de la musique françoise et italienne, avec la basse [...]*,⁵⁴ published in Paris in 1737 in which airs by Lambert and Bacilly can be found amongst those of Brossard, Campra, Clérambault, Couperin, Desmarest, Lalande, Lully, Marais, Montéclair and Rameau. We may add that Massip has found evidence that Lambert's 1689 volume of airs (which contains no *doubles*) was still on sale in Paris as late as 1740.⁵⁵

Writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century mention Bacilly on the strength of his published output and the twentieth century has seen some more detailed analysis of the treatise's contents. This interest in Bacilly is certainly justified from an historical point of view: his treatise plays a major part in defining the art of his day as the most substantial and detailed of its kind in dealing with the performance practice of vocal

Quinault and the designer Vigarani, as well as the majority of the King's troupe of singers and dancers. (Benoit [1971] p.74.)

⁴⁹ Ballard (1703, 1704, 1711)

⁵⁰ Massip (1999), p.249.

⁵¹ 1730 (Vol. 1), 1719 (vol.2) and 1726 (vol.3).

⁵² See Poole (1987), pp.187-188.

⁵³ *Recueils imprimés du XVIIIe siècle* (1964), p.268.

⁵⁴ A second collection appeared entitled *Nouvelles poésies spirituelles et morales sur les plus beaux airs de la musique françoise et italienne avec une basse continue*, Paris, G. Desprez, 1731 [-1732], 2 vols.

⁵⁵ Massip (1999), p.130.

music during the second half of the seventeenth century, a matter otherwise neglected by his contemporaries.

Le Cerf de la Viéville is, as far as we know, the only eighteenth-century writer to mention Bacilly, who is occasionally mentioned in the *Comparaison de la musique françoise* (1704-6), often in the same breath as Lambert, such as when Le Cerf refers to the beauty of vocal music during the 'reign of Lambert and Bacilly'.⁵⁶ The little biographical material we possess on Bacilly we owe partly to this writer. Although his work has become one of the principal texts on eighteenth-century aesthetics, the musicians through whom he illustrates his argument had died between a decade and twenty years before the *Comparaison* and belong very much to the seventeenth century. There is a generational gap between Le Cerf and his subjects and so this chronological distance must be taken into account. This may be partly to blame for the fact that Le Cerf's biographical accuracy is not infallible,⁵⁷ which raises the question of whether we may unreservedly accept the validity of everything recorded in his testimony. Moreover, we cannot escape the fact that Le Cerf is writing with a specific agenda: that of defending French music and its musicians from the pro-Italian faction, and therefore, as ever in such a case, we must be wary of his manipulation of facts.

When he wrote *La musique mise à la portée de tout le monde* (1830), François Joseph Fétis was well-known for the erudite musical articles he contributed to daily papers and to the *Revue musicale*, which he founded in 1827. Though he was popularly known for his journalism, he had an interest in the revival of early works in performance. In his *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*,⁵⁸ Fétis lists other nineteenth-century sources in which Bacilly is mentioned, but he is keen to establish the authoritative nature of his own entry over those of his contemporary historians: he mentions Bacilly's appearance in the *Dictionnaire historique des musiciens* (Paris 1810), the erroneous attribution of the *Remarques* to Bailly instead of Bacilly in Forkel's *Allgemeine Litteratur des Musik* and in Lichtenthal's *Biographia della musica* (vol.4) and the correction of this error in works by La Borde and E.L. Gerber (he does not specify which).⁵⁹ Following what would appear to be, at least according to Fétis, rather sloppy work by others, he endeavours to

⁵⁶ Le Cerf (1705), I, p.130.

⁵⁷ Massip has pointed out inaccuracies such as Le Cerf's attributions of airs by Bacilly to Lambert. (Massip [1989], pp.25-39.)

⁵⁸ Fétis (1877).

provide a complete and accurate entry on Bacilly. In spite of his interest in performance, Fétis' concern in Bacilly's work seems purely documentary, his entry consisting mainly of listing Bacilly's published works (Fétis is the source for the reference to a lost fourth edition of the treatise in 1681) and not mentioning at all the nature and contents of the *Remarques*. He believed that the treatise was first published anonymously without even the author's initials. While establishing the existence of the *Remarques*, Fétis, who seems to have read Brossard's catalogue notes, portrays Bacilly the musician in a slightly negative light, perhaps influenced by his source, when he writes 'il avait [...] fort peu de pratique, quoi-qu'il ne manquât pas d'une sorte de génie naturel'.⁶⁰ The connection with Lambert and Nyert, neither of whom have an entry in his work, does not receive a mention. Fétis' entry is factual. He strives for credibility through accuracy in establishing facts and there is little critical apparatus involved.

If writers of the nineteenth century went only so far as to acknowledge the existence of Bacilly's treatise, those of the twentieth century went further in casting a critical eye over its contents. The first principal writer to turn his attention to Bacilly was Henry Prunières, who in 1913 selected parts of Bacilly's treatise for inclusion in his book *L'Opera italien en France avant Lulli*, the aim of which was to explain how various musical developments led to Lullian recitative. Prunières made the connection between Bacilly and his contemporaries and established that Bacilly, together with Nyert, Lambert and Cambert, was theoretician to a school whose style paved the way for Lullian recitative by way of a reform in singing, in which more emphasis was placed on the rhythm of declamation. Prunières returned to Bacilly in a 1923 article,⁶¹ using Le Cerf as a source for biographical detail. He placed particular emphasis on the fact that it was Nyert's vocal style that was being promoted by Bacilly. Mention is made of Brossard's negative comment concerning Bacilly. In the manner of Fétis, Prunières did important work in establishing facts, particularly in his listing of Bacilly's published works, having combed through issues of the *Mercure galant* in which Bacilly's airs appeared. He also traced the authorship of the *Trois Livres d'airs* to Bacilly through the volumes of the *Recueil des plus beaux vers* and corrected the erroneous attribution in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Royale de Bruxelles of the *Nouveau livre d'Airs* of 1661 to Lambert. Prunières also established that Ballard's books I to VI of *chansons à*

⁵⁹ These must have been J.B. de La Borde's *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1780) and E. L. Gerber's *Historisch-biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* (Leipzig, 1790-92).

⁶⁰ 'he had [...] very little practical ability, although he did not lack a kind of natural aptitude.'

danser et à boire, of which Book VI is dedicated to Nyert, are by Bacilly. In fact, Prunières credited Bacilly with a significant innovation: that of applying the style and tone of the *récits d'opéra* to the *airs à boire* , a very popular innovation which he claims to have been rapidly imitated by other composers of such airs. Prunières observed that Bacilly's volumes of airs were very hard to find, mainly because only a very small number of volumes were printed from plates which Bacilly subsequently destroyed.⁶²

Gérolde's seminal work, *L'art du chant en France au XVIIe siècle*,⁶³ followed in 1921 Prunières' first publication and focused on the style and performance of the French air. Gérolde realised the scope and dimension of Bacilly's work by pointing out that Bacilly and Mersenne were the only authors of their period to write in detail about the role of the sound of vowels and consonants in singing. His study is also sociological, taking into account the culture of the salons and the writing of poetry. Gérolde wrote in detail on all aspects of the French air, yet while constantly referring to Bacilly's treatise, it is not dealt with in a particularly critical manner, for Gérolde documented the contents of the treatise without investigating further any wider applications.

A.B. Caswell was the next researcher to have turned seriously to the *Remarques* in his 1964 thesis, 'The development of seventeenth-century French vocal ornamentation and its influence upon later Baroque ornamentation practice', which is centred around a full translation of the *Remarques* with an accompanying commentary of some forty thousand words. Caswell commented on each chapter in turn, providing comparisons with the contents of later instrumental treatises, but inevitably concentrating on the last two chapters of Part I, on ornamentation and embellishment, in order to demonstrate his theory that Bacilly was the first French writer to codify ornaments and that both instrumental and vocal treatises written after the *Remarques* in the seventeenth century and throughout the first half of the eighteenth century owe much, if not everything, to Bacilly's efforts.⁶⁴ Although Caswell recognised that the second and third parts of the treatise were in fact more important to Bacilly than the first, he was nevertheless mistaken in thinking that Bacilly was dealing with a system of quantitative prosody.⁶⁵ Caswell nevertheless did much to bring the treatise to the

⁶¹ Prunières (1923), pp.156-160.

⁶² *MG* Nov. 1687, unpaginated announcement appended to a catalogue at the end of the journal.

⁶³ Gérolde (1921).

⁶⁴ Caswell is the author of the *New Grove* (6th edition) article (Caswell 1980) which reflects this emphasis on the importance of the treatise as a source for French ornamentation and embellishment.

⁶⁵ Caswell (1967), pp.116-20; Caswell concludes that for Bacilly '*agréments* are primarily a device for stressing the length of the long syllables inherent in a system of quantitative poetic accentuation' (p.120).

attention of English-speaking researchers. A 1970 review of this publication praised it mostly for the inclusion of the musical examples to which Bacilly refers. The reviewer, however, is very critical of Bacilly's style, labelling it 'extremely elaborate – and quite inefficient', as well as 'surely the most baroque monument to the historical talent of the French to get carried away with the problems of their own language'.⁶⁶ While Bacilly's treatise is undeniably long, readers informed on the question of declamation and aware of Bacilly's aims will find it thorough and complete.

In the 1996-8 facsimile edition of Bacilly's airs, Jean Saint-Arroman collected for each air anything that was said about it in the *Remarques* concerning quantity, pronunciation and ornamentation, adding a few supplementary observations on other aspects relevant to its performance. Thus whereas the present edition supports Bacilly's aim of illustrating the theory in the treatise with musical examples, the facsimile edition presents the process in reverse and seeks to illustrate the performance of the airs by extracting relevant observations from the treatise. Both are procedures of reconciliation between theory and practice.

The main problem with Saint-Arroman's approach is that, although Bacilly's comments are evidently helpful, it presents an incomplete guide, and this in two ways: firstly, the airs which Bacilly does not happen to mention as examples in the treatise are not provided with performance guidelines; and secondly, by choosing selective observations from the *Remarques* which are relevant to selected moments in an air, other rules which are indispensable to the performance of the rest of the air are inevitably overlooked. That is the difficulty with providing guidelines for a performing edition: unless one reproduces all of Bacilly's descriptions of ornaments and all his tables for pronunciation and quantity, including all the exceptions - in short, the entire contents of the *Remarques*, then one only has a fraction of the elements involved in the performance of an air.

Catherine Massip is the most recent scholar to have addressed Bacilly's significance as a musician in her 1999 study of Michel Lambert, in which she takes Bacilly's work into account. However, she concludes on page 275 that today the value of the *Remarques* as a guide to interpreters of French song is overrated, since she finds it unlikely that his contemporaries would have given it the same importance. This is an important point, for the relevance of the treatise would be limited if it did not reflect

⁶⁶ Jander (1970), p.353.

current practice, or only reflected a small aspect of it. It is, nevertheless, the most complete guide to the performance of the repertoire with which she is concerned; and this essay has aimed to show the full relevance of the treatise to its performance by considering some of the reasons why it encountered criticism and examining the context for the repertoire on which it is based.

Since the eighteenth century, Bacilly's treatise has remained largely in the domain of musicologists. They have in fact shown an ongoing interest in Bacilly: more recently, the treatise has been the subject of a handful of short musicological articles by Rhyming, Favier and Gallat-Morin.⁶⁷ However, it is interesting to see that Bacilly's work has made its way into general publications of French scholarship on language and literature in the seventeenth century, a direction in which Gérold was the first to point: a growing attention towards the *Remarques* on the part of linguists establishes it as an important source in research on pronunciation and seventeenth-century rhetoric.⁶⁸ This highlights the difficulty in approaching Bacilly's treatise; for it seems easy to separate the purely 'musical' aspects (such as technical descriptions of ornaments) from the rules which accompany them for performance (i.e. the quantity and pronunciation of syllables), but in so doing, the point of the work is lost. Olivier Bettens has tried to reconcile some of these aspects by concentrating his linguistic research on the pronunciation of French in singing. For a presentation of the complete text, however, a combined historical, cultural, linguistic and musical approach is required to convey the full breadth of the *Remarques curieuses*.

⁶⁷ (1982), (1997) and (1997) respectively.

⁶⁸ See for example Salazar (1995) and Dandrey, ed. (1990).

EDITORIAL NOTES

1. THE TEXT

Bacilly's *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter* first appeared in 1668 from the printing presses of Claude Blageart in the rue St. Jacques in Paris. The royal printer, Robert Ballard, distributed the treatise. It was then reissued on two subsequent occasions that same year, the first again distributed by Ballard, the other by Pierre Bienfait.⁸⁹

Bacilly's full name is missing from the title of the second and third issues of the 1668 edition, which only bear his initials 'B.D.B'.

The treatise was printed in-12. An exemplar of the third issue, held in the British Library (C.30.i.7.), is leather-covered with a gold-embossed spine. It measures 152 x 90 mm. There are four hundred and twenty-eight numbered pages preceded by ten unnumbered leaves (of which the first is blank). These contain: (f. 2) an engraved frontispiece, bearing the title and the initials of the author, the coat of arms of the Lorraine d'Elbeuf family (above the title), an address ('A Paris, ruë des Petits Champs, vis à vis la Croix chez un Chandelier'), and notification of royal privilege and date. This is followed by the title-page (f. 3):

REMARQUES CURIEUSES/ SUR L'ART/ DE BIEN CHANTER,/ Et
particulièrement pour ce qui/ regarde le chant françois./ Ouvrage fort utile à ceux qui
aspirent/ à la methode de chanter, surtout à/ bien prononcer les paroles avec toute la/
finesse et toute la force necessaire; & à/ bien observer la quantité des syllabes,/ & ne
point confondre les longues et les/ briefves, suivant les règles qui en sont/ établies dans
ce traité./ Par M. B. DE BACILLY / [Fleuron] / A Paris,/ chez l'autheur ruë des Petits
Champs, vis/ à vis la Croix chez un Chandelier./ ET / Chez PIERRE BIENFAIT,
Libraire au Palais / proche la Chambre des Comptes, à l'image/ S. Pierre, comme on va
à l'Hotel de/ Monseigneur le Premier President M. DC. LXVIII/ AVEC PRIVILEGE
DU ROY.

Then follow an unsigned 'avant-propos' (foreword, ff. 4-7^r), table of contents (ff. 7^v-8) and 'epistre' (dedicatory preface, ff. 9-10), to the 'tres-haute, tres-puissante, et tres-illustre Princesse, Marie Marguerite Ignace de Lorraine d'Elbeuf', signed 'D.B.'. The book has two further unnumbered leaves at the back (the last one is blank), presenting an extract from the Royal 'privilege' (f. 11^r), which was granted 'au Sr D.B.' on the 22nd January 1668, signed on 23rd March 1668 and was to last for seven years, and finally, a table of *errata* (f. 11^v).

⁸⁹ I am grateful to Laurent Guillo for sending me details of the different issues from the Bacilly entry in his forthcoming bibliography of Ballard publications.

This treatise was to see two subsequent editions, in 1671 and 1679, both distributed by Guillaume de Luyne. Each one is a reprinting of the 1668 edition, for the same printing forms were used: the name of Blageart (the original printer), together with the date 1668, is still at the foot of the last page of text in the subsequent editions; the list of *errata* is the same, as is the main body of the text in all cases. Only the title page was altered. The subsequent titles are as follows:

[1671] *Traité de la méthode ou art de bien chanter, par le moyen duquel on peut en peu de temps se perfectionner dans cet art, et qui comprend toutes les remarques curieuses que l'on y peut faire.*

[1679] *L'art de bien chanter de M. de Bacilly. Augmenté d'un Discours qui sert de Réponse à la Critique de ce Traité, et d'une plus ample instruction pour ceux qui aspirent à la perfection de cet Art. Ouvrage tres-utile, non seulement pour le Chant, mais même pour la Declamation.*

A fourth edition, printed in 1681 and also distributed by de Luyne, is presumed lost. Its title was similar to the 1671 edition, *Traité de la méthode ou art de chanter, par M. de B****. It is not listed in RISM, neither is there any sign of it in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Caswell mentioned it in his publications (1967, 1968 and 1980) but gave no detailed reference for it. Its existence was in fact first mentioned in Fétis' 1866 *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, on which all subsequent catalogues of Bacilly's works have relied as evidence.

The 1679 edition incorporates the original engraved frontispiece with the coat of arms of the Lorraine family, but the original date at the foot of it is omitted, as is the dedicatory letter. In addition, and importantly, it was supplemented by Bacilly's thirty-two-page 'Réponse à la critique', which gives a valuable insight into the way in which Bacilly's work was received by contemporaries.

Editorial Method

Bacilly's pagination is shown in the text between oblique strokes (for example: /123/). The present translation takes Bacilly's *errata* (which are minor) into account. Italics are frequently used in Bacilly's text, principally for emphasis, quotations, titles of airs, French and Italian poems and technical terms. Text italicised by Bacilly for emphasis has been underlined in the present edition, titles of airs and poems (retained in French or Italian and translated in a footnote) have been kept in italics and quotations have been placed in inverted commas. The presentation of technical terms in italics is, however, inconsistent in the source: terms such as *mouvement* and *cadence* have been

standardised in italics and are preserved in French rather than translated, for their meaning often requires detailed explanation and no suitable English equivalent exists. These terms are addressed in the annotations to the text and are listed in the glossary of French terms at the back.

All material in square brackets is editorial; all other brackets in the text are from the source. The orthography of all French quotations has been preserved as in the source, but the letters *u*, *v*, *i* and *j* have been standardised in accordance with modern practice. The spelling of terms which end in –ent in the singular, such as *tremblement* and *doublement*, and end variably in –ens or –ents when in the plural in the source has been preserved, and accents have not been altered or introduced where lacking in Bacilly's text. Abbreviations by suspension or contraction in French quotations have been written out in full. These are usually indicated by a tilde in the source and occur most often with the omission of the letter *m* or *n*. All translations given in the introduction and annotations are my own, unless otherwise stated. In the footnote annotations, which are numbered consecutively throughout the translation so as to facilitate referencing, musical realisations of some of Bacilly's verbal descriptions of ornaments have been suggested. These editorial realisations and other editorial examples are clearly numbered with small roman numerals.

2. MUSICAL EXAMPLES WITHIN THE TEXT

Principal Sources:

Throughout the *Remarques*, Bacilly principally refers the reader to three books of airs engraved in Paris by Pierre Richer. Two of these, to which he refers as the books 'in octavo', are by Bacilly and are two volumes of the same publication, and the third, the book 'in quarto', is by Michel Lambert. Bacilly's volumes are entitled:

*Les trois livres d'airs, regravez de nouveau en deux volumes, augmentez de plusieurs airs nouveaux, de chiffres pour le théorbe et d'ornemens pour la méthode de chanter, Première Partie [Seconde Partie] Paris, rue des petits champs, vis à vis la croix chez un chandelier, 1668.*⁹⁰

As the title implies, these were first published as three separate books: airs from the *Nouveau livre d'airs gravez par Richer* in 1661 (C. de Sercy) and from the *Second livre d'airs* in 1664 reappear in the *Trois livres d'airs regravez*, but the third volume to

⁹⁰ B.N.F. Cons. Rés. 113.

which the title alludes has not been positively identified.⁹¹ It may well have been the *Premier livre d'airs gravez par Richer* (1662), which is presumed lost.

A curious omission of a clear indication of the identity of the author of the 1668 *Trois Livres d'Airs* has been the cause of some confusion over questions of authorship. In 1923, Prunières presumed that when Bacilly referred to the airs *in octavo* in his treatise, he expected the reader to know that they were of his own composition although no clue is offered as to the author's identity. Prunières also mentioned Fétis' erroneous attribution to Lambert of Bacilly's 1661 volume of airs, and criticised Gérold for his lack of scrutiny in 1921 in accepting this fact and in adding to the confusion by attributing Bacilly's 1668 *Trois livres d'airs* to Lambert as well.⁹² Later, in 1964, Caswell also accepted this attribution to Lambert, though he amended this claim in the preface to his 1968 publication.

No explanations have been forwarded for this absence, neither for Bacilly's reluctance to name himself as their author when he refers to these two volumes in the *Remarques*.

The title of Lambert's volume of airs is:

Les airs de Monsieur Lambert, Maistre de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy. Gravez par Richer. Corrigez de nouveau de plusieurs fautes de graveure. A Paris, Rue des Petits Champs, vis a vis la Croix Chez un chandelier, 1666.

The Lambert volume was first printed in 1660; three subsequent editions appeared in c.1661, 1666 and 1669.⁹³ The third edition of 1666, which contains a preface, a sonnet to Lambert by Perrin and Lambert's signature on page 53, has been chosen for the present edition because it is the closest chronologically to Bacilly's treatise. Caswell listed the Lambert volume he used as dating from 1668, which does not appear in Massip's list of the volume's editions.⁹⁴ According to the title and the name of the publisher (Guillaume de Luyne), this must in fact have been the c.1661 edition which was published without a date.

Additional Sources:

Other examples in the text come from several sources. Two airs from volumes entitled *Brunetes ou petits airs tendres*, edited and published in Paris by Christophe

⁹¹ Lescat (1998), p.6.

⁹² Prunières (1923), p.159.

⁹³ Massip preface to Lambert (1666), p.3. The contents of all four editions are the same, with minor changes made to spelling and rhythm.

⁹⁴ Massip preface to Lambert (1666), p.2.

Ballard in 1704 (vol.2) and 1711 (vol.3), have been inserted into Chapter XI. Bacilly refers to these as examples of old gavottes, for which Ballards's volume is the earliest source available.

The majority of the other missing examples from Chapter XI, Chapters XII and XIII, and Parts 2 and 3, were found in the volumes of airs published throughout the century by three generations of the Ballard family of royal printers, Pierre (the main source for Guédron's airs), Robert and Christophe.

An anonymous manuscript volume of airs (Bibliothèque nationale Rés Vma ms.854) dating from around 1659-1661⁹⁵ was also used as a source for musical examples. No *doubles* are included in this volume and there is no continuo figuration in the bass part. Cross-referencing with other published works has allowed for the authorship of some of the airs to be established, while others have been identified only through Bacilly's *Recueil des plus beaux vers*. The means of identification is signalled in a footnote.

The other manuscript source is a collection of airs by Lambert known as the Foucault Manuscript and dated c.1691 by Massip. Caswell used the copy from the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, Ms. 3043, which is one of five copies of this manuscript; a different copyist made each copy but the format and foliation is the same, though there are slight melodic differences affecting mainly rhythm and ornamentation.⁹⁶ The copy used for the present edition is Rés. 584, which was compared with Rés Vmf. ms. 12, both in the music department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The remainder of the sources include books by Antoine Boesset, Jean de Cambefort, Guillaume Michel and François Richard, as well as other volumes by Bacilly.

There is a missing musical source which would have been of use in the study of the *Remarques* and particularly to the translating of the 'Réponse' (Appendix 3). In the 'Réponse', Bacilly implied that a revised and augmented edition of the *Trois livres d'airs* was published in 1679, in which corrections, made in accordance with his rules of quantity or his revisions of them, were indicated with small stars:

'il y en a quantité d'exemples dans les Airs corrigez in *octavo*, dont l'on connoitra la correction par de petites étoiles.'⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Massip (1999), p.139.

⁹⁶ Massip (1999), pp.169-75.

⁹⁷ Bacilly (1679), p.24.

Saint-Arroman took some of his observations from Bacilly's 'Réponse' for his performance notes to the 1668 edition; he pointed out that Bacilly contradicted himself, without noting that Bacilly's comments in the 'Réponse' refer in fact to this subsequent, corrected edition of 1679.

There is no doubt that this revised edition must have existed, for Bacilly mentioned his amendments in the 'Réponse' as if they had definitely been made. There are no small stars anywhere in the 1668 *octavo* edition to which Bacilly could have been referring.⁹⁸

However, this 1679 edition is not listed anywhere and seems not to have survived. Laurent Guillo has suggested the possibility that it was a reissue of the 1668 edition but without the new date printed on the title page. A straight reissue would not account for the reported revisions of the contents. A comparison of all the extant exemplars of the 1668 edition of the *Trois livres d'airs* may have shed some light on the matter if indeed this later edition still had '1668' printed on the front. However, there is a very limited number of surviving exemplars: RISM⁹⁹ lists only two, held in the Bibliothèque nationale.¹⁰⁰ This problem is enhanced by the fact that very few were originally printed: the number of exemplars produced using the new method of printing from engraving was half that of volumes made using moveable type because the copper-plates used in this process wore out quickly.¹⁰¹ The *Mercure galant* noted that fewer exemplars were made of Bacilly's engraved volumes than of his Ballard printed volumes.¹⁰²

Editorial Method:

All of Caswell's references supplied in his 1968 publication have been verified. Additional examples have been traced where possible.

The music is always supplied if Bacilly refers the reader at any point to the 'octavo' or 'quarto' volumes. However, where mention is made of other airs with no reference given to the reader, the music has been supplied when available and when musical illustration of the point Bacilly is making is pertinent.

⁹⁸ The one exception occurs on p.65. of vol.I, where a star is used to indicate that the last bar of the last line is continued at the end of the first system of that page, the engraver having run out of space on the stave.

⁹⁹ RISM (vol.1, *Einzeldrucke vor 1800*).

¹⁰⁰ These are Cons. Rés. 113 and Rés. Vmf. 38, which used to be part of Prunières' collection.

¹⁰¹ Massip, introduction to Lambert (1666), p.3.

¹⁰² *MG*, Nov. 1687, non-paginated advertisement at end of volume.

The numbering of each musical example in the text in Arabic numerals is my own, to which has been added the composer of the example in question, the date of the publication from which the example has been extracted (which also relies on the author/date system used throughout this thesis) and the page number. Bacilly's two 1668 volumes of airs are numbered I and II respectively. The same principle used for the orthography of French quotations has been followed in the text of the musical examples. Letters have been capitalised where appropriate and textual elisions are indicated in the underlay.

A prefatory staff is supplied for each musical example, showing the original clef, key-signature, metre indication and initial note of the extract. In most cases, the example is a small section taken from a complete air. Clefs have been modernised following modern convention. The metre indications have been modernised according to what is implied in the source; where the metre changes during the course of an extract, the original metre indication (such as '2' or '3') is signalled above the new metre.

Bacilly's musical examples all refer to the *dessus*, or top part of each air. This has been supplied together with the instrumental and / or vocal bass part with continuo figuration or text as it occurs in the original. A small number of airs have a second *dessus* part, which is noted in a footnote but has been omitted from the transcription.

The continuo figuring has been preserved but not realised and has been moved from above the staff to below it, in accordance with modern convention, when the bass line is instrumental rather than vocal; where both words and continuo figuration are present in the source, the words are below and the figuration above the bass staff. Where no continuo line is given, it is not present in the source (the continuo line is not printed for the second verse, or *double*, in Bacilly's two volumes but is supplied in Lambert's, where it is identical to that of the first verse). Continuo figures present in the source have been aligned beneath the chord changes to which they relate.

The original beaming in these examples has been retained: it relates to underlay (also indicated by slurs, which have been retained or extended where necessary) and phrasing, in contrast with modern beaming conventions where beamed groups tend to reflect the beat. Small crosses (or occasionally small chevrons) indicating the position of a recommended ornament in the source have been retained, but not realised in the examples. Editorial comments and realisations appear in the footnotes.

There are many instances where note-values in the examples are ungrammatical: there are often too many or too few notes, a deliberate result of notating embellishments while preserving their rhythmic flexibility, and the shortening of notes following a dotted note is frequently omitted on paper. In such cases no changes have been made to suggest a rhythmically ‘correct’ rendition of the music; however, editorial dots in square brackets have been added to notes such as the final note of an air where the dot has been omitted in one part and not the other. The other changes made to notation have been to dotted notes crossing a barline, or notes divided by an editorial barline, which have been changed to two tied notes. Particular points and problems are addressed in the footnote annotations as they occur. Saint-Arroman¹⁰³ suggested some solutions, including amending some notation and creating triplet groups for which no symbol was available to Bacilly, but ultimately he believed that the performer must choose his own solution.

Editorial barlines appear as dashed barlines. Repeat signs and first- and second-time bars have been added where necessary. Redundant accidentals in the source have been retained. Small editorial accidentals are given above the staff in square brackets (to distinguish them clearly from continuo figuration), while cautionary editorial accidentals, such as those following an editorial barline, appear in square brackets within the staff. Sharps cancelling a B \flat in the source, both in the music and the continuo figuration, have been replaced by a natural sign. Editorial slurs follow conventional practice. Where necessary, an editorial symbol within square brackets [▼] has been added to the examples to clarify which note or notes are under discussion in the text. Bar numbers in Example L (Chapter 3 of Essay) are editorial. Pitches in these examples to which reference is made in the annotations follow the Helmholtz system.

¹⁰³ Bacilly-Saint-Arroman (1996), vol.1, pp.25-7.

**INTERESTING
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE ART
OF PROPER SINGING**

**and particularly for what concerns
French song**

**A very useful work for people who aspire
to the correct method of singing, especially
as regards pronouncing words with all the
necessary refinement and power and the
observance of the quantity of syllables,
as well as how not to confuse long syllables with
short syllables following the rules
given in this treatise.**

By Mr B. DE BACILLY

FOREWORD

/ [i]¹ / I have been wondering for a long time whether to publish these observations on French singing, and when I sought the advice of several people, their answers could not have been more diverse. Some told me that, indeed, it would mean releasing a knowledge which I alone possess² that would enlighten the great authorities in singing, who would otherwise remain in the dark. Others, on the contrary, tried to dissuade me, telling me that my work would be of no great benefit to singing, which relies entirely on practice, and that as regards the French language, most teachers are themselves so ignorant, for lack of proper instruction in their youth, that they barely know the meaning of ‘syllable’, ‘consonant’, ‘vowel’, ‘plural’ and ‘singular’, ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’. Others, finally, tried to divert me from this idea for fear of the critics who / [ii] / are always at the ready to lampoon a work which deals with matters that no one has ventured to deal with before, be it laying down rules for quantity, which they believe to be entirely ‘fanciful’, or claiming to teach singing with rules and to dogmatize upon an art which, as I said, relies entirely on practice.

After taking into consideration all these arguments, I decided to go ahead, regardless of the incurable ignorance of some people, or the incorrigible ingratitude of others, or the envy and censorship of critics. I have followed the advice of several learned persons of great ability³ who enjoyed hearing me discuss the contents of this book and who constantly reproached me for delaying the disclosure of a work of some interest for its novelty [(] meaning that no one has dealt with this subject before), if not for its quality.

What comforts me about the criticism that may be levelled at this book (for the simple reason that it is hard for new ideas to meet with / [iii] / approval at first and that jealousy and conceit are so widespread among musicians that they cannot bear to be given instructions) is that I have foreseen it. I am aware of all the objections which will be raised against me, and this foresight will make them less fearsome and less upsetting.

¹ The ‘Avant-propos’ is unpaginated. Though the editorial page numbers for the dedication that follows are consecutive with those of the foreword, a table of contents separates the two in the original exemplar.

² This is an allusion to the parable of the talents from the book of Matthew which, from the Middle Ages, was conventionally used as a *topos* in the *exordium* (the introductory part of the *dispositio*, see Essay Ch.2): writers were not to be seen keeping their treasures to themselves.

³ Although Bacilly gives us no clues as to the social position of these ‘learned persons’, we may assume they are either members of his salon audience or the Academician admirers whom he mentions in the ‘Réponse’ (see Appendix 2).

I have no doubt that people will say ‘that singing cannot be learnt from books; that rules are useless unless one knows how to put them into practice; that he who talks about singing does not know how to sing himself and should therefore not be considered above the others;⁴ that people with *bon goust* are sufficiently knowledgeable in syllabic quantity without the need of rules, which are sometimes fabricated; that these rules are a hindrance to creative minds who will henceforth be required to observe long and short syllables and renounce noble thoughts and expressions especially when words are set to existing airs’.

Finally, they will say that ‘most facts contained in this book are disputable, and those that happen to be true are such obvious facts / [iv]/ that they are known even to the most ignorant singers, and are so easily perceived that there is no need to explain them nor discuss them’.

In answer to all this ill-informed and envious talk, I shall firstly say that I quite agree that singing cannot be learnt simply through theory if it is not accompanied by practice. Therefore, my aim is not to give instructions, for instance, on how to sing *passages* and diminutions according to intervals in music and on how to place them correctly,⁵ as pedantic musicians would claim to give. But I know that one can at least show how to avoid hundreds of mistakes commonly made in singing, especially as regards pronunciation and the quantity of words, and how to shake-off many ill-founded opinions which constantly crop up in singing. Thus it can be said that this work will at least be quite useful as regards the theory of singing, if not as regards its practice.

Secondly, I agree that vocal performance is very important, both in providing pleasure and / [v] / in teaching others the proper method of singing. But one must not judge rashly the merit or demerit of a singer’s performance (as hundreds are inclined to do) simply from hearsay or for having occasionally heard him sing hoarsely, provided this is not a constant trait. And I dare say that those singers with a beautiful voice who are always fit to sing at any hour of the day and even, so to speak, when asleep, sing in a very dull and lifeless manner. Their performance becomes tiresome in the long run for all the airs sound alike, as they lack the expression which gives them diversity. And when, in the belief that they have pleased their public, they rise from their chair saying

⁴ In view of the evidence presented in the accompanying contextual essay, this may be regarded as an autobiographical reference to Bacilly’s skills as a performer, which may not have been as developed as his teaching, composing and writing skills.

⁵ Millet (1666) and Rousseau (1710) both illustrate this approach.

these fine words, with ludicrous conceit: ‘Now, that is what I call singing’, one could rightly answer: ‘Now, that is what I call hurdy-gurdying’.⁶

Thirdly, it is foolhardy to pride oneself on knowing the quantity of syllables without knowing the rules, and for one teacher who may possess refined *goust*, there are hundreds who do not, and who nonetheless / [vi] / believe that they do. Therefore, one could not have done those teachers a greater disservice by introducing this strict practice of long and short syllables, for it brings about a great differentiation between those whose merit would previously have been thought to be equal. As for poets, I do not doubt that they will find it a hindrance when they attempt to set words to airs, but they must not be so chagrined as to relinquish fine thoughts in favour of words which can fit the notes more easily, provided they deal with composers who can cope with this problem and who skilfully know how to amend a melody, be it on paper or during performance.

Finally, I know that I shall be criticised for not providing examples in musical notation, but I believe it is better to refer the reader to the volumes engraved by Richer,⁷ in which are notated, as far as it is possible, all the ornaments found in singing.⁸ This is principally the case in the second edition as regards the books *in octavo*,⁹ in which most / [vii] / diminutions have been altered and to which have been added several new airs, in addition to those that were in the three volumes; these have been compiled into two larger volumes in order to make reference to the examples cited in this work more convenient.

In addition to the *errata* at the end of this book, there is another important error: in the third part of this treatise, ‘Chapter Two’ has been printed twice,¹⁰ so that this part appears to have only six chapters when there are, in fact, seven. The reader will kindly take heed of this.

⁶ See Essay Ch.3, pp.78-9 for Bacilly’s attitude towards the instrumentalisation of the voice; although his preludes were written in imitation of an instrumental prelude, his comparison with the hurdy-gurdy is unfavourable.

⁷ Lambert (1666) and Bacilly I and II (1668).

⁸ Another factor in this decision may have been the sheer number of examples in the treatise; seeing the entire air, and its diminution, is of greater use than just a few bars (though, as in this translation, it is nevertheless more practical to give the few relevant bars within the text than all the airs in their entirety). This is also the first admission that ornaments cannot be satisfactorily notated; some, indeed, are impossible to reproduce on paper.

⁹ Bacilly is referring to the 1668 *Les trois livres d’airs*.

¹⁰ The heading ‘Chapter II’ reappears at the top of what ought to be Chapter III, and every chapter thereafter has been incorrectly headed as the preceding. These have been corrected in the present translation from p.356 / 403.

TO THE MOST NOBLE
MOST POWERFUL
AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCESS
MARIE
MARGUERITE
IGNACE
DE LORRAINE
D'ELBEUF

MY LADY,

The honour I was granted in being in the service of His Lordship your late father, and the favour / [viii] / he bestowed on me when asking me to teach you this fine Art, on which I am presently making some Observations, remain constantly in my heart and my memory. This is why I diligently seek every opportunity to present Your Highness with proof of my devotion and of my most humble gratitude. It is in this frame of mind and with this intent that I presume to present her with this small work, in which she will find, in the right order and in greater detail, the reflections which, in a disorderly way, I brought to her attention in the past, on / [ix] / the manner of singing and of pronouncing the words in French music. My aim in writing it has not been the desire to instruct or to please the public, since the knowledge of most people is very limited on this subject, and opinions are very divided. I have confined myself to the aim of arousing the curiosity of the more enlightened people who are more inclined towards these interesting pursuits, amongst whom Your Highness ranks the highest. Thus, MY LADY, I would be happy and more than / [x] / rewarded for my work, if she were to deign to bestow on it her approval and patronage, and if I may assure her, by means of this modest present, that my feelings are unchanged in honouring her, and that I am as keen to please her, and that I am still, MY LADY, with deep respect,

YOUR HIGHNESS' most humble and most obedient servant,

D.B.

INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS
ON THE ART OF PROPER SINGING
And particularly as regards French song.

/1/ This work is divided into three parts. The first deals with singing in general. The second deals with the application of song to French words solely as regards pronunciation. And the third deals with the quantity of French words most commonly found in singing, and how to differentiate between long and short syllables, which is the principal aim of this treatise.

PART ONE

On singing in general

/2/ At first my intention was only to give some insight into the correct pronunciation and the quantity of French words which one comes across in songs, in other words, to highlight the mistakes of the former and to establish reliable rules for the latter. However, I find it appropriate to discuss singing in general and even to give some basic rules so that it may be practised correctly, as far as allows an art which owes its existence more to performance than to theoretical rules. Let us begin by establishing the difference between singing and music, for many people confuse the two.

CHAPTER I

Of what the art of proper singing consists and how it differs from music

/3/ Though the aim of music is to please the ear with harmonious sounds, and must therefore encompass everything that can contribute to achieving this end, there is nothing more ambiguous than the meaning of the word ‘music’. Sometimes it is understood to mean the art of composing harmonious chords, in which case a man may be considered an accomplished musician even though he cannot sing a single pleasant note and cannot play a single instrument. At other times, it is understood to mean the ability to sing one’s part. In this case, what is commonly considered as being good at music only means interpreting correctly all the signs /4/ and notation found in music; so that he who can ‘sight-read’¹¹ (as it is called) all kinds of music can pass himself off as an accomplished musician, as singing in tune is all that is required for performing, without taking into account whether the voice is pleasant or flexible enough for the subtleties of singing.

The fact is that music, with its high degree of accomplishments, should on no account be limited to one aspect and to be a truly accomplished musician, one should not only be able to sing well,¹² to compose pleasing harmonies, to sight-read the most difficult works; but it would also be appropriate to possess a perfect knowledge of all the vocal embellishments and of all that can enhance the pleasure of the ear, which is the purpose of music. Nevertheless, some people do not hesitate to narrow the field of music, saying that one can be good at music without knowing the art of proper singing. Some have even been so bold as to claim that one can master singing very well without being able to read a single note.

/5/ Yet in all the arts there is what is called theory and practice and the art of proper singing is no exception: one can be well aware of how to sing properly and have the knowledge of all that is pleasant to the ear, without being able to put this knowledge into practice due to a faulty voice and a lack of disposition, since these qualities are a gift of nature and cannot be acquired, but only perfected through practice.

I am considering the art of proper singing from the practical point of view, and I believe that it consists of pitching each note correctly, sustaining the voice well and

¹¹ ‘chanter à livre ouvert’.

¹² ‘faire un beau chant’ can also mean ‘to compose a good melody’.

projecting it well, executing *cadences* and *tremblemens* properly, articulating each note when appropriate, and not too much when it is not, and knowing when to slide over certain notes, performing *accens* well, which are commonly called *plaintes*, and creating good *passages* and diminutions. And since singing can hardly be practised without words, they must be pronounced correctly, expressed with feeling or with passion as required; and above all, one should strictly respect the length of long and short syllables, which is the principal aim of this treatise.

CHAPTER II

On whether one can master singing without knowledge of music.

/7/ I do not intend to speak about music as meaning the art of composing, but I shall only consider it as the art of being able to sing one's part. Seen in this light, it is obvious that one cannot become an accomplished singer without having recourse to music. It is therefore foolhardy to proclaim that one can sing very well without any knowledge of music, or even that one can successfully teach others how to sing. However, one has to agree that it is not necessary to have such a comprehensive knowledge of music as to be able to sing all kinds of pieces without preparation and to be able to /8/ add all the embellishments of vocal music. Personally, I find that the person who sings an air with all the graces and all the peculiarities of the correct way of singing after having studied it for a whole day, should be considered more competent than another who is capable of singing it without preparation but does not observe all the rules of vocal practice, not knowing them as well as the first singer. I find it hard to accept this misconception, especially when it comes from a man who must surely be one of the great composers of the century,¹³ when comparing the musical talent of French and Italian singers. This composer found it ridiculous to praise so much the talent of a Frenchman who, after studying an air at his leisure, could perform it very pleasantly, saying that the Italians could sing it straight away with as much grace as if they had studied it all their life. It is like saying that a painting executed with the correct technique over the course of a whole year was not more worthy of consideration than one which is less perfect, but on which the artist spent less time.¹⁴

¹³ Bacilly gives no clues to this composer's identity. Lully was already very successful by this time, as was Lambert; though these two composers were concerned with forging a French style, they may have admired the talents of Italian singers such as Anna Bergerotti, who, as Loret records, performed alongside her French counterparts at court and was a member of the *Musique de la Chambre* until 1669. (Sadie [1995], p.162.)

¹⁴ This is the first of several analogies made with painting throughout the treatise; see also Ch.X, pp.83-4/209 and Ch.XIII, art.2, p.224/316. Comparisons between the arts were frequently made: in 1630, Faret had linked poetry, painting and music together ('[la peinture] passe pour une Poësie muette, et [la musique] pour l'âme de la Poësie', Faret [1925], p.31, '[painting] is mute poetry and [music] the soul of poetry') and Ménestrier, contributing to the debate of 'les anciens et les modernes' wrote in 1681 that he saw great similarities between the two ('Comme je distingue dans la Peinture le dessein, la disposition, le coloris, les jours & les ombres, la perspective, les mouvemens & le costume, je distingue aussi dans la Musique la diversité des sons des Instrumens & de la voix, & les dissonances, les nombres, les temps, & les intervalles, les modes, les ornemens du chant, & les accords des parties', Ménestrier [1681], pp.73-4, 'As in painting I can see the drawing, the structure, the colouring, the light and shade, the perspective, the movement and the apparel, so in music can I hear the different sounds of instruments and voices,

This was pointed out to me by a /9/ Lord as noble in spirit as in birth and dignity,¹⁵ who is quite rightly of the opinion that bestowing the title of ‘impromptu’ upon a piece of poetry is a poor excuse for its shortcomings, since there is no doubt that working seriously and taking one’s time is better than working badly and in a hurry; and that usually the type of people who write these ‘impromptus’ are quite incapable of producing anything worthwhile, however long they take over it. The aim of singing is to please the ear; consequently, the one who does this with the greatest care must be acknowledged as the best singer.¹⁶ The listener will not be interested in knowing for how long an air has been studied as long as he is pleased with what he hears.¹⁷

However, one must be very careful not to be mistaken, as most people are, in believing that a singer is accomplished in the performance of the art of proper singing and even qualified to teach it to others as long as he is capable of singing one or two airs pleasantly enough himself, even though he may have no knowledge of music and may never have heard of any /10/ rules of singing; for it is true that so often one does not see below the surface of things. This is what is peculiar to singing and what distinguishes it from all other talents: as long as a singer has a pleasant voice, a good ear and a throat that lends itself to the performance of the elements of singing, he can quickly master an air so successfully that one may not be able to tell whether he is knowledgeable in the ways of proper singing and whether he has invested a lot of time in acquiring it. This is not the case with other arts, where however much talent may have been given by nature, one must always spend some time and effort to produce any acceptable work.

This illusion is so widespread in the salons¹⁸ that I have noticed that only people who sing with a certain amount of charm are held in high esteem; and if those who have devoted their entire life to the acquisition of the basic principles of music and the proper way of singing, do not possess all the necessary qualities to please the ear when singing,

dissonance, the rhythm of the verse, the beats and the intervals, the modes, the melodic embellishments and the harmonies of the other parts’).

¹⁵ The ‘Seigneur’ is very likely to be Pierre de Nyert, whom Bacilly praises in the 1679 ‘Réponse’ with similar language and esteem.

¹⁶ That singing should please the ear is Bacilly’s ultimate goal, just as, according to contemporary treatises on rhetoric, that of the orator is to please the listener. (See essay Ch.4.)

¹⁷ Paradoxically, Bacilly was known for his speed at composing: the preface to one of his books of airs (Bacilly [1677]) boasts that he can compose an air in fifteen minutes (see essay Ch.2, p.37, fn.21). We do not know whether Bacilly even approved of this anonymous preface, for it would certainly have meant going against his own recommendations if he did.

¹⁸ ‘dans le monde’. Whenever Bacilly speaks of common opinion or beliefs, he is generally referring to that of the high society, the ‘mondains’, who cultivated music in the salons. Wherever Bacilly appears to be more specific to salon activities, this has been translated as ‘in the salons’; otherwise, ‘dans le monde’

they are treated with contempt. And /11/ when age robs them of anything that nature may have given them for the performance of vocal music, they are at risk of starving in spite of all their knowledge, unless they were wise enough to save up in order to have something to live on in their old age.¹⁹

I am not suggesting that being able to sing is not a necessary condition to teach singing to others, as I shall discuss later in this treatise. What I am saying is that this ability to learn an air in one day should not be a significant consideration when choosing a teacher. And one should not loudly proclaim that a person with this ability also has all the skills of one who excels in this art and from whom he learnt his air. It would be wiser to bestow on him the title of Best Pupil and wish him all the best, so that his teacher may be well-disposed to continue teaching him more airs of his composition; for without his help he would soon sink back into the obscurity from whence he came.

has been translated as 'in society', with the understanding that this is still the cultural élite. (See Essay, Ch. 1, 'Patrons and Milieu'.)

¹⁹ Successful musicians with aristocratic patrons often received pensions during the course of their career; both Lambert and Hilaire Dupuy received royal pensions such as one from the Duchesse de Montpensier, the daughter of Gaston d'Orléans, in 1651 (in whose service Lully remained until 1657). However, not many benefited from pensions at the end of their career; the 'musiciens du roi' such as Lambert and Lully owned their official positions, which earned them a certain sum every year, and would sell them to their successor as late as possible, thereby providing for their retirement. Singers and dancers of the Académie Royale de Musique only benefited from a pension fund from 1713. (Benoît [1992], pp.97, 136.) There is no evidence that Bacilly received any pension from a patron.

CHAPTER III

On the different approaches to singing.

/12/ It is quite common to hear people say in society that each teacher has his own method of singing, so that they usually ask: “Whose method do you use? Do you sing in the manner of this teacher or that one?” as if there were several methods which, though different, are equally good.

Let me assure you that there is only one, true method of singing, to which all peculiarities of singing must relate. One cannot honestly say that each individual has his own method simply to justify a singer who is not following the precepts of the most talented master in this domain, who either laid these rules down himself, or whose greater ability enabled him to benefit more from the teaching he received. He then further improved this teaching by adding some of /13/ his own inventiveness, so as to raise the art of singing to the level of perfection it has now reached, and from whence I fear it will soon decline.²⁰

I know that formerly, the manner of singing consisted only of brilliant melodic embellishments,²¹ without any regard for the words. Each singer had his own rules, that is to say, each one improvised at whim any number of *passages* in the verses of airs, and all these various interpretations were considered good, or at least acceptable. But nowadays, singing has evolved and careful attention is given to the pronunciation of words, and one is aware of their length and their expression, which is something new and was formerly almost unknown.²² As a result, singing has attained such a degree of

²⁰ In spite of this comment, the standards of singing were still high eleven years later, for Bacilly voiced the same concern over an imminent decline in the ‘Réponse’ (see Appendix 2).

²¹ ‘Les traits du chant’. Benoît (1997) cites several examples of modern scholarship (see Neumann, [1983]) which define *traits du chant* more specifically as a group of short, detached notes, as in the Italian manner of performing *passaggi*. Zacconi (1596), vol.1, p.58, mentioned that not everyone had the ability to ‘break and separate’ them; Praetorius (1614-1619), vol.3, p.236, also described singing embellishments in the Italian manner ‘quickly and sharply’. Here, Bacilly is referring to singing practices before Nyert’s reform.

²² ‘presque inconnuë aux Anciens’; in a further discussion on people’s taste for old-fashioned airs (Ch.XI, p.127/ 236) Boësset and Guédrón are mentioned as ‘les Anciens’. Mersenne commented on the poor pronunciation of French singers in the 1630s (see Essay Ch.4, pp.99-100) and although Mersenne discussed quantity, he was concerned with the tradition of ‘musique mesurée’. Guédrón is recognised as having adhered, if only loosely, to the principles of setting quantitative verse, but the following generation were less concerned with them. Their experiments, however, are irrelevant to Bacilly, who is not taking ‘vers mesurés’ into account, which explains his comment that a respect for syllabic quantity (i.e. according to the principles of declamation) was previously almost unknown.

refinement that it is as hazardous to perform diminutions²³ on certain syllables as it is difficult to improvise suitable ones on suitable words.

I have no doubt that thousands of ignorant people will come and contradict you /14/ telling you, annoyingly, that having so many strict rules in singing is inconceivable, since the person who embellishes most, or (to use the common term for it) who ‘warbles’²⁴ most, is bound to be the best.²⁵ However, a person can easily be corrected of this misconception, as long as he possesses some intelligence and an ear for singing; and he will be made to see that the rules of singing are by no means extravagant but founded on common sense.

Even so, there are a few different approaches to singing which are acceptable, in varying degrees. I would not want to label as ignorant someone who, through a natural defect or old age, could not articulate with the throat²⁶ certain melodic embellishments but would slide over them a little too much. Neither would I condemn another who, similarly through some natural defect, could not pronounce certain consonants well, as long as he was aware of his weakness and did not make it a general rule for other singers. But if a man were to say that *passages* /15/ were no longer necessary in singing merely because he cannot do them himself, I would consider him a fool for denying music that which indeed has always been its greatest asset,²⁷ provided one has the skill of correctly applying them to the words which are being sung.

One should also be aware that there are some people who affect a certain lightness in their singing and who sing in this way on all occasions, and others who affect more weight and sturdiness. Both are acceptable, provided they are applied correctly and with discernment, depending on the nature of the piece, be it merry or melancholy, light-hearted or serious, as I shall mention when discussing *mouvement*²⁸ in vocal music.

²³ See Ch.XIII. Bacilly finds the term analogous to *passages*.

²⁴ ‘Fredonner’ – we are later told on p.90/ 212 that this involves more specifically the performance of runs and other embellishments. In Furetière we find that it is ‘a musical sign [no illustration is provided] which indicates the diminution of a note into several smaller ones, in order to make as many variations of the voice or of the sound as there are notes. It is otherwise called quaver or semiquaver’.

²⁵ Over sixty years before Bacilly, Caccini expressed a similar frustration with the public perception of singers: ‘[...] pur che per mezzo di essi fussero dalla plebe esaltati, e gridati per solenni cantori’ (Caccini [1601/2], preface). (‘[...] precisely because of these [passaggi], some have been extolled by *hoi polloi* and proclaimed mighty singers’, trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.44.)

²⁶ ‘ne marqueroit point assez du gosier’ see Ch.VIII p.48/ 194 on disposition and Ch.XI, fn.111/ 212.

²⁷ ‘son plus grand ornement’. The term is used here in its broadest sense.

²⁸ *Mouvement*: see also Ch.XII, art.5, p.199/ 298, where this is described as ‘a certain soulful quality of expression’. In Ch.XI, the word is used to denote both the tempo and character of a piece.

Lightness gives singing what is called the ‘*galant* turn’.²⁹ But weight conveys strength in serious pieces, which require great expression. The former is suited to lively people with delicate voices; the latter, to melancholy people with stronger voices. It is not always a good idea to praise a singer /16/ by telling him that he sings very lightly, though the air seems more refined and ethereal as a result, and it is just as ill-founded to praise him for his gravity and weight when they are contrary to the *galant* nature of the air.

²⁹ The *galant* turn (‘*le tour galant*’) would be suitable for the performance of an air of the more light-hearted type of salon poetry, such as dance airs or airs expressing joyous love.

CHAPTER IV

On whether it is necessary to accompany singing instrumentally.

/17/ I am not speaking here of the union or accompaniment of voices and instruments which is found in musical gatherings³⁰ and choirs,³¹ where it is absolutely necessary for their proper execution. I am only speaking of the accompaniment of airs for solo voice.

Of all instruments, those currently most in use to support the voice are the harpsichord, the viol and the theorbo, since no one uses the lyre³² any longer. The viol itself and the harpsichord do not have the gracefulness and convenience of the theorbo, which is appropriate for accompanying all types of voices³³ if only because of /18/ its softness. It is suitable for soft and delicate voices, which the other instruments tend to crush. Therefore, the question is whether singing should be accompanied by a theorbo in order to be complete.

There is no doubt that the beauty of a song is greatly enhanced when accompanied by an instrument rather than other voices;³⁴ these other voices would be

³⁰ 'Concerts'. Furetière defines it thus: 'assemblée de musiciens qui chantent ou qui jouent des instruments' (1690), ('an assembly of musicians who sing or play instruments') while later J-J.Rousseau (1768, 'concert') is more specific: 'On ne sert guère du mot de concert que pour une assemblée d'au moins sept ou huit Musiciens ou d'amateurs, et pour une musique à plusieurs parties', (The word concert is only used to refer to an assembly of at least seven or eight musicians or music lovers and to music for several [voices or instruments]?).

³¹ 'Choeurs de musique': J-J. Rousseau (1768, 'chœur') defines this as a piece 'simultaneously sung by all the voices and played by all the instruments'.

³² Furetière (1690, 'lire') tells us that 'the shape of the modern lyre differs little from that of the viol, but its neck is much wider, as are the frets ['touches?], because they are covered with fifteen strings, the first six of which are doubled, making only three courses. [...] Its bridge is longer, lower and flatter. The sound of the lyre is very languorous and is suited to arousing devotion. It is rarely used in France, although it is very well suited to accompanying the voice'. This is a reference to the *lyra viol*, a small bass viol whose distinguishing characteristics from the standard consort bass viol were variable though generally minor.

³³ Caccini similarly recommends the quieter archlute, or *chitarrone*, or another stringed instrument as the ideal accompanying instrument, particularly in accompanying the tenor voice (Caccini [1601/2], preface and Caccini [1970], p.48). By the time that Bacilly was writing his treatise, tablature had been superseded in printed music by *basso continuo* figuration. This does not necessarily mean that Bacilly was old-fashioned in recommending the theorbo (for Guédron's and Boësset's airs, amongst others, appear with tablature). Though he may have been advocating the ideal as opposed to common usage, Lambert's preface to his 1666 collection of airs makes it clear that although only the *basso continuo* is given, the theorbo is the intended accompanying instrument. There is evidence that Lambert's airs were performed by one of his pupils, Mlle le Froid, before the King at Versailles at the 'couché du Roy', to the accompaniment of the theorbo. (Ben Messaoud [1998], p.27.) The theorbo was imported from Italy and made its appearance in the salons around 1630 (Duneton [1998], p.467). In his 1677 *Epître à M. de Nyert*, La Fontaine penned the following two lines on the suitability of the theorbo as an accompanying instrument and its position in cultured society: 'Téorbe charmant qu'on ne voulait entendre / Que dans une ruelle avec une voix tendre.' (La Fontaine [1995], p.1049.)

³⁴ Caccini also preferred solo singing: '[...] questi canti per una voce sola, parendo à me havessero più forza per dilettere, e muovere, che le più voci insieme', Caccini (1601/2), preface. '[...] those songs for a

better joining the *dessus* part (which sings the melody), so that the harmony may be perfect.³⁵ This unison of voices is more appropriate than performing with many vocal parts, which in their confusion overwhelm all the subtlety of the melody, though they are pleasant as far as the harmony is concerned. Instead, the theorbo will only go so far as pleasantly supporting the voice, obscuring neither its beauty nor the delicacy of the embellishments.

Nevertheless one has to agree that if the theorbo is played without restraint and if too many embellishments are added, as most accompanists do to show off their dexterity rather than /19/ to enhance the voice to which they should adapt, then the voice would be accompanying the theorbo and not *vice versa*. One must therefore take care in these situations and not believe that in this marriage the theorbo plays the part of the ‘husband’ to the voice, overpowering it and reprimanding it, when instead it should flatter it, soften it and cover up its weaknesses.

I find it therefore highly appropriate that those who intend to study singing seriously should also learn how to play the theorbo, provided they have enough patience and work hard enough so as to reach a higher level of playing than others.³⁶ But since most people only want the end result without taking the trouble to work out the means of achieving it, they never reach their aim. They reap no benefit from having embarked upon this study other than the embarrassment of having undertaken something which brings them no credit whatsoever.

As for relying on an accompaniment provided by another person, it is /20/ something which is not as ideal as could be hoped. I find that those who pride themselves on never singing without a theorbo, as do most people, behave like precious people,³⁷ since it is true that there are thousands of occasions when neither a theorbo nor a theorbo player are at hand when required.

single voice (which seemed to me to have more power to delight and move [one] than several voices together’, (trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.45).

³⁵ This implies singing in unison with the upper part.

³⁶ In his letter of 8th April, 1662, Loret described a court performance of sacred works sung by the three female singers most in vogue, Hilaire Dupuy, Melle. de Sercamanan and the Italian-born Anna Bergerotti, and notes that Lambert provided the accompaniment at the theorbo: ‘Le Sieur Lambert les soûtenoit, / Qui son théorbe en main tenoit’. Lambert would also have accompanied himself in solo performances (Loret [1970], p.145).

³⁷ ‘Je trouve que c’est faire le précieux ou la précieuse de ne point chanter sans théorbe’. This is directly quoted by Lecerf ([1705], vol.3, p.101). The term ‘précieuses’ was first used at the beginning of 1654 by Renaud de Sévigné, but its precise meaning was very ambiguous. (See Niderst [1976], p.283-5.) On the one hand, the *précieux* style was a social phenomenon as well as poetic and embraced a desire for refinement and gallantry, delicacy and subtlety. On the other hand, the term is also associated with artifice, vanity and ambition, and was used as a derogatory term to caricature feminine literary

Even so, this is the notion that singing teachers instil in their pupils, and one of which they avail themselves, even if they can only play two or three chords, which only serve to distract the audience and contribute nothing to a good and sound singing lesson.

These teachers tell their pupils repeatedly that one cannot sing in tune without an instrumental accompaniment, that it is equivalent to dancing without a fiddle and that it makes it difficult to impart the correct *mouvement* to an air. They are so persuasive that a lot of people are taken in. But these unfortunate, credulous people do not realise that the teacher only has his own interest at heart, rather than that of his pupil. He only says this to save /21/ himself the effort of having to sing at his best and of demonstrating in person what the instrument can only do with muted sounds, in mere imitation of the voice.

One has to agree, therefore, that the accompaniment, at the same pitch or at the octave, of a voice singing in tune with another is far better for teaching good tuning than that of an instrument. For the latter is like a monkey mimicking the voice and usually only produces fourths, fifths, sixths and other chords, which are only evident to people who are knowledgeable in composition.³⁸

Moreover, even if a theorbo accompaniment could help to sing in tune, with the beat and with the right tempo, there occurs an unfortunate drawback when teachers are only interested in these particular aspects and let hundreds of other noticeable errors in matters of pronunciation and the performance of melodic embellishments and ornaments slip by. This happens either because they do not know better themselves or because, if they wanted to correct them, they would constantly have to interrupt their playing. /22/ This would not only hinder them but would also remove any grace and benefit they might hope to gain from their accompaniment. Thus, in nearly every lesson the singer must stop at the rests which occur in airs [while their teacher carries on].³⁹ These rests are not only pointless but even a great hindrance when it comes to singing without an instrument; and as this is nearly always the case, one has to remove these silent moments. I could also add that the singing time is much shorter since half the lesson is spent in tuning the theorbo, in warming up,⁴⁰ in changing a faulty string and

pretensions typical of the salons; it is this which is parodied in Molière's play, *Les Precieuses Ridicules* (1659). It seems clear that Bacilly is using the term in a similarly negative sense.

³⁸ Bacilly is suggesting that this would be confusing for beginners unfamiliar with harmony.

³⁹ Bacilly is referring to rests in the vocal line only while the instrumental accompaniment continues.

⁴⁰ 'préluder'. (See Essay Ch.3, pp.77-9.)

other superfluous things. This encourages critics to say, not without a touch of sarcasm, that it is rare to hear the theorbo being played, but very common to hear it being tuned.⁴¹

⁴¹ Bacilly at this point is not changing his mind about the virtues of the theorbo. He makes it clear that for the purposes of teaching, it is not desirable, since the average teacher would be distracted by his own instrumental performance. But he has also established that ideally, singers should accompany themselves, to maintain the balance between voice and instrument and not get carried away with virtuosity; while singers who rely entirely on an accompanist should realise that one should be able to sing unaccompanied.

CHAPTER V

Whether one can sing well without knowing the rules of singing

/23/ It is quite common to hear people say that to sing well, one should have some knowledge of music and even know the rules and principles of singing, so as not always to have to rely on a teacher. They say that one should not only be able to sing an air by oneself according to the rules of music, that is to say by observing the beat, note-values and pauses, but also to sing it according to the rules of singing, that is to say by adding the necessary *ports de voix*, *accens* and other elements proper to this art, which are not notated on paper, or which cannot even be written down,⁴² as I shall discuss later.

/24/ This notion has arisen because people cannot imagine that the art of singing, which seems a mere trifle in comparison to other arts, should be so difficult to acquire as to need constant tuition in order to perform it properly.

Some people argue that those who live in the country, away from Paris where the most renowned people in all kinds of arts and sciences live, could never learn anything new if this handicap could not be truly overcome by a knowledge of music and its rules.

To this I reply that in singing there are indeed general principles that can very well be learnt and used when appropriate. However, some of these principles have so many exceptions that they can only be known through what is commonly called 'routine'. And thus if a singer is far from Paris he can roughly sight-read a piece thanks to the knowledge of a few general rules. /25/ But he is quite mistaken to think that he can sing it according to the composer's⁴³ intent, provided the composer himself has any knowledge of the rules of singing.

⁴² In the *avant-propos* of Lambert's *Airs* (1666) a similar concern is expressed: 'Au reste je voudrois de tout mon Cœur pour la satisfaction du public avoir peu marquer dans ma tablature toutes [sic] les graces et les petites recherches que je tasche d'apporter dans l'execution de mais [sic] airs, mais ce sont des choses que l'on n'a pas trouvé l'Invention de noter, et qu'il faut faire entendre pour les faire cognoistre' ('To satisfy the public, I would very much have liked to have added to my tablature all the graces and little refinements which I insert in the performance of my airs. However, these are things which no one has yet been able to write down and which must be heard in order to be learnt'). Mersenne is similarly concerned and goes as far as recommending specific signs for different ornaments, such as stars for *tremblements* (Mersenne [1636], 2, Bk.6, p.358), though these seem never to have been adopted in practice.

⁴³ 'L'auteur'. The composer was often responsible for the poetry of his airs, as indeed was Bacilly himself. The words 'auteur' and 'compositeur' tend to be used interchangeably in the text, apart from when the task of writing words and writing music are dealt with separately such as in Ch.XI.

It is therefore possible to sing the right notes in an air and add to it some vocal embellishments. For example, correct pitch can be observed by having accustomed the ear to it; the required expression and pronunciation can be given to the words; *cadences*⁴⁴ can be properly formulated and diminutions, which are found in second verses,⁴⁵ clearly articulated with the throat, provided they are written in the music, and other peculiarities of singing in general which are learnt through lengthy experience and proper training.

However, to be able to add certain ornaments which are not written down to first verses or *simples*, as they are commonly called, such as *ports de voix*, *accens*, some almost imperceptible note repetitions,⁴⁶ /26/ even *tremblemens* on the syllables that require them, and to apply them just at the right moment to the precise word or syllable, demands such a vast knowledge of singing that only very few people can do it. Even great singers really need to be shown personally all the above observations, for in spite of all their learning, they run the risk of falling flat on their face and of enduring the criticism of someone who might have little experience in singing but who will have learnt that very air from the composer himself, with all his recommendations.

Therefore you will notice that most people who sing perfectly well, and are very knowledgeable in music, hardly use their skill to learn airs, but turn to the composers, or to those who are fortunate enough to be in touch with them. Those who do this will know an air more faithfully (for its interpretation, if not for the music) /27/ for having learnt it from an individual who had it from the composer than someone who, however painstakingly, will have written in the ornaments himself.

This fact is obvious when a composer will not want to release his airs to the public with the ornaments marked in, either because he is being temperamental, or he wants to reserve the right to modify them, or he enjoys having the upper hand over other masters since he alone can sing them correctly, especially as regards the *mesure* he wants observed,⁴⁷ or he does not wish them to become too popular and wants to preserve their exclusivity, which is what our nation prizes most.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ the *cadence* is the subject of Ch.XII, art. 2. See also glossary.

⁴⁵ Although ornamentation was not ruled out in first verses, the melody was sung relatively simply before extensive embellishment was applied to second verses, or *doubles*.

⁴⁶ The *doublement* is discussed later in Ch.XII, art.4. There has been some disagreement (see fn.192, p.247) as to whether this involves a mordent or *pincé* figure, or the immediate and rapid repetition of a note at the same pitch.

⁴⁷ See Essay Ch.3 pp.83-4 and glossary. The *mesure* refers to the time signature, which indicated not only the number of beats per bar but also their speed, as explained, for instance, by Nivers (1665), f.2v and Rousseau (1710), pp.35-7. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, this was increasingly found to be

These types of airs that are withheld from publication can only be learnt through transmission. They are indeed more sought-after than others, either because they are difficult to obtain (which is an attraction to those who only value things that are hard to acquire) or because they are indeed better works in themselves due to the famous name of the composer. Each singer makes a point of knowing these airs and does not hesitate to steal them, either from the composer or from those fortunate enough to know him or to hear /28/ him sing. And there is no point in being proud and refusing to lower oneself to such practices, for one can amend the situation with the right of exchange. This is when someone can give and take, which means that he has been able to produce works of comparable quality to those he wishes to acquire from other composers.

And I shall say in passing that it is better for someone to humble himself in this way than to pride himself in singing only his own works, which do not circulate in society but remain on the shelf or are only known to obscure people who do not have enough influence to make them popular. For these works are often deficient, if not in the composition of the melody, at least regarding the words. Good verses are not usually put in the hands of average composers; instead, they are carefully given to the /29/ great masters of the art of singing as soon as they are written by Messrs. The Lyric Poets, who are commonly referred to by the strange name of ‘wordsmiths’.⁴⁹ If this were not the case, these verses would remain in obscurity, which would be entirely contrary to their authors’ intention. For however much they may seem to want anonymity by recommending that their name be kept secret, these writers would be most annoyed if their identity was not known by everyone in the salons.

Let us therefore say that as regards singing there is a general method that can be learnt. However, the specific one, the application of this method to a particular air, word or syllable, is so hard to define that, most of the time, it is only a matter of *bon goust*.⁵⁰

an unsatisfactory manner in which to indicate tempo: Saint Lambert (1702), pp.24-5, explained that tempo was no longer implicit in the *mesure* since this relied on each individual’s judgement, which was inevitably different in each case. Composers thus began to supplement the *mesure* with a verbal indication of tempo and character (such as ‘lentement’, ‘gravement’, ‘gayement’, ‘vite’, etc.).

⁴⁸ Playwrights faced a similar problem: manuscripts of new plays were closely guarded before the first performance. Once published, the author lost all their performing rights to them (Grell [2000], p.177). They could be copied by anyone. In these pre-copyright days, this may have been another reason for composers to withhold their pieces.

⁴⁹ ‘paroliers’ is clearly meant to have a pejorative meaning. Duneton (1998), p.583, mentions that this is the earliest appearance in print of the word ‘paroliers’, which modern French dictionaries record as first emerging in the 19th century.

⁵⁰ The rule of *bon goust* pervades the treatise (see discussion in Essay, Ch.5); it can override even the most specific recommendations. It appears to be a recurring consideration with any tutor; Caccini (1601/2) wrote in the preface of *Le Nuove musiche*: ‘Il perche noi venghiamo in cognizione quanto sia

Just as in the domain of moral qualities one must have recourse to the judgement of a wise man, so for hundreds of peculiarities of singing one has to rely on those considered to be authorities and by extension on those who have applied these rules constantly and had more talent and a better disposition to benefit from the experts' instruction. By instruction, I mean either verbal or /30/ vocal imitation. For evidently, singing is not learnt from rules alone and if the singer is talented and has a good disposition, he only needs to listen carefully to the teacher, without him having to explain the logic behind it and point out every particular aspect.

I shall go even further and say that surely, a teacher who executes an air with all its refinement and all the embellishments, will imprint it a thousand times better on his pupil's memory by singing it three or four times than a teacher who does not have as much skill in performance and compensates with dogmatism. For it is true that singing can only be learnt by imitation to the point of the pupil even copying his master's gestures and facial expression.⁵¹

It is therefore a great error to say that a teacher who does not sing well can demonstrate well; for if the teacher cannot execute something well, if, for instance, he cannot sing /31/ in tune, how can he inspire good pitch? If he has an ugly *cadence*, how can he correct that of his pupil? If he does not possess a flexible throat to articulate embellishments, how will he make himself heard? And what is more, if his voice is a little harsh or unrefined, how can he encourage softness, lightness and delicacy? He has

necessario per il musico un certo giudizio, il quale suole prevalere tal volta all' arte come altresì [...] ('How necessary for the musician a certain judgement is which sometimes must prevail over [the rules of] Art as over other things [...]') trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.50). Writing over a century later, Tosi is also concerned with this concept when criticising the fashion for an excess of 'passages' and 'divisions'. He knows that his views must be submitted to '...the tribunal of the judicious, and those of taste, from whence there is no appeal' (Tosi [1987], p.128). On the following page, Tosi describes what he means in this context by advocating the *cantabile* style and condemning the 'capricious cadences' as being the epitome of 'bad taste'. Bacilly seems to advocate a mixture of knowledge and musical instinct.

⁵¹ The use of gesture and facial expressions, or *actio*, was an important element of rhetoric. There is evidence enough that it was used in the theatre. (E.g. Le Cerf, [1706], III, p.72: on the qualities of an actor at the opera, one must possess 'Des gestes vifs, un visage où la passion se peigne, une action, une démarche accomodée au personnage, une voix sûre, flexible [...]') ['lively gestures, a face which can depict passion, a gait and actions suited to the character, a steady and flexible voice']; see also Taylor (1981), p.291, on the gestures in French classical theatre and Verschaeve [1997], pp.101-116). Gesture was equally important away from the theatre; Barnett (1981), p.346-7, summarises the five types of gesture involved in rhetoric from manuals and books on the dramatic art of the 17th and 18th centuries, which were applied to particular words; Lamy (1699), Bk.V, Ch.XXI, p.366, wrote that 'tous les sentimens ont chacun un ton de voix, un geste, & une mine qui leur sont propres. Ce rapport bon ou mauvais fait les bons & les mauvais Déclamateurs.' ('Each feeling has a tone of voice, a gesture and a facial expression proper to it. This relationship [between words and expression] dictates the quality of the orator.') Though Bacilly does not expand any further on gesture here, he recognises it as playing a role in performances away from the stage. If oratory and singing are both elements of rhetoric, they may well have shared the same gestural vocabulary.

to forego a faithful rendering of *passages* and diminutions which occur in verses; instead, he performs them just enough for them to be understood by those who are versed in the art of singing. In addition he has to pride himself in being amongst the first to know them and to assert himself through novelty. He must also criticise all other works which he does not know, or at least which he pretends not to know, as unworthy of his attention, in case his weakness is noticed if he attempts to sing them without having consulted the composers.

It is useless for this type of teacher to say ‘take no notice of my performance, only of my principles’. For one will only answer ‘show me yourself what you want me to do; I shall understand it better than with all this roundabout reasoning’.

/32/ People will tell me that it is useless attempting to write about the art of proper singing if it can only be learnt in practice and by routine. To this I reply that there are several types of observations in singing that can be learnt from rules and particularly those of correct pronunciation and the quantity of long or short syllables with regards to singing, which is the principal aim of the treatise.

Rather than speaking of vocal embellishments themselves, which can only be learnt by example and imitation, I only wish to mention the circumstances of their performance and not the knowledge one might have of them, which, in the nature of things, should properly precede any performance.

CHAPTER VI

On the qualities necessary for proper singing.

/33/ Three things are required in order to sing well. These are three gifts of nature, quite distinct from one another: the voice, the disposition and the ear, also referred to as intelligence. The ordinary man confuses these three qualities, thinking that only the voice produces singing. He is not aware that often one can have a good voice and yet cannot sing well and even sometimes not at all, due to a lack of disposition or intelligence.

There is yet another condition without which it is impossible to sing well, however beautiful the voice or fine the ear, and however good the disposition of the throat may be: that is, the choice of a good teacher who has the necessary qualities /34/ to teach singing properly. I shall discuss each of these qualities separately in as many different chapters.

CHAPTER VII
On Suitable Voices for Singing

/35/ It is commonly said that intelligence is so well shared that everyone believes himself to have as much, or more, than the next person.⁵² I could say the same about the voice, for however little voice one may have, it does not stop him considering himself exceptionally well endowed. Some pride themselves on having a big voice, others on having a small one.⁵³ The latter never fail to state the preference of great masters in the art of singing for training small voices rather than big ones.⁵⁴ Still others boast of having a higher voice, while those who have a lower one say that singing high is ‘akin to squealing’. Those with natural voices scorn the falsetto voice,⁵⁵ saying that it is out of tune and like squealing, while the latter claim that refinement in singing is much more apparent in a /36/ brilliant voice, such as the falsetto voice, than in a natural tenor voice,⁵⁶ which usually has less brilliance though better tuning. Lastly, some are proud to have a touching voice, but others find that this kind of voice does not always have good tuning, neither does it have enough lightness in *airs de mouvement*,⁵⁷ nor even an accurate pronunciation.

⁵² This statement is a paraphrase of the opening sentence of Descartes’ 1637 *Discourse on Method*: ‘Le bon sens est la chose du monde la mieux partagée: car chacun pense en être si bien pourvu, que ceux même qui sont les plus difficiles à contenter en toute autre chose n’ont point coutume d’en désirer plus qu’ils en ont.’ (Descartes [1992], p.126.) (‘Good sense is the most equally distributed of all things; for everyone believes himself to be so abundantly provided with it that even those who are hardest to please in everything else do not usually desire more than they already possess.’) Bacilly moved in cultured and intellectual circles; he would have been familiar with discussions on Cartesian thought, which were fashionable in certain salons during this period. Figures such as Mme de la Sablière were reputed for their Cartesian interests.

⁵³ The adjectives ‘big’ and ‘small’ (‘grande’ and ‘petite’) refer to projection.

⁵⁴ Le Cerf noted that ‘Bacilly en fait autant, de ces petites voix, que des grandes, il y étoit intéressé. Mon ami et moi, qui aimons les tons nobles, hardis, perçans, nous seront d’un autre goût. Nous tiendrons pour les grandes voix, et nous laisserons sans regrets les petites passer plus finement les doubles [...]’ ([1705], III, p.333). (‘Bacilly pays as much attention to small voices as to big ones, and showed an interest in them. My friend and I are of a different opinion: we like noble, bold and penetrating sounds. We will stand by big voices, and are happy to leave small ones to sing their *doubles* more finely [...]’) Le Cerf’s lack of interest in the finer performance of *doubles* reflects the view that by the end of the seventeenth century, the execution of *doubles* was no longer the yardstick by which singers were rated. Lully’s dislike of them, cited by Le Cerf (1705), II, p.333, hastened their departure from the vocal music scene.

⁵⁵ *Voix de fausset*

⁵⁶ *voix de taille*

⁵⁷ Bacilly discusses different types of airs in Ch.XI. An *air de mouvement* is a short, secular solo air with a regular dance metre, which, though lively in character, does not necessarily go at a fast pace; thus *movement* also indicates that the singer is to ‘move’ his listeners to feel lively, mainly through the rhythmic character of the melody. (See Ranum [1986], p.36 and below, fn.62).

Those who only have a voice good enough for speaking launch themselves brazenly into singing and think that, provided they have a good teacher, they will at least manage to sing ‘casually’,⁵⁸ using this term to excuse their incompetence.

This is not to say that a good voice cannot be acquired through much practice, or rather, that it cannot be restored after it has broken, which usually occurs in boys between the ages of fifteen and twenty. One has even witnessed some who, driven by despair at seeing themselves deprived of such a powerful attribute, have forced nature, by a painful and unpleasant process, to give back what it took /37/ from them.⁵⁹ They have in the end attained a high degree of perfection in the art of singing, by dint of trying to produce certain notes that would quite rightly have been mistaken for shouts and screams, rather than harmonious sounds.

Experience has taught us that not everyone possesses a singing voice as they do a speaking voice; forcing nature to produce a singing voice, even with the help of a good teacher, is all in vain if there is no trace whatsoever of a voice to begin with, nor, more importantly, of a good ear.

The defects of a voice can be corrected; it can even be freed instead of remaining imprisoned, through constant training. If it is rough, it can be refined; if it is out of tune, it can be made to sing in tune; it can be softened if it is harsh. But one cannot make something out of nothing,⁶⁰ and one must make sure that there is a voice to

⁵⁸ ‘cavalierement’.

⁵⁹ Caswell (1964), p.60, assumed here that Bacilly was describing castrati, which seems plausible at first. Other commentators have remained silent on the object of Bacilly’s description. The term *castrat* was used in spoken French; if this is what Bacilly means, it is curious that he does not use the term, even in its Italian form. It may have been considered indelicate, *vis à vis* his readers. Rousseau (1768), pp.76-7, mentions that the term *castrato* cannot offend the ear, but that its French synonym does, reflecting the attitude of the person using it. Castration was generally regarded as a barbaric and inadmissible practice. By alluding to ‘un travail aussi pénible que désagréable’, Bacilly could well have meant that of castration. However, Bacilly mentions ‘un travail aussi pénible qu’il est ingrat et dégoûtant’ in Ch.XII (p.165/ 273) when speaking of attempting to develop the ability to trill. Clearly, we cannot rely on Bacilly’s choice of words as evidence. Bacilly is discussing the French tradition, but in a table of castrati active in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Sawkins (1987), p.315, lists only one French castrato, Blaise Berthod, who was active by 1665 (the others were all Italian). Bacilly is speaking of men trying to regain their high voices once nature has taken them away, ie. after they have broken. Some men may have been forcing their chest voice upwards in imitation of the natural, though rare, *haute-contre*. It is generally accepted that the *haute-contre* was a naturally high tenor voice (Zaslaw [1974], p.939). But it is perhaps more likely that these men who ‘force certain notes’ are singing in a high, forced falsetto: there is some evidence (Sawkins [1987], p. 318) of male sopranos (high falsettists) being active in France, who sang with the castrati. In addition, Bacilly discussed the *voix de fausset* earlier (pp.35-6/ 187) together with the tenor, implying that the two voices may share a similar range. Thus since Bacilly does not discuss the male soprano register anywhere else in the treatise, it may be reasonable to think that he is here referring to soprano falsettists.

⁶⁰ The Latin proverb, ‘Ex nihilo nihil’ which Bacilly uses here, originally comes from the works of Perseus (Aulus Persius Flaccus, Volterra, A.D.34-62), namely, from his Satires (III, 24), which begin ‘De

start with, be it a good one or a bad one, before thinking of training it. This is how to assess voices which can be trained to sing well.

/38/ Firstly, I see a great deal of difference between a lovely voice and a good voice. A lovely voice can be pleasing to the ear with just one note, due to its clarity and softness and particularly the good *cadence*⁶¹ that usually goes with it. On the contrary, a good voice, although it has not got the same softness and natural *cadence*, consistently charms the ear with its strength, its steadiness and its ability to sing with *mouvement*,⁶² which is the essence of singing. Lovely natural voices usually lack this ability, nature having shared its gifts in this case as in all others.

One can also distinguish between lovely and pretty voices, saying that the lovely ones are those that are very harmonious and have a large range, while the term 'pretty' is only suitable for small voices.⁶³

Lovely voices are usually very slow⁶⁴ and consequently lack the fire and the /39/ disposition needed to put life into singing. They are primarily appreciated by the ordinary man and at length become tiresome. Such singers often lack a good ear and thus require lengthy training in diminutions and vocal embellishments, for which firmness, which their voice lacks, is sometimes necessary. These singers do not need much practice to maintain their softness, which is so natural to them that they are ready to sing at all times and in all seasons, and rarely suffer from colds. People with this type of voice are also usually shy (a great failing in singing) and are consequently more suited to ensemble singing, where other voices give them confidence with their

nihilo nihil'. The Stoics inspired the notion that nothing can come of nothing, or that all that exists existed already.

⁶¹ Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.20, has translated *cadence* here as 'vibrato', interpreting the mention of the 'good *cadence*' as still referring to the quality of the 'one note' sung by this voice type: Bacilly could not mean *cadence* in the sense of a lengthy vocal ornament (its normal meaning) if only one note is being sung. This passage has been mentioned by Brown (1989), pp.104-5, but the suggestion that vibrato is being discussed is made with some caution. The text is ambiguous: Bacilly may equally be referring to the 'good *cadence*' as a general natural attribute of the 'lovely' voice: in this sense, it can easily refer to a vocal ornament, which not all singers have the natural ability to perform (see also p.165/ 273). He also mentions 'une *cadence rude*' on p.43/ 191, which appears to refer to the ability to perform a *cadence*.

⁶² Although *airs de mouvement* are lively airs, singing with *mouvement* does not necessarily imply singing in a lively manner: it is the ability to render the character of an air according to its speed and the nature of the poetry. On page 200/ 298, Bacilly describes *mouvement* as 'une certaine qualité qui donne l'ame au chant', ('a certain quality which brings singing to life') and as 'une [...] qualité plus épurée & plus spirituelle, qui tient toujours l'auditeur en haleine, & fait que le chant en est moins ennuyeux', ('a [...] more refined and more soulful quality, that makes the listeners hold their breath and renders singing less tiresome'). Bacilly's use of the words 'âme' and 'spirituelle' implies the involvement of that part of the soul which governs the intellectual and moral faculties. Rousseau described *mouvement* in a similar way as 'le pur esprit de la musique' ([1710], p.86). 'Esprit' also meant wit and vivacity.

⁶³ It does not necessarily follow that small voices have a small range.

⁶⁴ 'Fort lentes'. The voice is not flexible enough for fast passage work.

accompaniment. Besides, in ensemble singing one normally just needs strength, accuracy and good tuning, as using hundreds of subtleties and vocal ornaments is pointless since they are drowned out. These voices are more commonly female because of their phlegmatic disposition,⁶⁵ which causes this slowness and inert gentleness. /40/ They are very reluctant to articulate well, especially in pronouncing the letter *r*, because they are worried by the harshness which results from correct pronunciation. They often adopt a frivolous attitude, which looks so unnatural. One has even noticed some teachers acting like this, which is the most ridiculous and stupid thing they can do. They are all the more prepared to overstep the mark, since this attitude is favourably looked upon by the feminine sex.⁶⁶

Voices that are only of moderate beauty can become very good by means of artistry and regular exercise. This is needed to maintain this type of voice, and to rid it of any huskiness it usually has, due to the bilious temperament of these singers, which is what gives them this fire and emotion and, especially, the ability to give expression to the words. This type of voice is very suitable for proper training because it often comes with a good ear and a throat better disposed to performing certain small, fiery *tremblemens* /41/ which bring expression⁶⁷ to song and are what is called the essence of singing or singing with understanding.⁶⁸ This implies paying attention to the meaning of the words and to their true and proper pronunciation. These voices also need preparation, which means early morning practice before breakfast, for this is an antidote to their natural hoarseness. In this way, such singers can be more assured of their disposition for the rest of the day and are less subject to a sort of cough to clear the throat, which they frequently do when singing. For this coughing can greatly reduce the audience's appreciation, particularly that of people who lack discernment and who only judge good singing by the beauty and agility of the voice. On the other hand, well-

⁶⁵ 'la pituite qui domine en elles'. Bacilly uses the scientific term for 'phlegm', implying phlegmatic behaviour. Phlegm was one of the four principal fluids of the body (together with blood, yellow bile and black bile), which gave rise to the cardinal humours (phlegmatic, sanguine, bilious or choleric and melancholic). These were thought to shape an individual's mental and physical characteristics and, first formulated in antiquity by Hippocrates, were the basis for the theory of disease in Renaissance medicine: sickness was believed to be the cause of an imbalance between the humours.

⁶⁶ Bacilly's criticism of the female voice is perhaps surprising in view of the likely readership of this work and indeed of its dedicatee. Nevertheless, it must have been a serious concern for Bacilly as a teacher and is no doubt directed at the so-called *précieuses* and their abhorrence of anything which may have seemed even mildly indelicate.

⁶⁷ Bacilly provides no specific definition of 'expression', but mentions in Ch.XII, p.136/ 246, that it is a form of ornamentation usually called 'passionner'; it is therefore a fundamental aspect of affective delivery. See Essay Ch.4.

informed people, and those with *bon goust*, will willingly excuse these small mishaps, provided that they are satisfied in other respects.

Secondly, voices are big or small, strong or weak,⁶⁹ bright or touching. Big voices are suited to ensemble singing and consequently need less skill, which they are less likely to have.⁷⁰ If they sing alone, /42/ they should stand a little way back from the audience so that the distance corrects their harshness. They also have difficulty in applying themselves to vocal ornaments because their throat is looser. If they want to perform these passages, they usually do so quite roughly and never with all the necessary elegance, either due to their unrefined⁷¹ throat (for whoever says refined means small: nothing big has ever been called refined) or due to their almost constant lack of ear.

However, just as defects always seem much more obvious in a tall person than in a small one, the same goes for big voices, which consequently have to sing better than all the others. Unfortunately experts seem to think that they are not as good, either because small voices do not have the faults of the big ones, or because these faults are less noticeable and are in some way concealed by the smallness of the voice.

Therefore, as big voices are usually harsh, one must not think that /43/ they just have to be made to sing more softly to eliminate this harshness; for by doing so, their tone⁷² would be lost. Instead, regular practice will achieve this, in the same way as a rough piece of iron is shaped by hammering it and using first a very rough file, before polishing it with a finer one. Yet the advice generally given to those whose voice is too powerful and who cannot perform a *cadence* accurately⁷³ is to relax it and not to sing so loudly. But by withdrawing into itself, the voice no longer has the tone nor the range which nature gave it, and the balance of the voice is destroyed by singing more softly.

As far as those who possess a small voice are concerned, they certainly have quite an advantage over those with big voices, in as much as their voice is more flexible for ornaments, since they have a more delicate throat, better suited to slide over certain

⁶⁸ 'Qui font toute l'expression, & ce que l'on appelle l'Esprit du Chant, ou le Chant de Teste': this has nothing to do with the head-voice but rather using the intellect.

⁶⁹ 'fortes ou foibles': these terms refer to vocal support, or sustaining power.

⁷⁰ This does not indicate that singing in an ensemble requires a louder voice: rather, since 'big' voices are, in Bacilly's view, generally hoarse and less flexible, and those who possess such a voice often have a weak ear, they are best appreciated in an ensemble.

⁷¹ 'faute de finesse de gosier'; 'refined' must therefore be equated with 'flexible'.

⁷² 'son'.

⁷³ 'Qui ont la cadence rude': Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.22, translated this as 'extremely errant vibrati'. Since Bacilly has already mentioned that big voices are not as good at performing ornaments as small ones, there is no reason to think that Bacilly is bringing vibrato into his discussion at this point.

notes which must not be emphasized. They have usually been graced by nature with a sharp ear which those with big voices only rarely possess. /44/ If they have a few defects, for instance a nasal sound, it is hardly noticeable.

One must be careful, though, not to confuse 'small' with 'weak'. There are big, yet weak voices, which cannot sustain their notes; yet there are small ones that are nevertheless strong despite their size.⁷⁴

A further difference must be made between touching voices and bright ones. Most people have some brightness in their voice without it being touching and other voices are only touching. Singers with bright voices are suited to lively music; they usually pronounce words better and, consequently, are more successful when singing in public than those with a purely touching voice. The latter are better suited to tender expressions and slower airs. On the other hand, they are not perfectly in tune (which is noticeable when they are accompanied by instruments /45/) and do not usually pronounce syllables with enough care and attention, especially certain vowels. This means that in large gatherings, such as in ballets, only those seated close enough to the performers will clearly hear the words, while those who are further away will only hear a confusion of sounds due to the lack of care these singers take in articulating syllables well.

Thirdly, let us consider the voice with respect to its range, according to its categorisation by musicians into *superius*, *hautecontres*, *tailles*, *basses*, and so on. It is clear that although the correct method of singing can be applied to all types of voices, it is all the more evident in high ones, especially when they render the various passions. Bass voices seem best suited to the rendering of anger, which is rare in French airs. Thus bass voices make do with ensemble singing and keep to the part for which nature seems to have destined them, always singing the bass line in /46/ airs rather than the tune.⁷⁵

From this observation, it would seem that female voices have a considerable advantage over male ones, if the latter did not have more vigour and steadiness in executing vocal embellishments and more talent in expressing passions than female ones. For the same reason, falsetto voices convey what they are singing in a far better way than natural voices. On the other hand, they sound piercing and often lack good

⁷⁴ 'qui ne laissent pas d'être ramassées dans leur petitesse'.

tuning, unless they are so well trained that they seem to have become natural.⁷⁶ Incidentally, I cannot help mentioning here a very common misconception heard in the salons concerning certain falsetto voices, where they are dismissed as non-existent (though they can be heard from a great distance). This is either due to the fact that our minds are ill-disposed towards them, or perhaps that these voices, being in a way contrary to nature, are more difficult to appreciate. It is easier to slander those who possess these voices by saying that they have none, though if one were to pay /47/ any attention, one would notice that they owe all their individuality in singing to the fact that their voice is elevated to a falsetto. This type of voice showcases certain *ports de voix*, intervals and other subtleties in singing in a very different way from the tenor voice.⁷⁷

There is yet another observation to be made on the difference between voices, in relation to the greater or lesser amount of sound and harmony that they produce. I mean that there are some which fill, or rather, to speak in artistic terms, which ‘feed’ the ear better than other lighter voices, normally referred to as ‘very thin voices’,⁷⁸ even though the latter can be heard from as far away and have as great a range, if not greater, than the former.

Let us come to the second quality of singing, which is commonly called ‘disposition’.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ This comment is surprising in view of the fact that Bacilly, amongst others such as Sicard, wrote popular *chansons à boire* for solo bass, which require flexible, sensitive and even virtuoso singing. (See Bacilly [1677] and Essay Ch.3, p.74.)

⁷⁶ ‘à moins que d’estre si bien cultivées, qu’elles semblent estre passées en nature’. This passage provides an insight into Bacilly’s attitude towards the falsetto voice, but its translation has been open to debate: Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.23, translated it as ‘they often display a certain sharp-edged quality and are often lacking in intonation, so that it would seem nature had passed them by with her gifts’, and Cyr (1977), p.291, wrote ‘they are harsh and lack purity from being so cultivated, that they seem to have passed nature’. Caswell’s translation omits part of the sentence and implies the opposite of Bacilly’s text. Similarly, Cyr missed the ‘à moins que’, and the translation ‘passed nature’ is unclear: it seems to imply that falsetto voices cease to sound natural when cultivated, but Bacilly makes it clear that falsetto voices are regarded as ‘unnatural’ anyway; only when they are highly trained can they sound ‘natural’. In view of this understanding of the text, the comma after ‘cultivées’ has been treated as superfluous in the present translation. Bacilly does not dismiss the falsetto voice, as the other two translations imply, and (as he next explains) is inclined to consider their outright rejection unjustified.

⁷⁷ Caccini’s experience led him to conclude the opposite: ‘Ma dalle voci finte non può nascere nobiltà di buon canto: che nascerà da una voca naturale comoda per tutte le corde, la quale altrui potrà maneggiare à suo talento, senza valersi della respirazione per altro, che per mostrarsi padrone di tutti gli affetti migliori [...]’, (1601/2), preface. (‘From the falsetto voice no nobility of good singing can arise; that comes from a natural voice, comfortable through the whole range, able to be controlled at will, [and] with the breath used only to demonstrate mastery of all the best affects [...]’, trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.56.). Caccini’s main objection with the falsetto is its lack of breath control, essential for ornamentation.

⁷⁸ ‘un filet de voix’.

⁷⁹ Bacilly has devoted an entire chapter to voice types without discussing the characteristics of the *haute-contre* (it is only mentioned as a range on p.45). This omission, in what is otherwise a comprehensive discussion, seems curious unless its characteristics are covered in the discussion of the ‘natural’ voice, the *voix de taille*, although this voice is that of a high tenor making ample use of head voice.

CHAPTER VIII On Disposition

/48/ I said in the preceding chapter that the voice is a natural gift that many people have. But the same cannot be said of disposition, of which most voices have been deprived. This is a certain aptitude in executing all that concerns proper singing that is seated in the throat. The throat can be naturally so well disposed that in no time and with hardly any experience, one can sing something pleasantly within the rules of singing. In such a case, one is permitted to wonder whether a singer has been training for a long time with a teacher or if he has simply had a couple of lessons.

This is what is remarkable about singing compared to other talents, in which whatever disposition nature has given, it always takes /49/ a long time to acquire, while in singing, one can progress more quickly and achieve in a few days what would take several years in other skills, such as playing an instrument or dancing.

But this disposition of the throat, which lends itself well to all sorts of ornaments, is a rare thing among singers.⁸⁰ For if some have the throat suited to articulating passages and diminutions, it often is too tight to soften the sound when necessary for certain, barely noticeable note repetitions.⁸¹ Others whose throat is suited to softening the sound do not have the ability to articulate what is required with the necessary steadiness, or do not have a supple enough throat to sing lightly, which is one of the most important and significant elements of singing.

The real secret in acquiring this quality, or at least in mastering it, is to begin practising right at the start of the day. One should first articulate heavily and firmly, particularly with the back of the throat, in order to accustom it to precise tuning. Then /50/ one should execute vocal ornaments by increasing the speed in order to acquire lightness. And lastly, one should soften the sound in the correct places, as I shall show in more detail in the following chapters, when discussing good tuning and particularly passages and diminutions.

⁸⁰ A parallel can be drawn here between 'disposition' and the Italian term 'disposizione', both of which are employed in vocal ornamentation technique; Greenlee (1987), p.47, has suggested that 'disposizione' is a specific, but lost, art of embellishment performed with the glottis. This echoes Bacilly's explanation that 'disposition' is seated in the throat.

⁸¹ *Doublemens*; see Ch.XII, arts.2, 4 and glossary.

The term 'disposition' can in addition include breathing, which is also very necessary in singing unless one is prepared to split in two a word or syllable, as many people often do. This creates a very bad impression.⁸²

Although this quality seems to depend entirely on the state of a person's lungs, it is true that it can be acquired and increased with practice, in the same way as the other peculiarities of singing.

⁸² The term 'disposition' therefore implies a certain talent or natural ability in the performance of ornamentation and embellishment, which is entirely dependent upon the physiology (both the lungs and the larynx) of the singer. The inclusion of good breathing in the term 'disposition' reminds us of Caccini's comments on the importance of the use of the breath for ornamentation (see above p.193 fn.77). For Bacilly, a natural flexibility and aptitude must be supported by a good voice, a good ear and practice.

CHAPTER IX

On the ear, or intelligence, as regards singing.

/51/ The third advantage given by nature for singing is the ear, also referred to as intelligence, without which the others are of no use. It is a gift almost as rare as the disposition of the throat, and is found in varying degrees among aspiring singers. Therefore the most ridiculous question of all is to ask how long it takes to master the art of singing, since this depends entirely on how much disposition and ear one possesses.

Yet one often hears this senseless question, and it is best not to answer it than to embark on a long explanation on a subject /52/ which is well above the head of these foolish, inquiring people. They are not content with watching you wear out your lungs for their entertainment when singing; they want to finish you off with endless questions on a subject which is only understood by those who are versed in the practice of this matter.

Yet it must be noted that in singing there are several types of ear, which are not found altogether in one person. It is for this reason that people often wrongly pride themselves in having a good ear for singing just because they can dance very well to the rhythm of the fiddle. I do realise that a good ear for rhythm⁸³ and for the *measure* are worth having. But experience shows that this has nothing to do with having the ear, or intelligence to perform the embellishments that pervade singing, and one may instantly pick up an air as regards the *measure* (in this respect, singing and dancing are similar) and yet take ages to learn a second verse or diminution.

It must also be noted that this type of intelligence is so different /53/ from the intellect (though they may seem to be the same thing, and indeed, several people confuse the two) that a person who may possess great intellect, and who may even have a very good voice and disposition, may not have an ear for singing. I have seen people with these attributes who, having tried to launch into a singing career, were forced to abandon it due to a lack of ear, while I have seen other people without much intellect learning rather unusual and quite extraordinary pieces with ease.

Some people have an ear for a simple melody⁸⁴ and yet can hardly manage a *double*. Others have an ear for what is strongly emphasized with the throat, and none for

⁸³ 'cadence'. In its broader sense, 'cadence' is synonymous with rhythm.

⁸⁴ 'un chant uny', i.e. an unembellished melody such as the first verse of an air, the *simple*.

what is only lightly sung. Still others can perform certain ornaments well, yet cannot perform the truly important ones; or else they possess a good enough ear to perform a long air but none for *airs de mouvement*. This is what makes learning so difficult and what must be taken into account when evaluating the time a singer needs to acquire the /54/ correct method of singing with a certain degree of proficiency.

There are people who have a voice, yet so little ear that not only can they not distinguish higher notes from lower ones, but even believe that the notes are going down in pitch when in fact they are going up: these people can be put into the category of ‘incurables’ as regards singing.

It is therefore this quality that enables one to sing successfully, for without it, a good voice and disposition are worth nothing. It is with the ear that the voice can be corrected when not in tune, polished when rough, restrained when too loud, or steadied when quavering.⁸⁵ It is with the ear that the throat becomes accustomed to articulate what must be articulated, and to slide over⁸⁶ what must only be lightly sung. All in all, it is with the ear that one may master everything involved in the art of proper singing. One may even say that with a very good ear, a singer can acquire a voice and produce it, as it were, out of nothing,⁸⁷ through hard work and more importantly with the help of a good teacher, as I shall discuss in the following chapter.

/55/ As regards intelligence for *passages* and diminutions, it can be acquired by studying music if one only wishes to distinguish on paper whether a note is high or low and the number of notes. But one rarely reaches the level required for the refined

⁸⁵ ‘Tremblante’. This is Bacilly’s only use of this term in the treatise. As we are told that it can be corrected, then he cannot mean the ‘shaky’ singing of elderly people resulting from a muscular weakness. Bacilly could instead be referring to the quavering caused by an unsteady air flow or pitch focus; this may be the symptom of a nervous singer, but such ‘quavering’ also raises the possibility of an uncontrolled vibrato. The question of vibrato is among the most controversial issues of performance practice. Scholars (such as Neumann [1983, 1989, 1991, 1993], Donington [1988, 1989] and Gable [1992]) disagree on the constant or occasional use of vibrato. Bacilly’s reference to correcting a ‘quavering’ voice is not necessarily a categorical condemnation of a constant vibrato. Vocal and instrumental sources such as Rousseau (1687), p.75 and others presented in Moens-Haenen (1988), pp.18-35, suggest that a narrow vibrato was used for ornamental purposes and that any constant, natural vibrato would equally have been very narrow in pitch deviation. In this case, if it is vibrato to which Bacilly is referring here, then ‘une voix tremblante’ may be one that has too wide a natural vibrato or too noticeable an intensity vibrato, the result of poor vocal technique (primarily breath control). However, Bacilly mentions the performance of successive *doublemens de gosier* later in Ch.XII, which may illustrate the use of an intensity vibrato as an ornament (see p.196/ 295 and discussion in fn.308). If the latter interpretation is correct, and a controlled intensity vibrato was prescribed on certain occasions, then ‘tremblante’ may refer to the use or misuse of pitch vibrato. Whether Bacilly feels a correction is required because it is too wide or because it is present at all is impossible to establish with any certainty.

⁸⁶ Bacilly uses the term ‘couler’ which normally means ‘to slide’ in his discussion of ornaments. In this case, the term may refer to a legato style of delivery.

⁸⁷ This would seem to contradict the statement on p.37 that ‘one cannot make something out of nothing’.

performance of the embellishments which enrich and pervade a melody, unless it is a natural quality, and it is useless to say that with time and practice one will finally master it.

Before coming to the chapter on the choice of a singing teacher, I find it appropriate, in passing, to discuss just intonation⁸⁸ in singing, which seems to depend on the three qualities which I have just discussed: namely the voice, disposition and intelligence.

The term 'just intonation' is very ambiguous in singing: some call it 'singing in tune' when one sings an air faithfully and according to the author's intent, only as regards embellishments, without considering the real intonation of the voice, but only /56/ the faithful performance of the ornaments which the author wishes to be added to his air. Others, on the contrary, call it 'singing in tune' when the voice clearly intones each note, though it may be lacking in the faithful rendering of embellishments, of which the singer is unaware in an air which he has been badly taught.

Others call it 'singing in tune' when the *measure* and *mouvement* of airs are respected, mainly those airs with a set *measure* such as gavottes, sarabandes, minuets, etc..

However, as there is nothing more unbearable to musicians than singing out of tune, one must give the exact definition of the term 'out of tune' and not wrongly accuse singers of this unpleasant attribute. One can therefore sing out of tune either because of a poor vocal character that is not at all sure of its notes, which will sometimes be in tune and sometimes out of tune due to a lack of ear, and even, as I say, because of a fundamental falsity; and in thus way we can with impunity call /57/ these kinds of voices faulty and squarely accuse them of singing out of tune.

But there is another way of singing out of tune, which is by confusing, through ignorance, tones and semitones, mainly in quaver and semiquaver passages. These pass by so lightly that if one is not concentrating, it is easy not to sing them at their proper pitch. Another example is when the note which precedes the *cadence* is not correctly sung, the final note which follows the *cadence* bears the brunt of this inaccuracy and ends up not exactly in tune. In these cases it should not be called singing out of tune (except by those who are not inclined to forgive the mistakes of others); instead one should moderate the term out of tune, and in a roundabout way just say that it is not

⁸⁸ 'Justesse'.

quite in tune, that the note before the *cadence* is not properly accented, that not enough attention is paid to the tones and semitones and that the two are confused.

To remedy this lack of tuning, let us consider first of all that which results from a hopeless voice (which is absolutely without remedy when /58/ a good ear is lacking). In this case, great care must be taken in choosing a teacher who himself can sing in tune, so that, by singing with his pupil all the time, he may, in time, communicate this quality, provided his pupil sings as much as possible from the back of the throat, which is the only way of controlling intonation in singing.

It is therefore pointless to practise music in order to correct a fundamental fault in vocal tuning, unless the music teacher has good intonation himself; if he does not, he will aggravate this fault and render it irreversible, for bad habits become second nature.

As for the other type of bad tuning (if indeed one can call it that), as it often results from the ignorance of tones and semitones, it is true that the knowledge of notes can contribute greatly to correcting it. And yet most singers, provided they not only have a voice but also a good ear, are naturally inclined to sing in tune /59/ with very little advice, due to a natural gift, which we may call 'innate music'.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ 'musique naturelle'.

CHAPTER X

On the choice of a singing teacher and the qualities required of him.

/60/ Before I begin on this subject, it would be right to mention first that in the common practice of vocal music, one comes across all sorts of composers who want to be second to none. Some are so jealous of their works and so worried about proving their worth that they will only make use of their own compositions when teaching,⁹⁰ compositions which often leave much to be desired. They scorn the works of others, or at least pretend to do so, either to save themselves the task and trouble of obtaining them from the authors, or because they doubt they would succeed in gaining /61/ this favour, having jeopardised their chances by their scornful attitude.

2. There are many singing teachers who do not compose any airs at all, either because they have no talent for composition or because they are unable to set words to music, since they fail to understand the proper meaning of words and more specifically the rules of quantity. Or they doubt that they will be as successful as others who can write good airs that meet with general approval. Even amongst those who write good airs, not many know how to add to them all the peculiarities included in the method of proper singing.

3. There are singing teachers who, although they do not compose any songs, embellish the works of others, especially the second verses of airs, with their knowledge of singing. M. le Bailly was such a man, who applied himself completely to reworking the works of others without ever composing an air himself.⁹¹

/62/ 4. There are teachers who are good at nothing, neither composition, nor the invention of vocal embellishments, nor even their application. They only have their performance to offer and thus remain permanent interpreters, but usually have a greater reputation and general approval, particularly among those who fancy only what charms

⁹⁰ Later, on 1st June 1684, the *Mercure galant* made the same point on this subject: '[M. de Bacilly] n'est point borné à ses Ouvrages, comme beaucoup d'autres, & enseigne indifféremment tout ce qu'il y a de nouveau' ('[M. de Bacilly] does not limit himself to his own works, as many others do, but indiscriminately teaches all kinds of new music').

⁹¹ Henri de Bailly did in fact compose some airs of his own: three *airs de ballet* are attributed to him by Gabriel Bataille (Bataille [1614], pp.58-60). Only the music for the *simple* is provided in this collection. Le Cerf noted that Bailly provided diminutions for airs by both Pierre Guédron and Boësset ([1705], II, p.199).

the ear, than their creative colleagues who may not possess these considerable powers of performance.⁹²

But what is very rare nowadays, and has never been seen in the past, is to find a teacher who is good at everything, who is able to write good melodies and set words to them, to write and perform airs with all the gracefulness of the method of singing and produce second verses which are as perfect as possible, who does not transgress the rules of quantity, nor disregard the proper pronunciation of words and their expression when singing, but penetrates the thoughts of the poet who wrote them, in short, who both sings well and declaims well. /63/ If he can add the theorbo accompaniment as well, he is what is called a real master. He does not have to rely on others; rather, it is others who rely on him, since it is absolutely necessary to have this great experience before being able to sing properly and before having a proper conception of singing. Moreover, the others have to take the trouble of acquiring this master's works as soon as they are made public and to find out, either directly or second-hand, how to embellish them according to the master's intention. For one may be caught unprepared if one does not possess those airs which have gained general approval and have a reputation far exceeding that of other airs that are only popular amongst a narrow clique concerning a few people.

Two further points must also be borne in mind in relation to singing, namely the ability to sing well and to sing good music. Poor quality works can sometimes be sung well, /64/ and good ones badly. This depends on the teacher one has chosen. Some write poor airs, but manage to teach them to their pupils as if they were outstanding, without any mistakes in the way they want them performed. Others on the contrary have very good airs at hand for teaching, but because they lack knowledge in the art of singing or have not taken the trouble to find out what the composer's intentions are, they teach them the wrong way. This is quite obvious when they think themselves capable of writing second verses in diminution simply because they are very familiar with the harmony of the air, a situation similar to a man thinking himself to be a good woodcarver simply because he is a good carpenter.

From the above observations it is easy to establish the qualities required of a teacher for his pupils to benefit from the proper method of singing.

⁹² The treatise is peppered with such remarks; we know that Bacilly was more noted for his compositions and his teaching than for his singing, so this could be a reference to himself, as in the Foreword, p.[iii].

Firstly, a teacher must have a good voice, to be able to demonstrate, and particularly good tuning, for evidently singing can neither be learnt from books nor from a set of rules /65/ unless both are supplemented by oral teaching. And how can a pupil's voice be assisted and its tuning corrected if the teacher does not have good tuning himself, since this is the only way of acquiring it? This quality is absolutely necessary in a teacher.

2. For the same reason, he must have the necessary disposition for executing vocal embellishments, so that his pupil may acquire it by imitating him. For singing is best learnt through demonstration rather than any other type of teaching.

3. A teacher who sings through his nose⁹³ and with his tongue⁹⁴ must be avoided, since these faults are easily passed on.

4. A teacher must be able to assess the strong and weak points of a voice and the disposition of beginners, so as not to teach them airs beyond their ability. This is one of the great secrets of the art of vocal instruction, but one hardly appreciated by pupils, who insist on being /66/ given the most elaborate music, thinking themselves capable of singing it. They believe they are not taught an air properly if all the embellishments are not included, as they have heard others say, but do not realise that there are several, equally valid ways of executing vocal ornaments. It is also a good thing for a teacher to point out the faults in his pupil's singing, in his pronunciation, etc., by mimicking them himself. This will have a greater impact on pupils who only know what is right when shown what is wrong, and who think they are doing well unless they are shown the difference between the correct and incorrect way of singing. This is achieved by emulating their faults, and then showing them the correct way of singing.

5. A teacher should have a good knowledge of the French language, above that of the average man. What I mean is that he should know the meaning of words, their pronunciation and quantity. One comes across some teachers who are so ignorant (and yet enjoy an undeserved reputation) that they write down /67/ words which have, as we say, 'neither rhyme nor reason', by mistaking one word for another, or by splitting them

⁹³ This general observation illustrates a common fault in singing, one which is echoed in other treatises such as Bernhard's: 'a singer should not sing through his nose [...]' (Bernhard [1973], p.25).

⁹⁴ Bacilly is referring to the articulation of *passages* and diminutions with the aid of the tongue, a matter to which he next returns in Ch.XI, p.90/ 212. Mersenne similarly warned against the use of the tongue in embellishments: 'Ceux qui n'ont pas la disposition de la gorge pour faire lesdites *cadences* et les *passages* se servent des mouvemens de la langue, qui ne sont pas si agréables, particulièrement lors qu'on les fait du bout' (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.355 ('those who do not possess a flexible throat to perform trills and embellishments use tongue movements, which are less pleasant, particularly when the tip of the tongue is used').

up. I do not wish to mention hundreds of examples which are noticed every day, or rather, are not noticed, for if they were, these teachers would be sent back to school. It is a mistake to think that all this is of no consequence, provided the pupils are taught correctly; for if this were the case (which is hard to believe) it would still suggest a great weakness on the part of the teacher in not understanding what he is singing. He would therefore neither be able to express the meaning of the words properly, nor correct errors as regards quantity in different verses, as I shall explain when discussing long and short syllables.

6. A teacher should also have a good knowledge of music, by which I mean the knowledge of notes and *mesures*. He need not have the ability required to improvise, but enough to be able to sing an air either taking his time or straight away;⁹⁵ /68/ and it would be right to expect him to know how to add as many ornaments as possible, so that he may not constantly have to rely on others for help, as I have already mentioned. For this is a weakness one would even find hard to forgive in a learner. To this effect, I would be of the opinion to put all teachers to the test; I would give them a hand-written piece which they have not previously seen to observe how well they acquit themselves; but of course, it is possible to deceive oneself in this instance, as in many others.

That is what I had to say about singing in general and how to avoid acquiring bad habits.

But since taking singing lessons is no guarantee of avoiding making mistakes, one should also take care to learn songs that are well known for their beauty and quality in the singing world (for ultimately this is the reason why people learn to sing). Here are therefore other qualities that should be considered in the choice of a good teacher, which are almost as necessary as the ones I have just mentioned.

Firstly, /69/ a teacher ought to have the talent required to be able to compose pleasant airs himself; he should know something about poetry which is appropriate for singing, or should take the trouble of regularly obtaining good verses from poets if he cannot produce them himself. It would be ideal if he did, to avoid relying entirely on the works of others; he should have enough material to satisfy the curiosity of his pupils who like novelty, which is what is most appreciated by our nation. By producing their

⁹⁵ Rhyming (1982/2), p.6, has highlighted this sentence as a key passage in helping to chart the gradual erosion of the skill of improvisation, leading to an art more inclined to favouring visual rather than aural capabilities. Bacilly does make it clear, however, that the most distinguished teachers have many more strings to their bow in terms of composition and performance.

own acceptable airs, these teachers would also find it easier to acquire those of others by right of exchange, which is something those who produce nothing find far more difficult to achieve. On this subject, I shall say that it is not enough for an air to have a beautiful melody for it to be good; for the words must also be beautiful, or at least acceptable, and there must, above all, be nothing jarring. For the term ‘air’ means a perfect union between a beautiful melody and beautiful words. It is therefore a mistake to say that an air is beautiful if the words are worthless. Nowadays people who write beautiful /70/ verses always give them to the great composers, who are highly acclaimed, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter.⁹⁶ This means that it is hard for others to have their airs well received in the salons.

Secondly, a teacher should make a point to possess not only good airs but in addition the second verse, or diminution of an air. In particular, he must be aware of the manner of singing these airs according to the intent of the fashionable composers, for otherwise they often run the risk of revealing that they are not equal to the task, and their knowledge of music, and indeed, of the correct method of singing in general, is of little help in such a situation. But as very few people are successful in the art of diminution, and as pupils are keen on them, teachers who are not first rate find themselves in a greatly embarrassing situation.

This brings to notice the fact that often, teachers who obtain airs from illustrious composers succeed better in teaching these airs /71/ (provided their pupils have a natural voice and disposition), though they may only be reproducing them, than inferior composers would do in teaching their original works. But there is a drawback: these teachers tend to limit themselves to a small number of airs and do not dare to venture into teaching other airs, whose embellishments and adjustments they are not familiar with, according to the composer’s intention. And if these performers were to lose all credit with the composers on which they prided themselves, they would no longer exist. One should be very wary of this; for while thinking one has a good master, one is in fact left with a disgraced disciple, who only existed through the works of others of which he is now deprived. Yet people are so blind to the unfounded merit of this type of teacher that even once they have been disgraced, they are still looked upon as being very clever; and since they have firmly established their reputation in society, they go on teaching

⁹⁶ See Chapter V, pp.28-9/ 183.

until people /72/ finally realise their incompetence, which only occurs after a considerable amount of time.

I would advise those who chose these teachers who rely entirely on the works of others to become acquainted with the pupils of the original composer. Even though the pupils are not teachers, their acquaintance would be found to be worthwhile for one would learn from them in an enjoyable and leisurely way. This is noticeable in families where a girl, who is taught by an excellent teacher, is able to teach all the other members of the family by feeding singing unconsciously into their ears, provided they have some disposition, in a far better way than would the teachers in town. One only has lessons with them from time to time, and they are over in an instant. One is quite mistaken in thinking that the title of teacher is enough to inspire in a pupil the correct method of singing; and it is hard to believe that a girl may be better at it than all the teachers put together if they fail to consult the original composer.

/73/ There is a still greater drawback: if a teacher, able to survive on his own, has been known to have close contact with the great masters of the art of singing, and if one notices one day that he no longer has these connections, he is immediately suspected of unworthiness. One stupidly says that he once mastered the method but no longer has it. And until, in the course of time, he has been able to establish his independence, he is treated like an outcast and a hopeless man, and put on the same level as the performers which I have just mentioned.

There are other qualities which are not essential to being a good teacher but which, though irrelevant, nonetheless impress people favourably. These are punctuality (which indeed is very important), kindness etc., and moreover singing without pulling faces. This determines the choice of a teacher, as much as more important qualities, because it is thought that the habit of grimacing is easily passed on. I believe this to be a great misconception (unless /74/ the grimacing is so great as to be inexcusable)⁹⁷ since one cannot avoid facial movements for certain pronunciations, which are often mistaken for actual grimaces, but only in people's imagination.

But what is considered in the salons to be a great fault rather than a quality is that of being eccentric, which is often unfairly attributed to illustrious masters of singing

⁹⁷ Bernhard provided a comprehensive list of facial gestures to be avoided by singers: '[a singer] should not close his teeth together, nor open his mouth too wide, nor stretch his tongue out over his lips, nor thrust his lips upwards, nor distort his mouth, nor disfigure his cheeks and nose like the long-tailed monkey, nor crumple his eyebrows together, nor wrinkle his forehead, nor roll his head or the eyes therein round and round, nor wink with the same, nor tremble with his lips [...]' (Bernhard [1973], p.25).

as well as of the other arts; so much so that when people want to discredit a talented man and yet cannot undermine his capabilities, they are quick to say that he is a surly, moody and unruly man. Credulous people fall for this (not realising that often these slanderous people have themselves been discredited, or are just repeating hearsay) without verifying whether it is true or not; if they did, they would find it to be quite untrue and they would see that though these teachers may behave in an eccentric way towards some, they also show /75/ consideration towards others who are worthy of it.

Moreover, what is often called 'eccentricity' refers in fact to 'precision', 'rigour' and too great a desire on the part of the teacher to do his best for a pupil. And on the contrary, people will believe a teacher to be good, who in fact lets hundreds of mistakes go unchecked because he cannot be bothered to correct them. He showers you with praise, saying no one could do better (while others laugh behind your back) and even goes around proclaiming it to everyone. Instead, an honest teacher will feel compelled to give an honest opinion, so as to protect his reputation and so that he may not be accused of ignorance for praising that which is not worthy of praise. Narrow-minded people call this malicious gossip, as if it had anything to do with morality or with destroying reputations.

One can evaluate the qualities of a good teacher by the progress of his pupils, particularly when one sees a pupil with little natural talent succeeding /76/ in singing well. But one must take care not to praise the teacher when the pupil's progress comes solely from his own skill, disposition and ear, and sings well due to these natural talents but who, on the other hand, breaks the rules hundreds of times, which is only noticed by the experts. And neither must one scorn a good teacher whose pupil has not made much progress because he lacks what is required for this purpose.

However, though a good teacher must be assessed in this manner, most people do not take it into account, for they only care for appearances and superficialities and only chose a teacher according to the number of eminent people he teaches. These people often recommend him for reasons other than his ability, and all the more easily that they have no serious intentions towards singing. All they want out of their teacher is to know the gossip that has recently gone round the salons.

/77/ Besides, it is still a great abuse in society to use for beginners a teacher of mediocre ability to open up, so to speak, the voice, since on good beginnings depends all progress. It is well known but rarely taken into account that this will later present a good teacher with two difficulties: he must suppress the bad habits and bad principles

which have taken root only too easily, then replace them with good ones. The problem is, however, that often one accepts a teacher directly recommended by someone who is believed to be an authority in this matter, without thinking that it would be bad politics for him to provide a teacher who is not greatly inferior to him, so that the inferior teacher may be eliminated in due course before he can shake off his yoke, as is usually the habit of ungrateful teachers as soon as they gain some reputation.

To conclude, I would say that the best teacher one could chose, either to learn how to sing properly, or /78/ to satisfy a curiosity for new airs, that is, as I have mentioned above, for the purpose of singing well and singing good airs, is a teacher who possesses the following: a knowledge of the general rules of the method of singing, the talent of applying them correctly to words, the art of teaching proper pronunciation and particularly the observance of long and short syllables. But above all, he must be able to compose pleasant airs at will, to avoid the weariness of always singing the same thing, and in addition he must take the trouble to have at hand the airs of other composers for the pupils who request them, even when they are not entirely to his liking, for the teacher must not only please himself, he must fulfil his pupils' wishes. When I say that he ought to know the airs of other composers, I mean that he ought to know them according to the composers' intentions if they are reputed in the method of singing; the teacher must not take pride in finding by himself all the ornaments which are only implied in airs. For often, this presumption only produces unfortunate /79/ results. And it is true that an author who will have pondered his air for a long time, will see more things in it than others who remain blind to it, unless they were particularly enlightened and had, so to speak, some insight into singing.

The problem is that one usually chooses a teacher either on the basis of an unfounded reputation which he has managed to acquire or due to the recommendation of the teacher one believes to excel in this art (which is a great mistake, as I have said), or due to public opinion, which often judges merit by hearsay and by qualities which have nothing to do with those which should be considered; or because a friend will have endorsed him, a friend who will not fail to pass on a teacher for whom he has a lot of affection rather than one who has a lot of merit. And once the choice of a teacher has been made, people feel bound by duty never to change. Instead, one should try out all the different teachers in turn, and then keep the best, who is bound to stand out after a while, /80/ unless one totally lacks discernment.

A question often raised is at what age one should start taking singing lessons, which is more or less the same type of question as how long it takes to become proficient in singing. This therefore depends on the greater or lesser amount of strength and on one's constitution. There are children who, at the age of five or six, have more voice and disposition than others at the age of fifteen. There is therefore no rule for this, but it is true that the earlier one starts, the better, for the voice naturally tends to sing in a very unsophisticated manner, as heard in three- and four-year olds. This only encourages bad habits and poor performance. Moreover, the voice is greatly improved with proper exercise, provided it is not too strenuous, which is what a wise teacher will be able to judge.

However, there is an unavoidable drawback concerning male voices, from which the opposite sex is exempt, which is that after taking a lot of trouble to train a /81/ boy's voice, it is then lost when it breaks, which usually happens between the age of fifteen and twenty (as I have already said). It is true that when this happens, the boy retains his knowledge of singing, so that he may appreciate it better and may be in a better position to judge its beauty and perfection; he may also use it if he feels like taking up an instrument, for which a knowledge of singing is by no means useless.⁹⁸

Before finishing this chapter, I must not forget to mention another very common misconception among people taking singing lessons, which is to praise a teacher for the sole reason that he gives his time unsparingly and that his lessons are very long; or because he generously supplies new airs at each lesson and also the second verse in diminution.

Firstly, apart from the fact that it is not quantity that makes a good lesson but rather quality, and this depends above all on the ability of the teacher and on the compliance of the pupil, /82/ there is nothing which annoys a teacher more than being forced by his pupil to give him more time than he intended for each lesson. It is certain that by forcing him to do something which he thinks is pointless, you take away his desire to correct fundamental mistakes, since these corrections require a time-consuming care and application. As a result, all the extra time demanded of him is not only useless to the improvement you hoped to gain from your lesson, but even detrimental, since he feels obliged to praise your faults so that he may be free to take his leave.

⁹⁸ Such knowledge would include, of course, an understanding of vocal ornamentation, which forms the basis of instrumental ornamentation practice.

Secondly, it is a mistake to praise a teacher for possessing a great number of airs which he freely gives his pupil. For other than the fact that there are very few good airs worth teaching, one cannot improve greatly in the refinements of singing if one's memory is overloaded with too many details. And it is sure that, unless one possesses a remarkably good ear /83/ and a prodigious disposition, if one attempts to learn too many airs, one has to leave out thousands of ornaments, which can only be acquired with hard work and careful study. In this way, one remains at a basic level and never learns refinement. And if by 'basic level' one understands 'solid foundation', that is to say the principles and fundamentals of singing, such as *cadences*, *ports de voix*, the sustaining of final notes and other long notes, and above all just intonation, without which all the rules of singing are turned upside down, this foundation will never be acquired if one spends one's time learning only the notes and the written embellishments of an air, according to a Latin proverb:

*Pluribus intentus minor est ad singula sensus.*⁹⁹

This is what is called wanting to paint before learning to draw. You must therefore first resolve to /84/ eliminate the basic faults which creep into the principles and fundamentals of singing, otherwise you run the risk of never correcting them later on; so that, when you think you are well advanced in singing, you do not have to go back and retrace your steps to learn what you neglected at the beginning. This is like what is commonly called reopening an old wound which was not treated properly at first and healed too soon, or as I have just said, like starting again with basic drawing after thinking you were well advanced in painting.

This does not mean that the teacher should not have every pleasant composition to hand, as I have already mentioned, and that he need only compose beautiful airs and perform them well, and teach them to others according to all the rules of the art. It means that he needs to have both 'sources and resources';¹⁰⁰ the source of knowledge to teach well and the resources of enough airs to satisfy his pupils' desires for novelty, which /85/ usually flatters them greatly.

But I would feel sorry for a teacher if he felt he had to lumber himself with thousands of 'rhapsodies'¹⁰¹ which are written to satisfy people with poor taste; in this case, the teacher should try to redress the corrupt taste of these people and set them back

⁹⁹ 'many intents are inferior to a single understanding'.

¹⁰⁰ Bacilly uses a play on words: 'sçavoir et avoir'.

¹⁰¹ In the seventeenth century the word 'rhapsodie' meant a work composed of disparate material, of low quality and of little worth.

on the right track, rather than, through lazy connivance, expose himself to blame for choosing music unworthy of him, and burdening himself with thousands of ridiculous and presumptuous trifles. However, teachers seem to have great difficulty in succeeding in this domain. This is what I find hard about singing and also peculiar to this art, for it does not happen in other arts, such as dancing and instrumental training, where one spends years on a very small number of pieces, without hardly any desire for novelty. For one has to admit, dancing relies on very few pieces; as for instruments, one is quite content with a few old bagatelles at first, to make the hand supple; and once more advanced, one can learn more substantial pieces, but /86/ without caring whether they are new compositions. Whereas in singing, one is faced with the difficult task of acquiring the works of good composers, who for their part have the habit of withholding them for as long as possible and only release them once they are no longer fashionable. This means that most teachers who are not composers, discouraged by all this nonsense, content themselves with 'run-of-the-mill' airs¹⁰² (which composers give to them all the more willingly that they think this will enhance their reputation and make their talent known). But these teachers always take the risk of being dismissed when one realises their lack of care or lack of ability in obtaining the works of good composers.

If pupils are to blame for wanting to fill their heads with hundreds of poor compositions and to mix good airs with bad ones, they must also be criticised when they develop too great an inclination for particular airs, which they only value because of the composer's name, and they /87/ let themselves be persuaded too easily by their teachers that only those airs are worth learning and that all other airs are of poor quality and are unworthy of attention. Thus, due to this inclination, they remain ignorant of the airs that are most praised (for one has to admit that there are several composers who write airs successfully and are second to none) and they do not even notice that they are made objects of ridicule, along with their teachers. Their teachers are delighted to encounter such easily duped pupils so that, as I have already said, they are spared the trouble and pain of gathering airs from various authors, and to find out their intentions (if these authors are knowledgeable in the method of singing, which is not always the case) and the proper ornaments.

¹⁰² 'airs de la basse cour': Caswell has misleadingly translated this as 'airs with a running bass'. The 'basse cour' of a property, as opposed to the 'cour d'honneur', was used by servants; Bacilly uses this term to denote ordinary, unsophisticated airs; there is no suggestion at all of a technical musical term.

CHAPTER XI

On airs¹⁰³ and the different sentiments regarding their composition.

/88/ I mentioned in the third chapter of this first part that there was only one proper way of singing, to which all the peculiarities of singing must relate. It is wrong to say (in order to make excuses for a poor singer) that each person has his own method and to try to justify this idea with the popular saying that ‘there is no accounting for taste’.¹⁰⁴ This saying is as unfounded as the idea it is meant to support, unless it is correctly understood.

However, since pieces of music differ greatly from one another, either in their *mesure*¹⁰⁵ or their *mouvement*,¹⁰⁶ or in the expression of the words, one could say that there are as many different ways of singing as there are different *mouvements* and expressions. /89/ One method might be suitable for the performance of a long air, an *air de récit* such as a Lesson of Jeremiah,¹⁰⁷ which has a slow *mesure*, while not suitable for an *air de mouvement*, an *air de ballet*,¹⁰⁸ a *gavotte* or a *chanson bachique*,¹⁰⁹ for example, and other similar airs. The latter will require more lightness, while the former will require more weight and steadiness and a more powerful expression. Since these ways of singing only differ by the amount of gravity or lightness, of firmness or softness required by the airs, they must always be based on the principles of correct

¹⁰³ As Bacilly believes that the music and the words of an air are inseparable, in this chapter he discusses both poetry and music; he uses the term ‘air’ interchangeably to refer to both musical and poetic aspects.

¹⁰⁴ This evokes the Latin proverb ‘de gustibus non est disputandum’. Bacilly believes that there is one overriding *bon goust* rather than a multitude of individual tastes. (See Essay, Ch.5.)

¹⁰⁵ See Ch.IX, p.52/ 196 and glossary.

¹⁰⁶ See Ch.VII, p.38/ 189 and glossary.

¹⁰⁷ Lambert’s first cycle of *Leçons de Ténèbres*, which set texts taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, was, according to Loret, first performed c.1662-1663 (Massip [1999], p.219-232). The *Leçons* (there are three each for the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before Easter) are amongst the earliest examples of monodic settings of the Lamentations in a style that contrasted sections of highly embellished vocal melody, such as in the *double* of an air, with a more declamatory style of writing (Anthony [1997], p.261). The melodic line is based on the Gregorian plainchant, the *tonus Lamentationum*, used in France during the 17th century that had been imposed by the Council of Trent in the 16th century, to which is applied the technique of vocal embellishment found in the air. A *récit* could more generally mean any solo passage, such as those contrasted with the chorus in a *ballet de cour*. In his *Recueil de paroles de musique* (c.1666), the poet and librettist Pierre Perrin confirms the general meaning of the term: ‘les récits pour une voix seule comprennent l’Air, la chanson et le grand récit’ (‘avant-propos’, Perrin [1986], p.xi), (‘solo *récits* include the air, the *chanson* and the *grand récit*’). See also fn.112 below, on the ‘grand récit’.

¹⁰⁸ A strophic air usually with a binary musical structure integrated into a dramatic situation in a *ballet de cour* (Benoit [1992], p.7).

¹⁰⁹ Also called *air à boire*. The subject matter of the text was by definition to do with drinking, usually wine and its effects. Bacilly produced a large number of collections of these, which he calls ‘chansons

singing, and it is only the misuse and misapplication of these principles which makes singing faulty.

This is something quite different from the faulty singing of musicians who have never had proper training. For there are certain things that can never be considered right, leaving aside their application, such as singing through the nose, badly projecting the voice, badly performing *cadences*, *accens* or *plaintes*, performing these ornaments incorrectly at the end of airs or of *ports de voix*, /90/ articulating *passages* with the tongue, performing *passages* with a certain unevenness and haste, and above all bad pronunciation and the confusion of long syllables with short ones. This is an incorrect method of singing and can only ever find approval amongst those who feast solely on the beauty and disposition of a voice, that is to say, on its ability to ‘warble’,¹¹⁰ to use the common expression, both of which are purely natural gifts, where Art and the knowledge of singing seldom play a part.¹¹¹

But I seem to be going somewhat off the point, which is my discussion of airs and their differences, not only concerning their *mesure* and *mouvement*, but also as regards their composition and the criticism levelled at them, which must be made in good faith and without prejudice.

Let us therefore say to begin with, that in the musical world, opinions concerning Italian and French airs differ widely. Some say that French airs are not as good as Italian ones, /91/ especially when the latter are sung by a Frenchman. Others say that this is an opinion which has crept into the minds of those who only value what they do not understand, or who believe that Italian airs are good because they have heard others praising them. Their point of view is that it would be better to keep to our own airs with which we are more familiar. Still others say that an Italian air cannot be sung properly by a Frenchman and that it loses all its power and expression, not taking into account all the refinement which an eminent French singer can add to Italian songs. They think that they have uttered an oracle when they say that these embellishments do

pour danser et pour boire’, ‘airs à boire’ or ‘airs bachiques’, printed by Ballard, Richer, Luyne and the *Mercure galant* between 1663 and 1677.

¹¹⁰ ‘fredon’ (i.e. to perform embellishments).

¹¹¹ ‘Disposition’ has been discussed in Ch.VIII (pp. 48-50/ 194-6). The physician and singer Giovanni Camillo Maffei, in his letter on singing of 1562, makes a similar distinction between natural aptitude and the Art of singing; he writes that ‘the disposition of the throat comes from Nature, but that being able to learn the method of ornamenting with diminutions without these rules of mine is something impossible, because if nature grants the aptitude, Art dictates the method, without which nothing good can be done’ (trans. MacClintock [1979], p. 60).

not sound right in Italian, as if what charms the ear according to all the rules of singing did not apply to all languages.

Italian airs certainly have a few advantages over French ones, especially for the *grands récits*.¹¹² But I wonder whether this advantage is not based on the fact that the Italian language tolerates many liberties /92/ which the French language does not. The (perhaps excessively) strict rules of French keep a tight rein on composers and often prevent them from fulfilling the genius of their creativity. Apart from the liberties which are taken with the Italian language, such as forming elisions at any time (something which is not allowed in French), Italian words can also be repeated as many times as the composer wishes. In this way, one can make a very long air out of four short lines by means of repetitions (as is still done in Latin) even repeating insignificant and worthless words. This would sound ridiculous in our language where according to usage (which, as I have already said, is perhaps too strict) one is only permitted to repeat words when appropriate, words which moreover must be of a certain sweet and familiar nature.¹¹³ Instead, in Italian or Latin song, all kinds of words can be repeated without any objection from the critics. Lightning, Thunder, the Stars, /93/ Purgatory, Hell and a thousand other similar words are all permitted in Italian airs, as are a host of expressions which would seem rather strange in French. An example of this may be found in the air *O cara Liberta*,¹¹⁴ which describes Freedom:

Le Tresor des Esprits

Le Ciel des Vivans.¹¹⁵

Sei Tesoro delle Menti,

¹¹² Bacilly may mean the early secular French solo cantata, based on the Italian model. Perrin's *Recueil* (1666) is the earliest source which defined this particular genre, which the author claimed to have introduced to France: 'Vous trouverez en suite dans cet ouvrage un recueil de grands récits composez pour plusieurs chants liez, premierement pratiquez par les Italiens, et que j'ay aussi le premier introduit en France' (Perrin [1986], p.xiii), ('Next, you will find in this work a collection of *grands récits* composed of several vocal pieces in succession, which the Italians were the first to employ, and which I am the first to introduce in France'). Perrin wrote that his texts, *Polipheme Jaloux* and *La mort de Tysbé*, were based on Italian themes, but the music to which they were set (composed by Etienne Moulinié and Jean Grenouillet de la Sablières respectively) has not survived.

¹¹³ Bacilly is voicing some frustration with the tyrannical character of 'l'usage' which rules over the poetry in French airs. Bacilly is conforming to the 'galant' style of poetry popular in the salons (see Essay, Ch.2) which he later describes as 'la fine & la délicate Poësie qui est celle de nos airs' (p.117). The issue of complying with 'l'usage' was tackled by Vaugelas who suggested that 'l'usage' in matters of language and pronunciation was determined by the language spoken at court and by the leading contemporary writers (Vaugelas [1984], p.10).

¹¹⁴ This title is the same as that of a poem by Abbate Saccho, set to music in an aria for solo voice and chitarrone by Filiberti Laurenzi in *Concerti ed arie* (Venice, 1641) but the two lines Bacilly gives here do not appear in Saccho's poem.

¹¹⁵ 'The treasure of the minds, the heaven of the living'.

Sei un cielo de viventi.

Another example is in the air *Mai n'ol diro*,¹¹⁶ where the faithfulness of a lover for his mistress is expressed by saying that she will reign forever on the throne of his faith.

Sù la sede

Di mia fede

Sempiterna regnerà.

These expressions would seem barbaric¹¹⁷ in French airs, which can only tolerate sweet, flowing words and familiar expressions. Thus to discredit a French air, /94/ one need only find in it an unsuitable word not generally accepted in singing. No one has yet decided whether this practice is founded or unfounded. It seems to be too great a rigour to exclude these unusual words and expressions, for when not set to music they are quite acceptable, and often are even of great substance and value in poetry.¹¹⁸ It would also seem rather rash for an author, who besides might not be all that great an authority in music, to aspire to include them in airs, for this is going against common practice which must be the arbiter, rather than the judgement of an individual.¹¹⁹

One must therefore, in this case, conform to the current practice, until the passing of time dictates otherwise and until one gradually accustoms oneself to tolerate all sorts of words in airs, provided they are French and not barbaric, as was acceptable in the past. Nowadays, these words would be most unsuitable, as can be seen in this fragment /95/ of an Ode by the Greek poet Anacreon, which was previously translated into French, or rather into 'Gaulish',¹²⁰ and set to music; perhaps in those days it was considered very good verse for a song:

¹¹⁶ This air has not been located.

¹¹⁷ 'barbare'; in 1671, Bouhours discussed the merits of the French language in the following terms: '[notre langue] rejette non seulement toutes les expressions qui blessent la pudeur, & qui salissent tant soit peu l'imagination; mais encore celles qui peuvent être mal intreprétées: [...] de sorte qu'un mot cesse d'être du bel usage, & devient barbare parmi nous, dès qu'on lui peut donner un mauvais sens' (Bouhours [1671], p.73. ('[our language] repudiates not only any expression which wounds propriety and which fouls the imagination in any way; but equally one which can be misunderstood: [...] so that as soon as a word comes to mean something else, it ceases to belong to the proper usage, & becomes barbaric to us'.)

¹¹⁸ Unfortunately, Bacilly does not explain why such a difference exists between poetry that is written to be set to music and that which is not. Boileau entitled one of his poems *Vers a mettre en chant*, which differs from his usual material by being written in the 'galant' style, including a pastoral feel and the unfaithful Sylvie; for him, therefore, verses made to be set to music, when not a 'chanson à boire', were necessarily in this specific style. (Boileau [1840], p.277.)

¹¹⁹ This parallels Vaugelas' *Remarques*, in which he explains that (in matters of language) one can only gain social approval 'en se soumettant à l'opinion commune' (Vaugelas [1984]), p.73, ('by submitting to widespread opinion').

¹²⁰ 'jadis tourné en François, ou plutost en *Gaulois*'. In the 17th century, 'gaulois' was used as an adjective to refer to the poets of the 16th century, in particular the members of the Pléiade, and their poetic style. The Pléiade was a group of seven poets during the reign of Henri II which included Baïf (See Ch.4, p.113), Jean Du Bellay (1522-1560), Rémy Belleau (1528-1577) and Pierre Ronsard (1524-1585); their manifesto is laid out in their works, notably in Du Bellay's *Défense et Illustration de la Langue Française*

*Trop amer est il de n'aimer;
 Mais aimer est trop plus amer,
 Et le plus amer que l'on voye,
 Est aimant faillir à sa proye.*¹²¹

A few years ago one of the great poets of the century turned it very gracefully into this:

*Il est fascheux de n'aimer rien
 Fascheux d'aimer, & plus fascheux encore
 De n'estre point aimé lors que l'on aime bien.*¹²²

This shows that customs change with time, and the French language changes not only in its spoken form but also in its sung form.¹²³ On this subject, I remember an author, quite famous for his poetry, who asked a composer to set a verse to music, which began thus:

*/96/ L'Amour est un oyseau qui vole
 En un moment, de l'un à l'autre Pole.*¹²⁴

These opening lines horrified the composer so much that his inspiration completely 'dried up'.¹²⁵ And yet if these words were put into Italian and given to an Italian musician, he would acquit himself quite honourably and may even produce an air that would be admired throughout Italy.

(1549). They were dedicated to enriching their native poetic language (as opposed to using Latin) by imitating the poets of the ancient world such as Horace, Virgil and Ovid, which frequently involved the creation of new words, the use of diminutives and borrowing from local dialects (such as Gascon) and from popular expressions. Mornet (1929), p.308, gives François Rabelais, Ronsard and Clément Marot as examples of 'vieux gaulois'.

¹²¹ 'Too bitter it is to love not, but to love is more bitter still, and most bitter of all is to love and not be loved'. The vogue for Anacreontic odes in Renaissance France began with Henri Estienne's (see Ch.4, p.114, fn.126) 1554 Latin translation of 10th-century pastiches of poems by the 6th-century B.C. Ionian poet Anacreon. Only fragments of Anacreon's original work survived. Estienne's version of the ode Bacilly quotes begins 'Et non amare, durum est'. In 1555 Ronsard wrote a French version of this ode which he included as the seventh poem in his *Meslanges*; it begins 'Celuy qui n'ayme est malheureux'. Belleau's 1556 version in his *Odes d'Anacréon* (Ode XLVI) begins 'C'est malheur que de n'aimer point'. The version Bacilly quotes here is from Richard Renvoisy's *Les Odes d'Anacréon mises en musique à 4 parties* (Paris, R. Breton, 1559). (Belleau [1995], pp.55-8, 66, 73, 116, 304 and Lesure-Thibault 1955, p.165.)

¹²² 'It is unfortunate to love nothing, unfortunate to love, and more unfortunate still to love and not be loved'. Bacilly's reference to 'one of the great poets of the century' may suggest a figure such as François de Malherbe (1555-1628), who believed that superfluity in the poetry of the members of the Pléiade and of their imitators had to be removed. However, this ode is not in Malherbe (1968). Other sources consulted are listed in the bibliography.

¹²³ La Bruyère (1645-1696) was frustrated with 'l'usage', or 'common practice'; in *Les Caractères* (1688-96) 'De quelques usages', he lists many words which, for reasons unapparent to him, are no longer in common use, though many derivatives are. Neither does he see any justification for changes in orthography and vocabulary: 'Est-ce donc faire pour le progrès d'une langue vivante, que de déférer à l'usage? [...]' (La Bruyère[1993], pp.352-7).

¹²⁴ 'Love is as a bird which flies in a moment from one Pole to the other'.

¹²⁵ 'il se vit hors de gamme': this literally means 'out of notes'. On p.112 in this chapter, Bacilly explains that these words are too turgid, or pompous to set to music. The source has not been traced, but this fragment would probably have been considered a prime example of exaggerated *préciosité*. In *L'Art poétique* (1674), Boileau criticised *préciosité* thus: 'Mon esprit n'admet point un pompeux barbarisme/ Ni

There is yet another observation to be made on the French language, regarding the ‘mute’ or ‘feminine’ *e*.¹²⁶ This letter truly weakens the melody which thus carries less weight in French than in Italian. For even though there are *os* in Italian which seem to correspond to this type of French *e*, they are so rare in comparison that they do not take away the strength and gravity from Italian airs.¹²⁷

Therefore, one must not credit the Italians with the genius of writing more beautiful and grander airs than the French /97/ (if not in truth, at least in people’s opinion) but rather, one must credit their language, for it allows things which would be unacceptable in French. To illustrate this assertion, imagine an Italian composer, as renowned as was the illustrious *Signor Luigi*,¹²⁸ trying to set French words to music; he probably would not succeed any better, nor even as well as our French musicians, even if he was as well versed in all the peculiarities of the French language.

You will tell me that it does not matter how, or why, Italian airs have a certain advantage and attribute over our own, if indeed they do, whether it is due to the genius of that nation, or only to the fact that the Italian language is better suited to producing beautiful airs than ours.

To this I reply that even if it were true that our compositions had a certain disadvantage with regard to Italian ones (which in any case would only apply to a *récit* and /98/ to long-breathed pieces) one should not attribute this to the lack of inventiveness of our composers, nor even to the limitations of our language, but to the temperament of our countrymen. Until now they have thought that their language was not suited to these longer pieces, such as pastorales and other theatre pieces, simply because they were not accustomed to them.¹²⁹

d’un vers ampoullé l’orgueilleux solécisme’, (‘My mind will not admit any pompous barbarism, neither any proud solecism from a turgid verse’), Boileau (1934), *Chant I*, ll.159-160, p.69.

¹²⁶ As early as 1620, Jean Godard, in his work *La Langue françoise*, identified the ‘mute’ or ‘feminine’ *e* as unique to, and indeed emblematic of the French language.

¹²⁷ La Fontaine gives an example in 1677 of the elision of an Italian ‘o’ in the following pastiche of Italian practice within a French line of poetry: ‘Les longs passages d’*Atto et* de *Léonora*,’ (La Fontaine [1995], *Epistre XII* l.9, p.1047), where the syllable ‘to’ must be elided in the Italian manner in order to respect the alexandrine, otherwise there would be one syllable too many. (The syllables which fall on the anapaest have been italicised). In an ordinary French alexandrine, the two syllables would be counted separately. ‘Atto’ refers to Atto Melani and ‘Leonora’ to Leonora Baroni, both Italian singers employed by Mazarin (Massip [1999], p.36).

¹²⁸ Luigi Rossi (c.1597-1653), Italian singer and composer. Rossi was in the service of Mazarin from 1646 and gained the approval of a number of French singers. His *Orfeo* was the first Italian opera to be introduced to the French court by the Italian cardinal in 1647. The failure of the opera to gain approval was notably recorded by La Fontaine, thirty years later (*Epistre XII*), when he recalled the extravagance of the production.

¹²⁹ The French pastorale was a relatively recent phenomenon at the time when Bacilly wrote his treatise: one of the earliest pastorales entirely sung in French was Pierre Perrin and Robert Cambert’s *La*

I further add that even the Italians agree that we have many short airs in France which are very pretty and very entertaining, such as our gavottes, our sarabandes, minuets and other similar pieces which deserve as much credit as longer airs. These are within the reach of thousands of singers who would otherwise be deprived of such a pleasant vocal exercise as singing if only longer airs were available.

Moreover, I cannot but marvel at the ridiculous opinion that has crept into the musical world concerning a few celebrated singers, who, it is said, are no good at singing French airs but only Italian ones. For if one accepts that all the power, refinement and /99/ delicacy of singing is found in Italian airs, it is hard to see how a singer who has mastered Italian airs should not also be able to master French ones. One could say that the opposite is more likely, for evidently there is a much greater chance of going astray in a foreign language which one does not thoroughly know, than in the language with which one is familiar and of which one should in principle know all the peculiarities.¹³⁰

As for French airs, they are subject to a great variety of opinions, which are based on nothing but intrigue, petty concerns and pure whim, often stemming from sheer ignorance, and rarely involving any sincerity or knowledge of the composers' ability.

Those who want to criticise an air, which is usually done by those who are ill disposed towards the author, as is the case for all other works of art; as I was saying, those who want to speak of an air with contempt, and who cannot find anything to say against the rules of composition, do not fail to say the following: 'that it is too long and it is a narrative, it is /100/ bizarre, it is common, it is made of odds and ends borrowed from a thousand other airs, it resembles a sacred work, such as a Lamentation of Jeremiah, the words are insipid and there is neither salt nor sauce' to use their own imagery, 'the words are harsh or the melody was, so to speak, cut-out in one piece and that since the words were written after the melody, all the praise must go to the one who

Pastorale d'Issy of 1659 which, as Méneestrier points out (1681), p.209, was well received by the French public and at court.

¹³⁰ The idea that Frenchmen sang Italian airs better, regarded by Bacilly as ridiculous, seems not to have been considered so by Rossi. Saint-Evremond reported that on Rossi's return to Rome, he could no longer suffer Italians singing Italian airs, which he thought Frenchmen could sing better, admiring in particular Nyert's singing: '[Rossi] se rendit tous les musiciens de la nation ennemis, disant hautement à Rome, comme il avoit dit à Paris, que pour rendre une musique agréable, il falloit des airs italiens dans la bouche des françois. Il faisoit peu de cas de nos Chansons excepté de celles de Beausset, qui attirent son admiration.' (1684), p.106. ('Rossi made an enemy of every musician in the country, loudly proclaiming in Rome, as he had done in Paris, that to produce a pleasant piece of music, an Italian air should be sung by a Frenchman. He little valued our *chansons*, except those of Beausset [Boësset] which he admired.')

wrote them and who set them so well to music'. Or else, they say that 'the melody bears no relation to the words when the latter are written first and that the melody misses the point'; or, to use their own words, that 'the musician did not manage to penetrate the thoughts of the poet'.

This is common talk amongst ill-disposed critics, due either to ignorance or malice, to which it is necessary to reply. Firstly, I shall say that the length of an air is not a drawback and that there are narratives which are so enjoyable that they do not become tiresome, whatever their length. It is therefore unfounded to criticise an air by calling it a 'story'.

2. As for the attribute 'bizarre' assigned to an air, /101/ when it cannot be called trivial or common, it is often confused with that of 'elaborate' or 'extraordinary'. This type of air might seem bizarre in its notes, but with the art of proper singing and the ornaments which are added to it, it becomes not only natural¹³¹ and familiar, but even so pleasant, that one never gets tired of it, whereas common airs, which seem at first pleasing, are soon discarded as tiresome. But the problem is that once the critics have made up their mind one way or another, they make it a point of honour to keep to their opinion. Therefore, woe betide¹³² those who write such airs if they fall into the hands of these judges who are quick to criticise and are far too great in number.

One must also agree that there are composers who get so intoxicated with their own works that they could be charged with a similar stubbornness in not wanting to alter them once they have been composed. They let themselves be led, /102/ in a manner of speaking, by the harmony of their theorbo which often takes them down as yet unbeaten paths into uncharted territory,¹³³ and in such distant lands that they could be referred to in music as 'imaginary places'.¹³⁴ They usually resort to an excess of inspiration and vivacity of which they are proud, to avoid the ordinary and produce

¹³¹ 'naturel': nature was one of the fundamental concepts in French classical aesthetics (see Essay, Ch.2). The doctrine of the Imitation of Nature (or the aesthetic of mimesis) in literature as in music, was opposed to artifice; any semblance of technical effort was avoided.

¹³² 'malheur à': Bacilly employs a specifically biblical style here.

¹³³ 'un Pays que l'on peut appeller inconnu'. An interesting analogy can be found in the geography of the famous 'Carte de Tendre' in Madeleine de Scudéry's novel *Clélie* (frontispiece of vol.1, Scudéry [1658]). The 'Carte du Tendre' warns against the dangers of venturing into 'les terres inconnues' and was a popular source of entertainment in the salons.

¹³⁴ 'Espaces imaginaires'. Bacilly does not elaborate on these 'imaginary places' and avoids a discussion of the basic rules of harmony in this treatise.

something extraordinary, or rather, ‘bizarre’.¹³⁵ Thus there is no point in giving them advice that will not be followed, on a subject where they have long thought to excel above all others. It will suffice to praise these airs in the presence of their composer and when they are accompanied by the theorbo.¹³⁶ For the instrument creates such a disguise for these airs that when they are deprived of it, they so rarely meet with approval that they are not much in demand. One can say that these airs are only produced to fill up books of songs that are constantly brought up to date but never brought to light.

/103/ 3. As for the attribute of ‘common’, which is usually given to airs which one wants to scorn, it is often confused with that of ‘natural’. For as long as the words are well set to music, this should be a good enough reason for being spared the unfortunate title of ‘common’.

We have in our French airs, as I have already said, a restrictive set of words and expressions, which always refer to the same themes.¹³⁷ How, therefore, can a musician avoid re-using the same notes, once he has so successfully applied them to words that it seems no other solution was possible? Is it not better to re-employ them in this way if he benefited from it and the air turned out well than to look for bizarre melodies, which are unnatural, just for the sake of wanting to be original?

Nevertheless, this rehashing of airs is the criticism levelled at a few well-known /104/ musicians, who would certainly be as capable of producing extraordinary and elaborate melodies as others. But they know that this kind of extraordinary air, written merely to satisfy the whim of a small number of critics, would not have the success these critics claim, and would remain obscure. This would totally defeat the aim of writing these ‘galant’ airs, which is for them to be popular. And whether these ill-disposed censors like it or not, saying that an air is trivial and made either ‘for the Pont Neuf’¹³⁸ or ‘to go and fetch wine’¹³⁹ is not always an insult, especially when applied to

¹³⁵ We have read under paragraph ‘2’ above how ‘bizarre’ may be an acceptable quality, yet here it is not. Bacilly implies above that a ‘bizarre’ melody can be remedied satisfactorily. We must conclude here that it is the harmonic accompaniment provided by the theorbo to which Bacilly objects.

¹³⁶ Insincere flattery was also a favourite theme of those critical of the *style précieux* (cf. Boileau, *L’Art Poétique* and Molière *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, throughout).

¹³⁷ Bacilly obviously has the pastoral imagery of the ‘galant’ style in mind.

¹³⁸ The Pont Neuf, begun in 1578 under Henri III and completed under Louis XIII in 1613, was the largest and busiest bridge in Paris, and was lined with a variety of entertainers, propagandists and merchants. Street singers were particularly popular there and the songs they sang were known as ‘chansons du Pont-Neuf’. These were simple songs of a maximum of eight verses which were often cutting commentaries on contemporary politics and society during the second half of the 17th century. In 1660, the poet and Académicien Saint-Amant (1594-1661) produced a short poem beginning with the lines ‘Les lestes chansons du Pont-Neuf / Épousent pamphlets et libelles’ (Duneton [1998], p. 405-12). They had the function of distributing the latest news; thus in 1664, Mme de Sévigné promised a friend: ‘dès qu’il y aura

short airs since this is of course a sure sign that they are ‘natural’, a quality much desired in singing.

On this subject, let me say that this type of air, which seems mundane on paper or is indeed so, can be spared this predicament by the addition of ornaments and their rendering, which is an important part of singing, and though there are many performers, very few /105/ rise to the occasion.

There are also some short airs that are of fixed metre such as gavottes, sarabandes, minuets, or of a free metre, such as the ‘villanelles’:¹⁴⁰ this is the name

des vers du Pont-Neuf et autres, je vous les enverrai fort bien’ (‘as soon as the next Pont-Neuf verses and any others are produced, I shall willingly send them to you’, in Duneton [1998], p.577; see also Vilcosqui [1977], p.36). These songs were sung to popular or traditional tunes with which the crowd would have been familiar; it could therefore not only join the performer in the refrain (if there was one) but individuals would have been able to purchase the text so as to perform them at home. Le Cerf mentioned that ‘Il faut distinguer entre les airs qui sont nés sur le Pont-neuf même, & ceux qui sont nés à l’opera où [sic] à la cour’ (Le Cerf [1705], II, p.316), (‘One should make the distinction between airs written on the Pont Neuf and those written at the opera or at court’). These songs always represented trivial and popular amusement and the term was used pejoratively by literary figures such as Boileau (Duneton [1998], p.412). They follow in the tradition of the 16th-century ‘voix de ville’, a term that originally designated a simple, strophic, syllabic song that was often based on dance structures and rhythms. Among the earliest collections of songs in the simple popular style of the ‘voix de ville’ was Adrian Le Roy’s 1557 *Second livre de guiterre, contenant plusieurs chansons en forme de voix de ville*. (Lesure-Thibault 1955, p.68), then in 1576, Jehan Chardavoine published a collection entitled *Recueil des plus belles et excellentes chansons en forme de voix de ville tirées de divers auteurs et poètes françois tant anciens que modernes*; many of these melodies borrowed or were adapted from earlier 3- and 4-part compositions on the same texts (the poets include Saint-Gelais, Ronsard and Desportes) by composers such as Arcadelt, Certon and Le Roy, and were strophic, melodically simple in character with a note-against-note counterpoint and dance rhythms. (Dottin 1984, pp.61, 69-70; Durosoir [1991], pp.30-33.) By the end of the 16th century, the most common spelling of this type of song was ‘vaudeville’, though publishers increasingly favoured ‘air’ or ‘air de cour’ for strophic, accompanied songs from the 1570s. During the first half of the 17th century, the vaudeville was considered the simplest form of air; it then became associated with the Pont Neuf in particular and by the end of the century, Furetière defined vaudevilles as ‘chansons du Pont Neuf’ (Furetière [1690]).

¹³⁹ ‘pour aller au vin’. As wine merchants sold their wine directly from oak barrels, people wanting to buy wine brought their own pitchers or jugs. A song written ‘to go and fetch wine’ therefore implies a simple street song.

¹⁴⁰ Originally a Neapolitan genre (‘villanella’) from the late 1530s, the ‘villanelle’ appeared in France around the middle of the 16th century in the poetry of Mellin de Saint-Gelais (1491-1558). As a poetic form it was still used during the 17th century. It consisted of a number of normally heptasyllabic tercets at the end of which the first and last line of the first tercet are repeated alternately, forming a refrain. These two lines are repeated together as the last two lines of a quatrain that ends the poem, normally of pastoral character. (Aquièn [1995], pp.116-7.) Polyphonic settings of ‘villanelles’ can be found in France from the end of the 1550s to the 1570s by composers such as Arcadelt, Certon, Caietain and Chardavoine, and from the 1580s in airs by Claude le Jeune and Guillaume and Charles Tessier. Bacilly lists several ‘villanelles’ in his 1661 *Recueil des plus beaux vers* where they provided poetic material for solo songs of simple melodic character. Le Cerf (1705), II, p.103-4, comments on Bacilly’s failure to explain the nature of the ‘villanelle’ through his fictional countess: ‘Qu’est-ce que c’est, Monsieur, que des Villanelles? Bacilly l’explique t’il? ... Non, Madame, quoiqu’il l’eust dû nous donner une idée d’une chose mal connue.’ He explains that they are of free metre and that each couplet has a refrain, and adds ‘Cela étoit fort à la mode, vers le Regne de Henri quatrième, mais la mode en est passée.’ (What is a villanelle, Monsieur? Does Bacilly tell us?... He does not, Madame, though he ought to have explained such an obscure thing.’ ‘They were very much in vogue around the time of the reign of Henri IV, but are no longer in fashion.’)

given to this type of song in which a provincial gentleman called ‘Du Vivier’¹⁴¹ excelled above all others. He wrote the melody and words himself, due to an admirable natural ability and without knowing any of the rules of composition. One cannot avoid calling these little songs common or ‘natural’. They would not possess this charm, nor this tenderness for which they are so appreciated, if the melody was too elaborate, by which I mean too distinctive. As a result, they nearly all look alike on paper. Their whole asset lies in the alterations made by the singer /106/ and in their pleasant execution, since their melodic range is limited and they are always written in the same ‘modes’¹⁴² (the latter being compositional terminology) which are more suited to these airs than to others. /106/ All this makes one say ‘that these airs are worthless trifles which only seem wonderful when they are well performed’. Those who say this are forgetting that these are selected trifles. Out of an infinite number of these ‘bagatelles’, only very few from amongst the oldest and best-known pieces, or those composed in an older style, have been found worthy of the lustre which they have now acquired. Surely this gives them as much credit as long airs.

Moreover, I must not forget to say that it is quite wrong to admonish the singer who slows down these light songs or even alters the *mesure*, in order to make them sound more delicate and to give himself time to add the ornaments which he deems appropriate.¹⁴³ This is mainly noticeable in certain old gavottes which need to be executed with more delicacy, such as these:¹⁴⁴

/107/ *L’amour qui me presse,*
Cause ma langueur, &c. [Ex. 1]

¹⁴¹ Little is known about Du Vivier, save that he was apparently an early seventeenth-century exponent of the genre. Bacilly lists one of his ‘villanelles’, *La Bergere Annette*, in the first part of his *Recueil* (1661), pp.266-7.

¹⁴² See Ch.4, p.90, fn.15. Bacilly’s lighter airs tend to be in the 6th mode (F), particularly in the first 1668 volume, though this mode is not exclusive to this type of air

¹⁴³ This is a clear indication of rhythmic freedom. One should not lose sight of the rhythmic flexibility of certain works in fixed metre in which, with the addition of ornaments, there is not always the ‘correct’ number of beats per bar. This comment clearly illustrates the importance in certain circumstances of affect, provided by the ornamentation, over the strict observance of rhythm.

¹⁴⁴ Caswell has identified the earliest extant sources, from the early eighteenth century, for the first and third of these examples. They appear in two books published by Ballard in 1704 and 1711, entitled *Brunetes ou petits airs tendres*. Although Ballard’s volume is much later than Bacilly’s treatise, Ballard explains that these are ‘airs anciens’ and that he has published them because they are still popular. This air appears in Bacilly (1661), p.272, where it is listed as ‘Vilanelle’ (*sic*); the composer is not identified but the poet is ‘M. de Charleval’.

Example 1 [Ballard 1704, p.23]

L'Am - our qui me pres - se cau - se ma lan - gueur Je me
plains sans ces - se de vô - tre ri - gueur Ma bel -
-le maî - tres - se ren - dez - moy mon cœur.

Ah! Petite brunette, &c.,

Ah! Ma chère maistresse &c. [Ex. 2]

Example 2 [(Chevalier) Ballard 1711, p.18]¹⁴⁵

Ah! ma che-re maî - tres - se Ai - mons sans ces - se, Ah!
ma che - re maî - tres - se Ai - mons tou - jours. Don - nons à
la ten - dres - se Nos plus beaux jours, Ah! Ma che - re maî -

In these and other similar airs,¹⁴⁶ one breaks the rhythm of the dance in order to give them more brilliance and interpret them in a hundred different ways, each time more enjoyable than the other. This is done according to the art and method of proper singing, which enables one to express certain exclamations better and to add more ornaments. So I say that one must not condemn this method of performance, as do many ill-informed people who erroneously say that one could not dance to it, as if the singer intended to make them dance and be a substitute fiddle.

However, this observation is only valid for certain gavottes, in which one has licence to slow down the *mesure*, and even to alter it, to give oneself more time /108/ to add vocal ornaments. As for the other songs in fixed metre, they can be slowed down too, but the *mesure* must always be respected, so as not to turn a minuet or sarabande into a free-metre melody, precisely as in so-called ‘airs’.¹⁴⁷ There are some critics who are even opposed to slowing down these light-hearted songs and who find that they were made to be danced to. But I believe that one should let them dance to their heart’s content, while those who love singing will find that the added ornaments (provided they are placed correctly) greatly enrich these short airs, and makes them more interesting, particularly if the words are not mere ‘sketches’¹⁴⁸ but are written with care and wit.

4. An air must not be criticised for being a ‘pastiche’, or, if you prefer, borrowed from other airs. Apart from the fact that it is hard to say anything that /109/ has not been said before and since all music is composed from just six or seven notes, one often has the feeling that an air has been borrowed from someone else. This is not at all deliberate on the composer’s part, whose thoughts unknowingly followed the same pattern as another’s and who generally has never heard of the work which he is accused of plundering. I must repeat again, that even if this were the case, it is often better to copy good works than to attempt, quite mistakenly, to be original and inventive.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Bacilly (*Recueil* 1668), p.464 lists this as ‘Menuet de M^r Chevalier’.

¹⁴⁶ This implies other dance airs in the style of a gavotte.

¹⁴⁷ It is slightly ambiguous at this point whether Bacilly is recommending that the whole air can be performed at a slower speed as long as the beats are constant, or that one can slow down in places in order to add ornaments and embellishments but not add extra beats, or fractions of beats, in the bar, as is sometimes the case in the *doubles* provided by Bacilly in his airs *in octavo*. The text reads: ‘car pour les autres chansons qui ont leurs mesure réglée, il est bien permis de la rendre plus lente; mais il faut toujours en conserver la proportion, & ne pas faire d’un Menuet, ou d’une Sarabande, un Chant qui soit d’une Mesure libre, comme sont ceux que nous appellons précisément *Airs*.’ In view of the following sentence, however, the first meaning has been adopted here.

¹⁴⁸ ‘canevas’ refers to poor-quality verses usually set to pre-existing instrumental melodies (see p.116/226).

¹⁴⁹ In the 16th century, pastiches of popular songs arranged in a polyphonic style were known as ‘fricassées’ (Dottin [1984], p.48). Mersenne thought that composers should always strive towards variety

5. I maintain that there are some very pleasant sacred works and that an air must not be held in contempt for resembling them in any way, for this similarity is only in the mind of those who are determined to find fault with an air at all cost. For it is a fact that the same notes are used in plainchant as for ‘music’ and that there are so few notes that it would be impossible not to find some melodic resemblance on close examination. This is the case for first verses. For the second verses /110/ in diminution, however, one often hears people say, even those who are not particularly out to criticise, that they closely resemble a Lesson of Jeremiah,¹⁵⁰ especially when they are in the same mode, which is called natural or ‘major’.¹⁵¹ For this reason, people are ready to criticise half the airs composed in this mode because of a single passage they find to have been also used in one of these ‘Lamentations’, which is the most ridiculous thing in the world. For though this resemblance is unlikely to occur in all airs, it is not such a great calamity to add the same melodic embellishments as in these large, sacred pieces. For composers take great care and effort to include all the refinement and delicacy of singing in these sacred pieces since these works are public works, which enhances their merit and increases their reputation in the method of singing.

One must therefore conclude that only the most beautiful and most /111/ embellished airs can bear some resemblance to the Lessons of Jeremiah. And if they were less appreciated because of this, then short airs and bagatelles would have a considerable advantage over them, since they would be spared this criticism due to their hurried pace, which is in complete contrast to these large pieces.

6. As far as the words are concerned, one comes across such dreadful verses that it would be a mistake to think that they can be enhanced by music, however beautiful the music may be. I maintain that it is wrong to excuse a composer whose air one claims to show off, by saying that the words are not his fault. For it is always a fault to waste one’s time setting to music something which is not worthwhile, which is like setting a diamond in a lead casing. One only does it out of kindness to a friend or out of respect

in their works. He found it improbable that two people could have the same idea independently of each other, since no two minds are the same; he believed that so many possibilities were available to composers that reproducing the same material was unacceptable and would immediately smack of plagiarism (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.362.

¹⁵⁰ (See p.211, fn.107.) This refers to the highly melismatic and improvisatory style of vocal writing found in Lambert’s *Leçons de Ténèbres*.

¹⁵¹ Bacilly uses the term ‘ton’ rather than ‘mode’ in this sentence. He is referring to one of the eight church tones or modes (see Ch.4, p.90, fn.15). The Lamentations of Jeremiah had their own *tonus Lamentationum*, which was restricted to four notes (F to B b) but was based on the 6th church tone (Massip [1999], p.217) that has its final on F and dominant on A; this corresponds to Bacilly’s specification of the mode as ‘*b quarre* ou “major”’ (“natural or “major”).

and deference to people of quality (which happens quite often) who, fancying themselves as poets, will insist on all account that their madrigal be set to music. In this case one cannot refuse, but on condition that /112/ these works are not performed in public but only in the presence of these Gentlemen.

There are also words which, though not outstanding in any way nor very meaningful, are quite acceptable provided they express passion, I mean acceptable for airs which I have just said are considered as common because they are natural. For words must neither be pompous nor unnatural to singing, however elegant they may be, as are the following which I have already mentioned in this chapter,

L'amour est un oyseau qui vole, &c.

This is the reason why certain composers are accused of having a poor choice of words, because they prefer sweet and flowing words rather than other more meaningful and poetic ones. This accusation is easily believed /113/ by credulous minds when it comes from the mouths of highly respected 'authorities', by which I mean poets. For even the greatest ones grow indignant when a composer, receiving a six-line stanza from their generous hand and praising and admiring it in front of them, leaves it to rot for years in his pocket without ever dreaming of setting it to music. Meanwhile, these poets let it be known amongst the salons that very soon their words will be set to music by this famous composer. Seeing their hopes dashed, they end up giving their words to another composer whom they know quite well to be less talented than the first one, but whom they nonetheless praise far above the one who scorned them. In retaliation, from which they will never back down, they in turn scorn and constantly discredit the composer who let them down, saying that he only writes common pieces with hopeless words.

It is true that as regards French words, as I have mentioned already, there are two things one must avoid in singing, namely using /114/ words that are either jarring to the ear or trite, and instead make sure that they are meaningful, with neither witticism nor ambiguity. This was not formerly the custom, when people preferred witticisms to the noblest of thoughts. By 'jarring to the ear' I mean either when they really are so, or when people just imagine them to be so. Words are sometimes considered jarring simply because they have not yet been accepted in singing and the meaning must not be taken literally. Nor does this only concern certain consonants, as a singing teacher once thought: he was corrected by another for having written

Quel est l'astre du jour dans ses douces chaleurs

in his book, instead of

Tel est l'astre du jour &c.

He admitted his error immediately, saying that it was true that *tel* was much softer than *quel*, and was quite happy to replace one word with the other since /115/ the consonant sounded unpleasant. The teacher who corrected him was never able to make him see that by using the word *quel*, his verse was made meaningless, so clumsy was the poetry.

Another way of criticising current airs is to say that there is no challenge if the music is composed first and the words are added later since there are no constraints, I mean one is not obliged to adapt to the thoughts of the poet, neither is one subject to respecting long and short syllables, which is the stumbling block as regards quantity. Thus if an air written in this way becomes popular, all the credit generally goes to the author of the words.

At first, this reasoning seems entirely plausible and based on common sense. Yet, every day we see proof to the contrary when sonnets are written on given rhymes.¹⁵² This would seem to restrain the poets, all the more since the meaning and subject are usually defined in advance by the rhymes, which adds a further constraint. These given rhymes in fact help them /116/ find what they would otherwise never have thought of, and provide them with material for a success they might not have obtained had they been free to choose the subject, ideas and words.

It is therefore wrong to say that all the credit goes to the author of the words. But it is right to say that the credit is shared and that it is divided equally between author and composer, especially when the words are not mere drafts like most verses which are referred to as 'sketches', in order to pre-empt the contempt they rightly deserve. This type of verse is usually only written for short, fast airs or songs with a set *mesure*, such as minuets, courantes, bourrées, sarabandes and other pieces, first composed for instruments (mainly the violin).¹⁵³ Then anyone can add these 'sketchy' verses, which could rightly be labelled as 'pretty useless' and yet have the power of establishing as poets hundreds of people /117/ and even of making them out to be 'famous', a renown which nowadays is rightly rewarded but not rightly deserved.

¹⁵² 'bouts-rimez'. A common practice amongst poets during the period was to write verses for which the last word of each line was supplied in advance. The collection of selected works by Pellisson, Suze and other anonymous authors (Suze [1695]) provides many examples of this manner of writing, with different poems written with the same end-rimes.

¹⁵³ The practice of adding words to an instrumental piece was known as 'parodie', as was that of writing new words to an existing air (Berthod's *Airs de dévotion*, see Ch.6, p.135, demonstrate sacred 'parodies', though the words of airs or even entire operatic scenes were usually changed for comical or satirical effect). Here Bacilly is scornful of poets who add words to existing melodies, but Quinault frequently had

If these poets, of which there are dozens, were only aware of what goes on around them, they would soon give up inundating society with their miserable productions. Indeed, these authors (and here I mean not only these producers of ‘sketches’ but even the versifiers who are highly regarded on Parnassus) would renounce their profession of poet if they would only consider a most extraordinary thing: a thing which we can call the wonder of our time. This wonder belongs to the opposite sex and puts ours into great disarray, not only as regards poetry in general but more particularly as regards the refined and delicate poetry of our airs, according to the general agreement of all experts; for a Lady (illustrious by birth but even more so by a thousand great qualities) has propelled this kind of poetry to such a height of perfection that we may say that this Lady has /118/ ‘outdone them all’. It would be improper to name her here, as well as unnecessary since all society knows her identity well enough.¹⁵⁴ What is most admirable is to have found the secret of setting words to music with such precision and of having married one to the other so successfully, making it look so natural that no other solution seems to have been possible. This is what is properly called clothing airs, with magnificent, rich and precious garments and not with miserable ‘canvas’.¹⁵⁵

But most people disregard such a considerable advantage and only admire the beauty of the thoughts, the elegance, sweetness and expression of the words, without paying any attention to the skill required in setting them so well to the melody. I

to write the lyrics of Lully’s operatic ‘divertissements’ after the music had been composed (Benoit [1992], p.532).

¹⁵⁴ Bacilly’s *Recueil* (Bacilly [Recueil 1668], p.457) enables us to identify this female poet as the Comtesse de la Suze, to whom he credits the authorship of one of the airs (the composer is le Camus) listed on p.119 of the *Remarques*. She was a prominent contemporary poet whose husband was a leading Académicien; though she belonged to the same circle as Madeleine de Scudéry and Pellisson, her rank was more elevated. Scudéry lauded Suze in her novel *Clélie* (vol.8), a roman à clef in which Suze is described as having ‘une grande naissance [...] [et] plus d’esprit que de beauté [...] elle surpasse tous ceux qui l’ont précédée, & tous ceux qui la voudront suivre’ (Niderst [1976], p.401). The engraving for Titon du Tillet’s *Le Parnasse françois* (1723), a retrospective of the most famous poets and musicians during the reign of Louis XIV, depicts three muses directly below Louis XIV as Apollo: they are Madeleine de Scudéry, Mme Deshoulières and the Comtesse de la Suze (See Benoit [1992], p.530-1). Niderst (1976), p.285, notes that the Comtesse de la Suze was a central figure in the delicate style of poetry emanating from the salons and quotes from an anonymous work, the *Relation Divertissante d’un voyage fait en Provence* (Paris, 1667), which found a convenient rhyme in the same parallel as that made by Titon du Tillet: ‘[...] la Comtesse de la Suze, / Qu’on nomme la Dixième Muse’. Bacilly’s opinion of the countess has not changed twenty years later when, in the preface to the second edition of his *Airs spirituels* (1688), ‘avis’, p.7, he mentions the skills of ‘l’incomparable Madame de la Suze’. Her verses were also set to music by Lambert, Cambert and D’Ambruiss (Bacilly [1661], pp.19, 265 and [Recueil 1668], p.510).

¹⁵⁵ Bacilly makes a play on words which is lost in translation. He first referred to ‘canevas’ on p.108/ 223, meaning a sketch or rough draft in poetry. Here the literal meaning of the word applies, meaning rough material such as sacking cloth.

therefore would like to refresh their memory with a few airs written in this manner, one of which is currently highly regarded and begins with the following words:

/119/ Ah! Qui peut tranquillement attendre &c. [Ex.3]¹⁵⁶

Example 3 [(Le Camus) Ballard XI, 1668, 17v-19r]

Ah! qui peut tran - quil - le - ment at - ten - dre N'eut ja-
 mais, N'eut ja-mais le cœur ten - dre, Ah! qui peut tran - quil - le - ment at -
 N'eut ja-mais, N'eut ja-mais le cœur ten - dre, Ah! qui peut tran - quil - le - ment at -
 -ten - dre, N'eut ja-mais, N'eut ja-mais le cœur ten - dre, Trans - por - té d'u - ne - a -
 -ten - dre, N'eut ja-mais, N'eut ja-mais le cœur ten - dre, Trans - por - té d'u - ne a -
 -mour, dont les Loix re - glent ma vi - e; J'ay pre - ve - nu l'au - ro - re, dans ce
 -mour, dont les Loix re - glent ma vi - e; J'ay pre - ve - nu, Jay pre - ve - nu l'au - ro - re, dans ce
 bois, pour voir Sil - vi - e e: Je lan - guis dans cet es - poir char -
 bois, pour voir Sil - vi - e: e: Je lan - guis, Je lan - guis dans cet es - poir char -

¹⁵⁶ Bacilly (*Recueil* 1668), p.457, lists this air as a setting by Sébastien le Camus to words by the Comtesse de la Suze. Caswell located this air in Ballard XI but the correct folio number is 17v-19r. In Ballard's volume, the two parts are not in score format but on separate folios facing each other, and there are no subsequent verses.

-mant, Ah! que vos-tre a - pro - che est len - te? Has - tez vous, ve - nez
 -mant, Ah! que vos - tre a - pro - che est len - te? Has - tez

heu - reux mo - ment, ve - nez heu - reux mo - ment, He - las! quand l'A - mour est pres -
 vous, ve - nez heu - reux mo - ment, ve - nez heu - reux mo - ment, He - las! quand l'A - mour est pres -

- san - te, La plus dou - ce at - ten - te, Est un grand tour - ment. - ment.
 - san - te, La plus dou - ce at - ten - te, Est un grand tour - ment. Je lan - - ment.

Here are two more which came out not long ago, the first beginning with

Ah! Fuyons ce dangereux séjour, &c. [Ex.4]¹⁵⁷

Example 4 [(Le Camus) Ballard X, 1667, 23v-24r]

Ah! fuy - ons ce dan - ge - reux se - jour, Ces verds om - bra - ges,
 Ah! fuy - ons ce dan - ge - reux se - jour, Ces verds om - bra - ges, Ces

Ces doux ri - va - ges, Ou Tir - cis me fit voir tant d'a - mour: -mour: Dé - tour -
 doux ri - va - ges, Ou Tir - cis me fit voir tant d'a - mour: -mour: Dé - tour -

- nons nos trou - peaux de ces bois, Ou l'in - grat m'at - ti - ra cent fois; Mais mon cœur à mes
 - nons nos trou - peaux de ces bois, Ou l'in - grat m'at - ti - ra cent fois; Mais mon cœur à

¹⁵⁷ Caswell located this air in Ballard X (1667) but provided an incorrect page number. Original parts on separate folios, no subsequent verses. This air was later included in *Le Camus* (1678).

des-seins re - bel -le, Ne peut ban - nir ce cru - ël sou - ve - nir: He - las!
 mes des-seins re - bel - le, Ne peut ban - nir ce cru - ël sou - ve - nir: He - las!
 un in - fi - del - le Me fait ay - mer ces lieux, Et mal -
 un in - fi - del - le Me fait ay - mer ces lieux, Et mal -
 - gré mes dé - tours, j'y viens tou - jours. Dé - tour - jours.
 - gré mes dé - tours, j'y viens tou - jours. Dé - tour - jours.

and the other with

Bois écartez, demeures sombres, &c. [Ex.5]¹⁵⁸

Example 5 [Ballard X, 1667, 33v-34]

Bois es-car - tez, de - meu - res som - bres, Re - dou -
 Bois es - car - tez, Bois es - car - tez de - meu - res som - bres,
 - blez vos om - bres, Mon cœur pres - sé de l'a - mour de mon Ber - ger, lan -
 Re - dou - blez vos om - bres, Mon cœur pres - sé de l'a - mour de mon Ber - ger, lan -

¹⁵⁸ Caswell located this air in Ballard X (1667) but provided an incorrect page number.

-guit, sou - pi-re, Luy va di-re, Qu'il l'ay-meà son tour: tour: Ah!
 -guit, sou - pi-re, Luy va di - re, Qu'il l'ay - meà son tour: tour:

c'est un grand mal que d'ay-mer, Et ce mal tou - te -
 Ah! c'est un grand mal que d'ay - mer, Et ce mal tou - te -

-fois, et ce mal tou-te - fois a de quoy vous char-mer, D'un a-
 -fois, et ce mal tou - te - fois a de quoy vous char-mer, D'un a-

-mour si ten - dre, Peut - on se def - fen - dre? J'y vou-
 -mour si ten - dre, Peut - on se def - fen - dre? J'y vou-

-lois re - sis - ter; Mais, he - las!
 -lois re - sis - ter; Mais, he - las! en

en vain on veut ce qu'on ne peut pas. [Ah!] pas
 vain on veut ce qu'on ne peut pas. pas.

In these airs, those who have the slightest knowledge of poetry will see that this incomparable Lady has only taken into account the rhyme, according to the cadences in

the melody, to which one has to conform. In this way, most of these verses are not strictly verses but only rhymed prose, and from this one can tell clearly that the melody was written before the words, if only people thought about it. However, I see that few people grant the praise which such a remarkable genius deserves, either through ignorance of poetry or lack of concern. This genius would be /120/ capable of many more things (if it were possible to reach even greater heights) if she was not limited by having to follow the melody so closely. This is such a great constraint that most of those who want to apply words to melodies, especially to *airs sérieux* and lengthy pieces, fall flat on their face and write words which hardly have any success, while the words of this Lady keep supplying the music world year after year, without being pushed into oblivion by the novelty of other airs.

The last and most common criticism that is levelled at airs, which one must admit is not entirely unreasonable or unfounded, is that the melody bears no relation to the words. It is true that most composers can be accused of this shortcoming, either through ignorance of the French language or in a way by over-estimating their ability, in wanting to philosophise too much or be too punctilious over the meaning of words, without considering the sentence as a whole, as they ought to.

/121/ But one may also say that though some composers are guilty of over-confidence in their ability, the same can be said of those critics who censure them quite wrongly and who are also just as punctilious about every word without considering the meaning and the purpose of a whole madrigal. Some critics are so ill-informed that they would reject an air as unworthy if the composer had omitted writing high notes on words which denote elevated things, such as *sky, stars, clouds, mountains, rocks, the gods, the heavens*; or lower notes on the words *earth, sea, fountains, valleys*, etc. Others believe that a melody is ill-suited to the words if it does not express the meaning of each individual word. They even claim that certain musical symbols are specifically assigned to the meaning and expression of words, such as ‘sharps’ and ‘flats’ for tender and passionate expressions, so that they do not hesitate to call a composer a fool if he failed to put one of these symbols /122/ on the words *languor, martyr, sadness, torment, pity, suffering, dying, sighing, crying, moaning, harsh, cruel*; or on the interjections *Ah! Alas! O heavens!* or if he has not written a *tremblement* on the word *trembling* or a rest before or after the word *sighing*.¹⁵⁹ He will also be called a fool if, on the other hand, he

¹⁵⁹ ‘Un soupir devant ou après le mot de *soupirer*’ – the parallel is all the more evident in French.

has written a ‘sharp’ or a ‘flat’ on words that have no passion. This is what a man supposed to be famous in the music world did, who is indeed famous but not for singing, when he wrongly reproached a composer for having written a ‘sharp’ note on the word *vient* in the stanza *D’ou vient que de ce bocage*, etc. [Ex.6]. He thought that the meaning of the word did not deserve such a tender, refined and valued symbol in music, not taking into account that the whole stanza was a lament for an absent beloved. As such, it could and should be treated tenderly, for it expressed sorrow from the first word to the last without exception, and it was wrong to consider each word individually and differentiate between /123/ the noun, pronoun and verb in a pedantic way.

Example 6 [(Bacilly) Ballard XX, 1661, fol.7v-8] ¹⁶⁰

D'où vient que de ce bo - ca - ge Qui plai - soit tant à mes yeux,
 Le se - jour m'est en - nuy - eux Et qu'il me pa - roist sau - va - ge?
 He - las! bel - le l - ris He - las! C'est que je ne vous y vois pas.

I must agree that sometimes one must pay attention to the meaning of certain words so that they can be set to the most suitable *measure*. This is particularly true with certain monosyllables which need to be cut short, such as *ouïy*, *non*, *va* and other similar ones. For example, in the words *Non n'apprenez pas*, &c. which are on page 24 of the book *in quarto*, the composer has written quite a long note on the word *non*.

Example 7 [Lambert 1666, p.24]

Non n'a - pre - hen - dez point

6 7 6 6 3

¹⁶⁰ Caswell did not supply this example. Only the *dessus* part is supplied by Ballard, with the words for three additional verses. Bacilly *Recueil* 1661, p.114, lists this as a ‘gavotte de B.D.B.’; Bacilly (‘B.D.B’) is also the poet.

His intention, however, is to cut the *non* very short and place a rest after it, even though it is written before the note.¹⁶¹ The same applies to page 66 of the same book, on the words *Non, si je meurs, &c.*

Example 8 [Lambert 1666, p.66]

The word *va* must also be sung short in this example of the second stanza of an air which has recently been published.

*Va, suy volage,
L'inconstant qui t'engage &c.*

/124/ The words *to run*, as well as *moment* and *instant*, also seem to require even more so a *mesure* that corresponds to the speed they convey. This can be seen in the words *allons, marchons, courons* in the air *Las c'est trop consulter* [Ex.9], and in the words *a long time* and *slowly* which need to be slower.

Example 9 [Boësset IX 1642, fol.33v]¹⁶²

Nevertheless, all this is according to what precedes and what follows them, for it can happen that the word *moment* will be connected to other words which by their meaning would prevent it being passed over quickly, as in the following example,

Que les momens me semblent longs, &c. [Ex.10]

¹⁶¹ Gordon-Seifert (1994), p.136, has pointed out the weakening effect of the dissonance at the beginning of the second bar with D over E \flat in the bass part. Shortening 'Non' would reduce the effect of this clash.

¹⁶² There is a redundant cut C metre indication at the beginning of the third editorial bar in this example. This air also appears in the c.1661 manuscript of *airs de cour et airs à boire*, p.80; the latter includes a basso continuo part.

Example 10 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.18]

Que les mo - mens me sem - blent longs et

which is on page 18 of the second book *in octavo*, as well as in this other example,

*Je n'ay pas long-temps à souffrir, &c.*¹⁶³

Here we can see that the word *long-temps* must not be taken literally and does not require as slow a tempo as for

/125/ *J'ay long-temps à souffrir, &c.*

or even

C'est trop long-temps souffrir &c.

The latter is like a middle ground between the two previous statements, that is to say, it neither completely involves the affirmative nor the negative. Instead, it takes from both: it is affirmative with regards to the past, and negative with regards to the future.

But to say, for example, that on the word *wave* or that of *swinging* one should expressly write dozens of alternating high and low notes, for a visual effect that has nothing to do with what one hears, is totally stupid and childish.

As for the words 'high' and 'low', it is more or less justified to ascribe to them notes which conform to the meaning of the words, but not without the usual reserve, for in certain circumstances /126/ it might be the most stupid thing to do. For example, when 'high' and 'low' do not mean 'what is superior' and 'inferior', but rather what is 'strong' and 'weak', it is no longer a compositional matter. Instead, it has to do with the manner of singing; one must not insist on producing higher or lower notes, but rather on singing louder or softer, according to the expression.¹⁶⁴ This is one of the peculiarities of the art of singing which cannot be written down in musical symbols.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ This air has not been located.

¹⁶⁴ An example of when 'haut' and 'bas' can mean 'loud' and 'soft' can be seen in the expressions 'chanter à voix haute' (to sing loudly) and 'à voix basse' (softly).

¹⁶⁵ Bacilly is suggesting that volume is dictated by the words. However, it is likely that Bacilly would have been familiar with the Italian dynamic indications 'piano' and 'forte', whether written in full or in abbreviation, which first appeared towards the very end of the sixteenth century. Bernhard lists *piano* and *forte* as two of the refinements used in *cantar sodo*, or 'plain singing' (see Bernhard [1973], pp.13-15). French composers used both Italian terms and the French terms 'doux / doucement' and 'fort / fortément'; it is therefore surprising that Bacilly does not mention this practice. Mersenne (1636), 2, Bk.6, pp.359, 365-73, on the subject of dynamics, mentions eight degrees of volume, from extremely soft to very loud, and adds that there is a regrettable lack of symbols to indicate these degrees.

This is more or less all the criticism that can be levelled at airs. However, I must mention a sure way of drawing attention to them which is generally as ill-founded as it is widespread amongst those who pretend to be knowledgeable. I have already mentioned several times that the title 'new' was what most flattered our nation, and this applies to airs as well as everything else.

Nonetheless, there are people who, on the contrary, /127/ only value airs of the past. What is more, even those who beg for novelty one minute, are quite prepared to change their tune the next minute to look knowledgeable, saying quite thoughtlessly, in a jargon which is often affected in parrot-fashion: 'that there is nothing like old airs, and that nothing written nowadays can match them'. But these Gentlemen remain speechless when they are asked to clarify their statement and explain which airs they classify as 'old'. The same goes for those who, through a different approach like some sort of preamble, ask a singer if there really is such a thing as new airs, to force him to give them a share of his professional opinion. In truth there is no direct answer to this question without qualifying it, for an air will be new to people who have not heard it before, yet it will not be new any more to these 'questioners' who have already heard it, even though it may not be more than three days old. And it seems that the mere fact that an air has already /128/ been heard throughout the town is enough for it to be classified as antiquated.

Nevertheless, even if an air is both novel and beautiful, which is all one may wish for, it is worthless if it is not also fashionable. This seems to contradict what I have just put forward, that an air must be more or less unknown to qualify as 'new'. I therefore find nothing harder to unravel than the literal meaning of 'new'.

There will be airs which will never have been published and which the composer will want to keep for a while before releasing. If it becomes known that he wrote them a while ago, it is enough to qualify them as 'old'. And yet there will be some very old airs which will be considered to be quite recent simply because they are back in fashion.

But let us return to old airs, and to the saying, often heard in the mouth of those fussy people, who pride themselves on their *bon goust*, that 'one no longer writes airs in any way comparable to /129/ old ones'. I would like to ask them how long they think it takes for an air to become 'old'. Some will quote airs written two or three years ago; others will go further back and quote some from fifteen or twenty years ago. But most

people go much further back, to the airs of the late Mr Boësset,¹⁶⁶ and even to Mr Guédron,¹⁶⁷ so that we see these people unable to appreciate anything other than Mr Boësset's airs, without being able to say why. They cannot even detect the difference with the more recent ones, which they are constantly made to believe are these *airs précieux* that they consider so superior.¹⁶⁸

Those who go back to Mr Guédron's airs are usually elderly people, who, to honour their old age, are delighted to quote the works of their day. They are overjoyed when they hear airs such as the following performed in the salons (they may even venture to sing themselves, crooning in a dismal voice, half with the chin, half with the jaw):

/130/ *Quand pour Philis mon cœur tout plein de flam, &c.* [Ex.11]¹⁶⁹

Example 11 [(Guédron) Ballard IV, 1621, fol.8v-9r]

Quand pour Phil - lis mon cœur tout plein de fla-me Sou - pi - roit nuit et

¹⁶⁶ Anthoine Boësset (1587-1643) held a number of positions at Louis XIII's court, including Maître des enfants de la Chambre du Roi (1613) and Surintendant de la Musique du Roi (1623). He was one of the two musicians involved in Mersenne's famous competition in 1640, to see who could write the finest air on a given text; the other musician was the Dutch priest Joan Albert Ban (Boësset was declared the winner; Ban was criticised for setting the text too literally and academically). Boësset was a prolific composer of *airs de cour*, both for solo voice with lute accompaniment and for 4 or 5 voices. Some of his airs are listed by Bacilly (whose regard for him is apparent on pp.130-1/ 244) in his *Recueil des plus beaux vers* (1661). Rossi is reputed to have admired his airs upon his arrival in France (Le Cerf [1705], I, p.45), as did Lully (Le Cerf [1705], I, pp.94 and 158).

¹⁶⁷ The composer and singer Pierre Guédron (c.1575-1620) held, under Henri IV and Louis XIII, the positions of Maître des Chanteurs de la Chambre du Roy, Compositeur de la Chambre du Roi (he succeeded Claude le Jeune in 1601) and, at the time of his death, also held that of Intendant de la Musique de la Chambre du Roi, for which his designated successor was his son-in-law Anthoine Boësset. His earlier homophonic *airs de cour* for 4 or 5 voices bear the influence of *musique mesurée*, an idea formulated by Baif and put into practice by composers such as Jacques Mauduit (see Yates [1988], pp.53-6 and Walker [1948], pp.141-163) but this is abandoned in his solo vocal works with lute accompaniment after c.1612, the *réécits*, which bear the influence of the *air de ballet* in their rhythmic freedom and a closer regard for the rhythm of declamation (see Durosoir [1991], p.146-9). Some of his airs are listed in Bacilly's 1661 *Recueil des plus beaux airs*.

¹⁶⁸ The poetry had evolved in style from *airs précieux* to what was commonly called *airs sérieux* or *galant*.

¹⁶⁹ Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.59, located most of these airs in Pierre Ballard's volumes of airs published during the first three decades of the century. However, his reference for this one is erroneous; it is in Ballard (1621), under the heading 'Air de Guédron'. The text of four subsequent verses is provided by Ballard. Where the sources in which the following airs were found specify that Guédron is the composer, his name has been added to the source in brackets.

jour, Clo - rispour moy tes - moi-gnoit que son a - me Es - toit plai - ne d'a -
 -mour: Ah! que le bon - heur des a - mants Du - re
 bien moins que leurs tour - [ments.] - ments.

Musical notation: Treble clef, key signature of one flat (B-flat), 2/2 time signature. The piece features a variety of note values including minims, crotchets, and quavers. It includes a repeat sign with first and second endings, and a *dal segno* marking.

Où luis-tu soleil de mon ame, &c. [Ex.12]¹⁷⁰

Example 12 [(Guédron) Ballard 1615, fol.48v-49r]¹⁷¹

Ou luis-tu so - leil de mon a - me? Ou luis-tu flam - beau de mes yeux?
 Ou - bli - ras - tu tou - jours les cieux, Et au sein de The - tis ta fla - me?
 Or que mon beau so - leil me luit, Le jour ne m'est plus qu'u - ne nuit.

Musical notation: Treble clef, key signature of one flat (B-flat), 2/2 time signature. The score includes a *dal segno* marking and a repeat sign.

Hola, Caron, nautonnier infernal, &c. [Ex.13]¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Caswell's page reference for this air in Ballard-Bataille I (1608), which he abbreviates as 'I Airs 1608', is erroneous: it is on fol.51v-52r; this edition provides an instrumental part in lute tablature by Bataille in score format and the text of the four subsequent verses. The air was republished in Ballard (1615), fol.48v-49r, under the heading 'Air de Guedron'; the *dessus* part is identical to the earlier version, as are the lyrics for four more verses, but no instrumental bass part is provided.

¹⁷¹ Although barlines in this type of air are usually placed at the end of each phrase, which correspond to each line in the poetic verse, both the 1608 and 1615 versions (see fn.170) lack a barline after 'cieux'.

¹⁷² This dialogue is in Ballard-Bataille VI (1615), where it is anonymous. The first half of the dialogue is presented here as an illustration – the publication is readily available in facsimile reprint (see bibliography). The editorial slurs are slurs that were present in the source but have been extended to reflect the underlay to which they relate. The poem is from *Les Souspirs* by Olivier de Magny (Paris, Vincent Sertenas, 1557), Sonnet LXIII. (Magny [1874], p.47.) The same sonnet was set to music by Berçoy (1569), Bertrand (1570) and Lassus (1571) (Lesure-Thibault 1955, pp.137, 143, 153).

Example 13 [dialogue, Ballard-Bataille VI, 1615, fol.53v-56v - extract]

Ho - la, ho - la Cha - ron

Nau - ton - nier in - fer - nal.

Qui est cet im - por - tun qui si pres - sé m'ap -

- pel - - - le? C'est l'es - prit es - pleu - ré

d'un a - mou - reux fi - del - le,

Le - - - quel pour bien ay - mer n'eust

ja - mais que du mal.

d d d a b a d d c b a
c a d* a a

Que cher - ches tu de moy?

c d c a d c b d* d* c d c a

Le pas - sa - ge fa - tal.

c c c a a a a c c c a c d c c a

Quel est ton ho - mi - ci - - - de?

d d a b d a d d b c d d a b a a d c d a

O! de - man - de cru - el - - - le!

d d a d d c d e a c d c c e a a

A - mour ma fait mou - - - rir.

d d d a b a a c c b a c d a c c b a

Example 14 [Ballard-Bataille I, 1608, fol.2v-3r]

Se - jour de la di - vi - ni - té,

Ou des fem - mes l'i - ni - qui - té,

N'e - xer - ce point sa vi - o - len - ce:

Par - don - nés moy ro - chers et bois

Si j'in - ter - romps vos - tre si - len - ce,

¹⁷³ Caswell has provided an erroneous page reference in *Ballard-Bataille I* (1608); it is on fol.2v-3r. The text for two subsequent verses is provided.

Par le tris-te ac-cent de ma voix.

D'un si doux trait ma poitrine est atteinte, &c. [Ex.15]¹⁷⁴

Example 15 [Ballard-Bataille II, 1609, fol.16v-17r]

D'un si doux trait ma poi-tri-ne est at-tein-te,

Un feu si clair va mon cœur em-bra-sant,

Que plus je souf-fe un tour-ment si plai-sant,

Et plus mon a-me à l'ay-mer est con-train-te.

Aux plaisirs, aux delices, bergères, &c. [Ex.16]¹⁷⁵

Example 16 [(Guédron), Ballard 1615 fol.18v-19]

Aux plai - sirs, aux de - li - ces ber - ge - res, Aux plai - sirs, aux - de -
 - li - ces ber - ge - res, Il faut es - tre du temps me - na - ge - res: Il faut
 es - tre du temps me - na - ge - res: Car il s'es - cou - le et se perd d'heu - re en heu - re, Et
 le re - gret seu - le - ment en de - meu - re, A l'a - mour, aux plai -
 sirs, aux boc - ca - ge, Em - ploy - és les beaux jours de vos - tre à - [ge.] - ge.

This is particularly true of the song¹⁷⁶ which has been entitled *Le tombeau de Guédron*:

Quoy que l'on me puisse dire,

Qu'amour n'est rien que martire, &c. [Ex.17]¹⁷⁷

Example 17 [(Guédron), Ballard 1621, fol.1v-2r]¹⁷⁸

Quoy que l'on me puis - se di - re Qu'A - mour n'est rien que mar -
 ti - re Dont l'on meurt cent fois le jour, Je se - ray plus - tot las de vi -
 vre, Que d'ay - mer et de sui - vre Les plai - sirs de l'A - [mour.] - mour.

¹⁷⁴ Caswell's reference (in Ballard-Bataille I [1608], p.31) is erroneous. Ballard-Bataille II (1609), fol.16v-17r, provides the text of two subsequent verses.

¹⁷⁵ For this air, headed 'Air de Guédron', Ballard provides the text for six subsequent verses.

¹⁷⁶ 'chanson'.

¹⁷⁷ Caswell provides an erroneous reference. This air, headed 'Air de Guédron', is in Ballard (1621), fol.1v-2r, with the text of four subsequent verses provided.

¹⁷⁸ The $\frac{3}{4}$ metre (first system) is editorial; the position of the original metre is shown above the stave.

These are more or less the favourite songs of these good people, which can rightly be called ‘airs from the old stock’.¹⁷⁹

Everyone agrees that the airs of the late Mr Boësset are the bedrock of airs and that he must be praised /131/ for having created beautiful melodies.¹⁸⁰ But due to this privilege, he has been spared the criticism often levelled quite unfairly at successful contemporary composers, which is of having plundered the works of this great man. For he seems to have made use of all that is melodically beautiful in the airs he has left us, I mean in the ‘modulations’,¹⁸¹ leaving nothing for our composers to do but to imitate him. There are some amongst them who might have been as gifted as him in those days for composing beautiful airs as they are gifted nowadays for adding the necessary ornaments and executing them well. They excel in this above all those who have gone before them, which, I dare say, is a talent more exceptional and remarkable than that of composing. Only a small number of musicians are capable of it, compared to the large number of those who write quite successful and commendable airs.

It has always been common practice, or rather /131/ a common error, not only in music but also in all the arts, to attach considerable importance to works once their authors have passed away (as if the Fates alone were allowed to give prizes for the works of great men). It is also a fact that most people only value the earlier works of composers, from the simple belief that in old age, they have exhausted their creative powers for beautiful melodies.¹⁸² It would be better to say that this exhaustion only comes from an overload of praise and from the fickleness of our nation which in the end tires of all things, even of perfection, and which constantly wavers in its feelings and opinions.

One must not make a fool of oneself, as do most people who are only concerned with the name of the composer, and say, as they do, that ‘nothing equals the airs of

¹⁷⁹ ‘airs de la vieille roche’. Bacilly also refers to certain old airs as ‘diamans de la vieille Roche’ (p.225-6/316), even though the diminutions they contain do not always respect pronunciation and quantity.

¹⁸⁰ Mersenne (1636), p.363, believed Boësset, a contemporary of his, to be regarded by all Frenchmen as a ‘phoenix’.

¹⁸¹ Bacilly is not referring to harmonic modulation (from the Italian *modulazione*) between keys, but rather to the older meaning of ‘modulation’ (from the Latin *modulatio*) denoting changes in pitch or intensity in a melody. In the ‘Avis’ of his *Airs spirituels* (1688), p.1, Bacilly mentions certain ‘excellens Poëtes, qui n’ayant point preveu que leurs Vers deussent estre mis en chant, n’ont pas eu soin d’y employer des paroles propres pour la modulation’ (‘other excellent poets who, not expecting their verses to be set to music, did not take care to use words suited to modulation’). This is in line with Bacilly’s belief, expressed throughout Part 2 of the *Remarques* in particular, that the sound and meaning of words contribute to the beauty of the melody of an air.

¹⁸² This calls to mind the remark in the *Mercure galant* which aimed to stop the rumours that Bacilly, who would have been approaching sixty at the time, no longer taught. (See Essay, p.142, fn.21)

Boësset; and nothing as beautiful is written nowadays'. Neither, concerning modern composers, should one decide with unyielding stubbornness that 'this composer is only capable of writing short airs /133/ and bagatelles, and that one only writes airs for ballets and violin airs' (although experience proves the contrary). And, finding an air pleasant, a person should not say, upon learning that it is not by the composer he had in mind, that he 'was mistaken and did not pay proper attention to the air'. Nor should he contest the obvious, assuring everyone that 'the real composer cannot possibly be the author of this air', nor pride himself quite wrongly in being able to recognise the hallmark of the composer at a precise point in an air. For it is a discernment that even the most talented musician would not be able to make without getting it wrong.¹⁸³

But if the obsession of critics is deplorable, that of composers is even more so. Some of them are so wild that they can suddenly change from extreme joy, delight and enthusiasm at having written a successful song, to extreme pain and fear of seeing themselves denied the laurels that such a beautiful exploit deserves. They imitate Virgil's *sic vos non vobis*¹⁸⁴ with these words: 'See how fortunate I am to be successful in my compositions. But alas! I have the misfortune of seeing them all attributed to M** only because he is in fashion, or rather, that he was in fashion, for I hope it will soon be my turn.'¹⁸⁵

But enough about the composition of airs; let us now discuss how they should be properly performed.

¹⁸³ The *Mercurie galant* would later publish an interesting note on this subject: '[...] dans toutes sortes d'Airs M. de Bacilly réussit également. C'est ce qui a obligé deux grands hommes à faire un mot tout exprès pour exprimer ce qu'ils pensent d'un Génie si universel. Ils disent que de toute la musique, luy seul n'est point manieré, au lieu que l'on reconnoit la maniere de composer des autres Auteurs dans chacun des Airs qu'ils mettent au jour (...)', ('[...] M. de Bacilly writes airs as successfully in all sorts of different styles. This has compelled two famous men to write expressly what they thought of such a versatile genius. They say that in the musical world, he alone has no mannered style, while the style of other composers is easily recognisable in the airs they produce (...)', (*MG* 1st June 1684).

¹⁸⁴ This can be translated as 'this is like you but is not by you'.

¹⁸⁵ It is interesting to recall at this point the fact that many of Bacilly's airs were apparently attributed to Pierre de Nyert. (See Essay, Ch.4, p.97, fn.47.)

CHAPTER XII

On vocal ornaments

/135/ In singing as in all things, one makes the distinction between beauty and charm, and a piece of music may well be beautiful but may not charm the listener if it is not performed with the required ornaments. Most of these ornaments are not usually written down, either because there are no suitable symbols with which to indicate them,¹⁸⁶ or because it is thought that too many markings on the page would obscure and remove all neatness in an air and would give rise to confusion. Moreover there is little point in indicating ornaments if the singer does not know how to perform them properly, which is part of the problem.¹⁸⁷ In short, ornamentation is a long-accepted practice, /136/ which indeed lacks solid regulation.

The vocal ornaments which are not usually written in a piece of music are more or less as follows: the *port de voix* and the *cadence* (which is different from the normal *tremblement*, often called *flexion de voix*); the *double cadence*, the *demy-tremblement*, or rather the *tremblement étouffé*; the *soûtien de la voix* which occurs on cadences, and other long notes; *expression*, which is commonly called *passionner*; the *accent* or *aspiration* often called *plainte*; ‘certain almost imperceptible note repetitions done with the throat’, commonly called *animer*; and *diminution*, which is done when moving from one note to another and is not usually written down for the first verse of an air but only for the second verse. Ill-informed people call the practice of diminution ‘Method of singing’, and reduce all the subtlety of singing to what they /137/ barbarously call *fredon, roulement* and other similar words.¹⁸⁸

I could also add to the graces of singing the fine and pleasant pronunciation of words and their quantity. But I shall write about these in separate chapters, since it is the main aim of this treatise. Let us now examine all these particular ornaments.

¹⁸⁶ ‘soit parce qu’en effet ils ne se puissent marquer par le defaut des caracteres propres pour cela’; there is no mention here of Mersenne’s proposals (1636), 2, Bk.6, p.358 for stenographic symbols to indicate particular ornaments.

¹⁸⁷ Bacilly does not suggest writing-out the ornaments themselves and never does so in his treatise. It is clear from what follows that the context is really what matters as regards their execution, so that there is little point in giving written examples of isolated ornaments. Caswell (Bacilly [1964]) has noted the limited use of representing flexible ornaments in strict rhythm and pitch notation.

¹⁸⁸ In his introduction to Jean Millet’s 1666 treatise, Cohen (Millet [1666], pp.vi-vii) has pointed out that Millet takes this very view, reflecting the older tradition of vocal performance in which the application of embellishments and diminutions is considered to be of primary importance.

CHAPTER XII

ARTICLE 1

The *Port-* and *demy-Port de Voix.*

/137/ To begin with the *port de voix*, some people mistake it for a type of *soûtien*,¹⁸⁹ or ‘anticipation’ (to speak in their terms), which is performed before a *tremblement* or *cadence*. I call *port de voix* (and indeed the name itself is self-explanatory) the movement by way of a *coup de gosier*¹⁹⁰ from one note to another above it.¹⁹¹

There are therefore three things to consider in the performance of a *port de voix* (by which I mean the full and real *port de voix*), namely, the lower note /138/ which needs to be sustained; the *doublement du gosier*¹⁹² which is performed on the upper note; and the sustaining of the upper note after it has been repeated.¹⁹³ In the *demy-port de voix*,

¹⁸⁹ The *soûtien* (sustaining) is the preparatory note of the *cadence* or *tremblement*. See Ch.XII, art.2 and glossary.

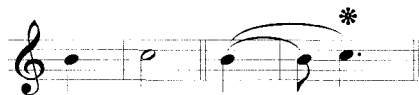
¹⁹⁰ Here *coup de gosier* implies a strike of the throat in order to change pitch.

¹⁹¹ Bacilly does not mention a descending *port de voix*. Rousseau (1710), p.52 made one mention of a descending *port de voix* in bass *récits* or at imperfect cadences in airs. Those of d’Ambruis (1685) ascend only. Later writers do not agree on the direction of the *port de voix*: d’Anglebert (1689) and Saint-Lambert (1702) describe both an ascending and descending ornament, while Chambonnières (1670), L’Affilard (1694, in Neumann [1983], p.63) and Loulié (1965) treat it as ascending. Loulié names the descending version a *coulé* or *chute* (1965), p.76. Neither Bacilly, nor Lambert (1666) nor Rousseau use a stenographic symbol for the *port de voix*, but d’Ambruis (1685) uses a small ‘v’ in the table provided in his ‘Avis’, as does L’Affilard.

¹⁹² Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.66, interpreted the *doublement* as an accented note-repetition; Neumann (1983), p.54-5, basing his evidence on later instrumental treatises such as Rousseau’s viol treatise (1687), found it more likely to be a *pincé* (mordent) figure, as did Donington (1989), p.518. There is sufficient evidence in this treatise and other sources to suggest that the *doublement* was primarily an intensity fluctuation associated with bow-vibrato and was called *balancement* by later theorists. (See Ch.XII, art.4 for a full discussion.) Bacilly used no symbol for the *doublement*: it is indicated in the editorial realisations below with an asterisk (*).

¹⁹³ ‘doublée’, i.e. after the *doublement* has been performed. Bacilly defines the three main characteristics of the *port de voix* at this stage; his more detailed description on pages 140-1/ 249-50 is anticipated here to avoid a misleading editorial realisation: he explains (p.141/ 250) that the initial, lower note must borrow some of the value of the upper note, thereby delaying and shortening the upper note and producing a syncopated ornament across the beat. An illustration of this is suggested in Ex.i a.

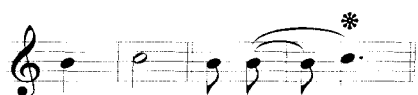
Ex.i a: *port de voix* (ed.)



However, Bacilly also stipulates that when the *port de voix* falls on a different syllable the lower note must be divided into two shorter notes (the only exceptions being some *ports de voix* on a rising third); the second of these two shorter notes is the note of the *port de voix*, on which the syllable that would normally fall on the upper note is anticipated. In this case, (pp.141-2/ 250-1) the second note must be sustained to delay the upper note (Ex.i b, over). Bacilly explains that when a *port de voix* is written out in the music, which is often the case in both the 1668 Bacilly volumes and Lambert’s 1666 book, the two lower notes appear to be of equal length, but must not be performed as such.

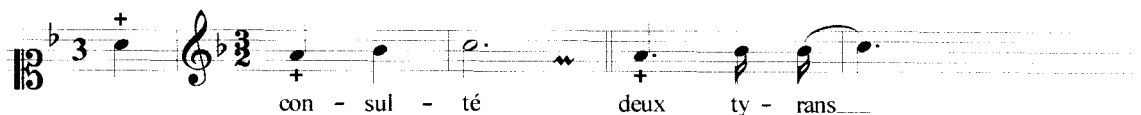
however, which is not a full one, there are only two things to consider; namely, the sustaining of the lower note before moving on to the upper one, and the *coup de gosier* which repeats the upper note¹⁹⁴ without in any way sustaining it.¹⁹⁵ This *coup de gosier* must be less forcefully and much more delicately executed than in the normal *port de voix*. The said *demy-port de voix*, which is incomplete, can also be formed in two other ways: one is by sliding to the upper note¹⁹⁶ without giving the emphasis required for a full *port de voix*, yet leaving the upper note its full length and value. I call this a *port de voix glissé* or *coulé*, whichever you prefer.¹⁹⁷ The other way of performing a *demy-port de voix* is by denying the upper note its full value and instead giving almost all of it to

Ex.i b: *port de voix plein* (ed.)



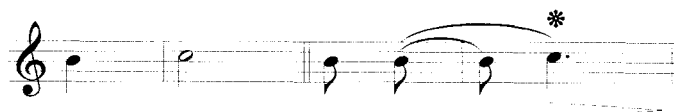
Ex.ii is an illustration of a written-out *port de voix* as they appear in the airs, from Bacilly I (1668), pp.28 and 30. It shows the two corresponding places in the *simple* and the *double* of the air *En vain j'ay consulté l'amour*: the second syllable of the word 'Tyrens' is clearly anticipated.

Ex.ii: Bacilly I (1668), pp.18, 20.



¹⁹⁴ The *coup de gosier* here refers to the movement of the throat done to perform the *doublement*.

¹⁹⁵ Ex.iii: Bacilly, *demy-port de voix* (ed.):



¹⁹⁶ 'en coulant le coup de gosier'.

¹⁹⁷ Bacilly does not specify whether the *port de voix coulé* retains a *doublement*, though this may be unlikely if the upper note retains its full value. On p.60, giving an example of the performance of this type of *port de voix* ascending from *mi* to sharpened *fa*, he describes sliding upwards from *mi* via natural *fa*. Later, p.174/ 280, Bacilly speaks of sliding 'as in an imperceptible *port de voix* in semitones'. Neither does Bacilly specify that the lower note should be split and the second syllable anticipated before moving upwards when the *port de voix* covers two syllables, though as it is an alternative *demy-port de voix*, which does involve such a split, it is possible that the *port de voix coulé* involves one too. There is no symbol for this ornament. Nivers (1665), who speaks of 'couler les notes' on the organ to imitate vocal practice by delaying slightly the release of consecutive notes, illustrates his 'coulement' with an upward slash. This has been adopted in Ex.iv.

Ex.iv: *Port de voix coulé* (ed.)



the lower note that precedes it. I call this a *port de voix perdu*¹⁹⁸ and I shall give some examples of it later in this treatise.

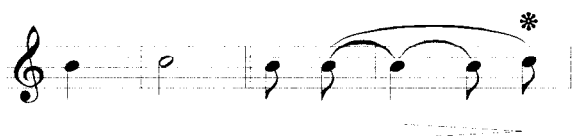
/139/ Although singers take pride in their ability to perform a *port de voix*, there is nothing so rare and so revealing of one's training as the correct performance of a real *port de voix* with the precision and emphasis it requires. Some people do not sufficiently sustain the lower note and are too hasty and impatient to move on to the upper one (which is the most frequent error). Others do not emphasize enough the *doublement* with their throat, thinking that it would sound too harsh or often because nature has denied them the ability to do so. Still others do not sufficiently sustain the upper note, either through negligence or ignorance, thinking it unnecessary.

As for the *demy-port de voix*, it can fail if the lower note is not sustained for long enough or if too rough an emphasis is placed on the repetition of the upper note. So that what is referred to as 'firmness' in the performance of a *port de voix* becomes 'harshness' in the case of the *demy-port de voix*. One can give examples for the *port de*
/140/ *voix*, but it is more difficult to write [examples] on paper for the *demy-port de voix* because in performance the upper note is hardly sustained after its repetition, as in what I call the *port de voix perdu*, and the singers may assume that they must sing the notes as they see them written. However, as I have just mentioned, there is a *port de voix* which can only be performed by sliding over the notes, and for which there is no particular musical sign capable of indicating this sliding or gliding performed with the throat.

One should also be aware that in the performance of the *port* and *demy-port de voix* the lower note is repeated, even though on paper only one note is indicated. Or (to make the matter clearer) one should note that when the *port de voix* is not performed on the first syllable, one must assume the same note for the second syllable on which the

¹⁹⁸As for the *port de voix coulé*, no specific mention is made of the division of the lower note when the *port de voix perdu* occurs on two syllables, nor is there any mention of a *doublement* on the upper note. Their inclusion here is based on the assumption that this differs from the normal *demy-port de voix* only in the lengthy sustaining of the lower note.

Ex.v: Bacilly, *Port de voix perdu* (ed.):



port de voix is performed as on the first syllable.¹⁹⁹ There is an example of this on page 5 of the book of airs *in quarto*. [Ex.18]

/141/ *Nous sommes trop pres de la Mort.*

Example 18 [Lambert 1666, pp.4-5]

The musical score for Example 18 is in 3/2 time. It consists of a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff contains the melody with lyrics: "Nous som - mes trop pres de la mort". The bass staff contains a single line of music with fingerings: 6, 5, 3, 4, 3. The word "mort" has a first ending bracket above it.

One must repeat the *fa*²⁰⁰ of the preceding syllable on the word *mort*, on which the *port de voix* is performed; or rather, the crotchet must be divided into two quavers, of which the first will be on the syllable *la* and the second on *mort*, before performing the *port de voix* by way of a *coup de gosier* and repeating the *sol*, and then sustaining it. And this is not all: for although I say that the crotchet must be split into two quavers, and that the syllable *la* falls on the second of these, not only must a quaver be borrowed from the preceding syllable but one must also borrow some of the value of the following upper note by anticipation. This must be joined to what has already been borrowed from the

¹⁹⁹ Bacilly is alone in describing a syncopated *port de voix* which begins before the beat and delays the second note, and makes no exception, in his text at least, to the pre-beat design (but see below, Ex.30 and accompanying footnote, where an on-beat design is written out in the 1st book *in octavo*). Towards the end of the seventeenth century, an alternative on-beat *port de voix*, which borrows its value wholly from the second note, became increasingly frequent. The pre-beat design is apparent in d'Ambruis (1685). Both Rousseau (1710) and Loulié (1965) describe a pre-beat and an on-beat *port de voix*; D'Anglebert (1689) illustrates an on-beat *port de voix* only and Saint-Lambert (1702) specifies that the on-beat *port de voix* is better for vocal music than for instrumental music.

²⁰⁰ Throughout most of the treatise, Bacilly uses the Guidonian system of solmization, involving three basic hexachords, when referring to notes: the 'natural' hexachord begins on C, the 'soft' on F (so called because it uses the B ♭, the 'round' or 'soft' B of medieval notation) and the 'hard' hexachord on G (which uses the 'square' or 'hard' B). Each note is named *do*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, and is relative to the hexachord in use; if the range of the hexachord is exceeded, then the process of mutation ('muance') is called for by changing from one hexachord to another. Excursions of a semitone outside the hexachord were possible but technically incorrect. The *fa* in this example is that of the soft hexachord, beginning on F; however, this would normally be a B flat so it seems that Bacilly has ignored the B natural on the penultimate note in this example or has failed to change hexachords (the principle is that *mi-fa* is always a semitone, so Bacilly should have referred to these pitches as *mi* and *fa* of the hard hexachord on G). The system of three hexachords existed alongside the 'méthode du si' (or 'solfège au naturel'), which employs a seventh note (the *si*) during the second half of the century in France before it was superseded at the end of the century. In the Netherlands in the 16th century, the system of bocedization, a seven-syllable system of solmization attributed to Hubert Waelrant (c.1516-95) was introduced, as was the system of the extended hexachord where *bi* was added as a seventh note. But in France, the use of the 'méthode du si', which removed the need for mutations, was first attributed to Nivers around 1666 (Benoit [1992], p.645). Bacilly demonstrates that he was aware of it and uses it in Ex.48 (pp.158-9/ 267-9), so this failure to acknowledge the B natural is all the more puzzling.

preceding note in order to make a complete *port de voix*, consisting in a lengthy sustaining of the lower note before the *coup de gosier*,²⁰¹ in which almost every singer fails.

Although critics may find this explanation pointless, since /142/ it seems to state the obvious, I find it all the more necessary that when a *port de voix* is notated in the usual way, the lower note preceding the move upwards is just divided equally, with no indication that value must be borrowed from the following note. This can be seen in the diminution of the air which I have just mentioned, on page 6. [Ex.19]

En mourant, que je meurs d'amour.

Example 19 [Lambert 1666, p.6]

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a lute line. The vocal line is in 3/2 time and features a port de voix on the word 'amour'. The lute line is in 3/2 time and features a sixteenth-note figure with fingerings 6, 3, 3, 4, 3. The lyrics are 'En mou-rant que je meurs d'a-mour'.

Here we see that the author has divided the quaver destined for the first syllable of the word *amour* into two semiquavers, placing the second on the syllable *-mour*. If one were merely to sing this as it is written, the result would be awkward and would be breaking the rule which requires that the lower note be sustained for some considerable time before moving to the upper note. Therefore one must, so to speak, ‘give the note a hand’ by borrowing some of the value of the following *sol*²⁰² and making it shorter than it is written. This can serve as a reference for all /143/ similar instances, which reveal that the written music shows one thing but another must be sung for the sake of a graceful execution.

Since the *port* and *demy-port de voix* are essential to accomplished singing, nothing puts singers into such a predicament as the correct placing of these ornaments, in order to make their singing firm without being harsh and soft without being weak.

²⁰¹ Neumann (1983), p.55, has written that Bacilly’s normal procedure is not to delay the upper note. This is misleading, as Bacilly explains that although on paper it seems that the first note is split and the second one left whole, the rule in performance is to borrow from both the lower and upper note. This is not merely relevant to the example given but to all *ports de voix* and illustrates the ‘sustaining of the lower note’ to which Bacilly refers at the outset of his explanation on page 138/ 248.

²⁰² Soft hexachord, i.e. *c*”.

The best advice one can give for full *ports de voix* is always to perform them at final cadences, at secondary cadences (when appropriate) and at other principal cadences, where *demy-ports de voix* are rarely performed since they should be placed instead at less important points in an air. A *port de voix plein* should always be reserved for these important places. Here are some examples.

Page 45 of the book *in quarto*:

Finir mon amour & sa haine.

Example 20 [Lambert 1666, p.45]

Musical score for Example 20, showing two systems of music. The first system includes a bass line and a vocal line. The bass line starts in 3/4 time and changes to 3/2 time. The vocal line has lyrics: "fi - nir mon A -". The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "- mour et sa hay - ne". Fingerings are indicated by numbers 3, 5, 6, 3, 3, 3, 3, 5 in the first system and 6, 3, 5, 6, 3/6, 5 in the second system. A first ending bracket is present over the final notes of the second system.

The *port de voix* on the last syllable of *haine* must be a *port de voix plein*, because it is the final cadence of an air. The same must be said of the one performed on the last syllable of *vaine* in the same air: [Ex.21]

Ah! c'est trop se flatter d'une esperance vaine.

Example 21 [Lambert 1666, p.45]

Musical score for Example 21, showing a bass line and a vocal line. The bass line starts in 3/4 time and changes to 3/2 time. The vocal line has lyrics: "Ah! c'est trop se flat -". Fingerings are indicated by numbers 3, 3/6, 5, 6, 6.

Although the author clearly indicated the one on *haine* [Ex.20],²⁰³ he has not done so on *vaine*, which he let the singer assume because it occurs at an important cadence in this air, as if it were a secondary or final cadence. Note that when I say ‘cadence’ I am speaking in terms of the method of singing.²⁰⁴

The same applies on page 57 of the same book, in the air

J'aimerois mieux souffrir la mort, &c.

The author has expressly written two *ports de voix* (without, however, indicating the *coup de gosier*)²⁰⁵ on the words *feroit* and *voir* in this verse: [Ex.22]

Et quand je ne ferois que l'aimer & la voir.

Example 22 [Lambert 1666, p.57]

/145/ These must be *ports de voix pleins*, though the first could just be a *demy-port de voix*.

Knowing whether to perform a *port de voix plein* or just a *demy-port de voix* is therefore what puts those who learn an air from the written music²⁰⁶ into a great predicament. And that is not all, for in certain places one must perform neither of them

²⁰³ It is indicated by way of a slur and the anticipation of the last syllable.

²⁰⁴ The clarification Bacilly makes is in fact confusing, due to the dual, yet overlapping meaning of the term *cadence*. It would seem more logical for Bacilly to be speaking here in terms of composition rather than in terms of singing.

²⁰⁵ Bacilly stresses throughout this article that the *port de voix* can only be written in its most basic shape.

²⁰⁶ This is in contrast to those who listen to the composer performing it, as discussed in Ch.V.

and favour instead a *tremblement*, as can be seen on the following words further on in the air, on the same page: [Ex.23]

Je seray trop heureux, etc.,

Example 23 [Lambert 1666, p.57]

Je se - ray trop heu - reux

♯3 6 3 3

If the singer performed a *port de voix* on the last syllable of the word *heureux*, as he is entitled to, the effect would not sound as good as if a *tremblement* were performed. The same applies for the last syllable of the word *desespoir* [Ex.24] on page 8 in the same book.

Enfans de ma douleur & de mon desespoir.

Example 24 [Lambert 1666, p.8]

En - fans de ma dou - leur et

de mon de - ses - poir, I - nu[tiles]

♯3 3 5 3 4 ♯3

A *tremblement* is preferable to a *port de voix* on this syllable, according to the author's /146/ intention. It is wrong to say that the presence of a 'sharp' implies this clearly enough (as I shall discuss in the following article) for this would establish an incorrect rule as regards the *tremblement*. There are many more examples, based only on *bon goust*, for which no definite rule can be established, unless the aim is to confuse people rather than enlighten them. For if singing could be regulated in this way, there would be little point in writing this treatise. However, there are many other instances for which

rules can be established, if not for composition and application, then at least for performance.

It must be observed that the *port* or *demy-port de voix* is not only performed by ascending from one note to the one immediately above it, by which I mean by a second, but also when ascending by a third, a fourth, a fifth and a sixth. Experts call these ‘intervals’, in which the *port de voix* is far more at risk, not of omission, as I observed in the above examples, /147/ but of being placed wrongly, which happens frequently, and of being performed incorrectly.

Here are examples of all these intervals, in which one can study the instances when the author has indicated a *port de voix* and when he has omitted it. From these examples one will have an idea of how to proceed in similar situations.

This example is from the book *in quarto*, on page 57. [Ex.25]

Je seray trop heureux le reste de ma vie.

Example 25 [Lambert 1666, p.57]

Je se - ray trop heu - reux

3 6 3 3

On the last syllable of the word *seray*, a *port*, or rather a *demy-port de voix* must be placed on the rising fourth, by repeating the *re* of the first syllable to ascend to the *sol*,²⁰⁷ which is on the last syllable. Yet it can be omitted and the notes may be sung as written. In the same book, on page 5: [Ex.26]

Ne vous offencez pas, Silvie.

Example 26 [Lambert 1666, p.5]

ne vous of - fen - cez pas

6 3

²⁰⁷ Hard hexachord, on G, i.e. *d''*.

Musical score for the words "Sil - - vi - - e". The score is written on two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note Bb4, and a half note C5. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The bass line consists of a half note G3, a half note F3, a half note E3, and a half note D3. There are fingerings indicated: '3' under the first G3 and '5' under the first E3.

A *port de voix* could also be performed on this fourth, while rising from the word /148/ *vous* to the first syllable of the word *offencez*, by repeating the *mi*²⁰⁸ of *vous* and anticipating the following syllable before moving to the *la*. I find it more suitable to omit the *port de voix*, if only for the reason that the first syllable of the word *offencez* is short and seems to go against a *port de voix*. This reason is even more obvious as regards the same interval of a fourth which occurs on the following words from the air *Oüy j'aime ma prison* on page 58 of the second book *in octavo*. [Ex.27]

O Beauté sans seconde.

Example 27 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.58]

Musical score for the words "[ai]mer ô beau - té sans se - con - de". The score is written on two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 3/2. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/2. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note Bb4, a half note C5, a half note Bb4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F4. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/2. The bass line consists of a half note G3, a half note F3, a half note E3, a half note D3, a half note C3, a half note B2, a half note A2, and a half note G2. There are fingerings indicated: '3' under the first G3, '6' under the first F3, '5' under the first E3, '4' under the first D3, and '6' under the first C3. There is a first ending bracket over the final G4 and F4 notes.

I am speaking of the fourth which rises from the *mi* of *ô* to the *la*²⁰⁹ of the first syllable of *beauté*. This is based on what I shall discuss on page 152 of this treatise, concerning the same word *beauté*.²¹⁰ In the second verse, there is similarly no *port de voix* on the word *ardeur*, which corresponds to the word *beauté* in the first verse. [Ex.28]

Example 28 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.60]

Musical score for the words "jour d'u-ne ar - deur sans se - con - de". The score is written on two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 3/2. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/2. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note Bb4, a half note C5, a half note Bb4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F4. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/2. The bass line consists of a half note G3, a half note F3, a half note E3, a half note D3, a half note C3, a half note B2, a half note A2, and a half note G2. There are fingerings indicated: '4' under the first G4, '4' under the first F4, and '4' under the first E4. There is a first ending bracket over the final G4 and F4 notes.

²⁰⁸ Soft hexachord, on F, i.e. *a'*.

²⁰⁹ Natural hexachord, on C, i.e. *e'-a'*.

²¹⁰ This involves the performance of a special type of *port de voix* inspired by the meaning of *beauté*.

The reason for this is different: the first syllable of the word *ardeur* is short, as I shall explain in my discussion on quantity; or /149/ if it is not very short because of the *r* which precedes another consonant, and is as a result exempt from the list of very short syllables (I shall explain this further on), it is yet not long enough to be able to sustain a *port de voix* on the interval of a fourth. The author has therefore correctly decided that it should be sung simply as written.

In the [first book *in octavo*], on page 5[3]:²¹¹ [Ex.29]

Qu'il ne faut pas toujours dire la verité.

Example 29 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.53]

[tou]jours Qu'il ne faut pas tou - jours di - re la ve - ri - té
[tou]jours Qu'il ne faut pas tou - jours di - re la ve - ri - té

It is appropriate to perform a *port de voix*, or rather a *demy-port de voix* on the word *faut*, as well as on the corresponding word in the second verse, on the rising fourth on the last syllable of *ayez*, by singing *mi mi la*.²¹² [Ex.30]

Example 30 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.55]²¹³

moy Et n'ay - ez plus pour moy tant de
se - ve - ri - té

As regards the interval of a third, the *port de voix* is performed differently. For when rising to a note a fourth above the lower note, the first note is repeated and then

²¹¹ Bacilly wrote 'in the same book, on page 52', when in fact this example is in the first volume, p.53.

²¹² Soft hexachord, on F, i.e. *a' a' d'*."

²¹³ This is the only example of a written-out on-beat *port de voix*. Bacilly unfortunately does not comment on it. It is difficult to assess whether he meant an on-beat design as illustrated: if not, the two resulting demisemiquavers would give the impression of a rather rushed execution; on the other hand, the performance of ornaments was rhythmically flexible, particularly in the *air sérieux*. Saint-Arroman (Bacilly-Saint-Arroman [1996]), vol.1, p.19, accepts this illustration as a written-out *demi-port de voix*.

the upper note is also repeated with the throat, without singing any of the notes in between these two; thus one would sing *mi mi la la*.²¹⁴ However, /150/ when a *port de voix* is performed on a third, the middle note is sung, resulting in *re re mi fa*²¹⁵ in the following air, which can serve as a reference for all *ports de voix* of this kind. It occurs on page 37 of the first book *in octavo*. [Ex.31]

Souffrir tant de martire.

Example 31 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.37]

A *port de voix* is required on the last syllable of *souffrir* and yet one rises from *re* to *fa* via the *mi*, as is expressly indicated.²¹⁶

The same applies for the word *attraits* on page 60 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.32], where one must sing *fa sol la*²¹⁷ instead of *fa la* and perform a *port de voix plein*, as is also indicated in the music, though the singer could have easily guessed as much from normal notation.

²¹⁴ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. *a' a' d'' d''*.

²¹⁵ Natural hexachord on C, i.e. *d' d' e' f*.

²¹⁶ This *port de voix* does not appear to be 'expressly indicated' in this example. However, the double on pp.38-9 [Ex.vi a], to the same words, illustrates what Bacilly is explaining: Ex.vi a [Bacilly I, 1668, p.39]:

In his editorial preface to the facsimile edition of the *Nouveau livre d'airs* of 1661, Saint-Arroman provides an editorial rendition of Bacilly's description concerning this example [Ex.vi b]. However, he uses the term 'port de voix double' in reference to this example, which is misleading as Bacilly never uses this term himself, and in addition, Saint-Arroman asserts that it is placed before the beat without providing any evidence for this.

Ex.vi b [Bacilly-Saint-Arroman 1996, vol.1, p.16]

²¹⁷ In this example the *port de voix* does not fall on a different, anticipated syllable; therefore the first note is not split, resulting in *fa sol la* instead of *fa fa sol la* (natural hexachord on C, i.e. *f' g' a'*).

Example 32 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.60]

vos di - vins at - traits

These intervals also appear in the air *Vous ne pouvez Iris*, etc., on page 60 of the [first] book *in octavo*, on the penultimate syllable of the words *defendre* [Ex.33] and *commander* [Ex.34], where a *port de voix* can be performed on both of these rising fourths.

Example 33 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.61]

[defen]dre me de - fen - dre de jus - tes

[defen]dre me de - fen - dre me de - fen - dre de

Example 34 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.61]

C'est me com - man - der de mou - rir

[com]man - der me com - man - der de mou - rir

But in fact it would be better to omit them, as the author /151/ suggests, perhaps because these two words, which almost mean the same thing, require something stronger and bolder, as I mentioned earlier concerning the word *attaquer*. The same cannot be said of the corresponding words in the second verse, for a *port de voix* is very appropriate on the last syllable of the word *helas* [Ex.35] and on the word *est* [Ex.36], which you will find on the following page and which are clearly indicated.

Example 35 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.62]

[crain]dre he - las il n'est plus temps de

Example 36 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.62]

Quand on est si préz de mou - rir

Great care should be taken over placing a *port de voix* on a fifth or sixth. For instance, if a person wanted to place one on the word *tort* in the air *C'est bien à tort*, etc., on page 24 of the first book *in octavo* [Ex.37] - the *ut* preceding the *sol* on the word *tort* creates a fifth²¹⁸ – he would sing *ut ut sol* instead of *ut sol*.

Example 37 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.24]

C'est bien à tort que l'on

However, this would result in nothing worthwhile, and it is far better to sing this interval plainly than wanting to perform this ornament where it is not suitable.

Besides, one should observe that although the *port de voix* is the main track which singers must /152/ follow, as it is very beneficial even to acquiring good intonation, I mean the full *port de voix* and only when it is performed in the appropriate place, there are some master strokes that go beyond the rules. I mean that experts, through an artistic licence, which as a result of their skill, adds gracefulness to singing, sometimes omit the full *port de voix* and instead simply throw the lower note onto the upper one with an imperceptible repetition of the note.²¹⁹ They do this mainly on words

²¹⁸ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *g'-d''*.

²¹⁹ On page 153/ 262, Bacilly compares this ornament to a violin bow-stroke, explaining that it involves 'repeating the note imperceptibly' and is called *animer*. This is presumably a repetition of the lower note, which would result in a light *acciaccatura* (Ex.vii, over). There is no mention of a *doublement* on the upper note. This last *port de voix* is not listed by Neumann (1983).

that seem to require more simplicity than the compound *port de voix* provides. This can be seen in the following examples, which beginners are better advised to study rather than to try to copy. Page 16 in the second book *in octavo*, on the last syllable of this verse: [Ex.38]

Tout ce qui fait une beauté.

Example 38 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.16]

6 tout ce qui fait u - ne beau - té
4 #

6 tout ce qui fait u - ne beau - té

This is also the case on the last syllable of *secours*, on both occasions, in the following air on page 28 in the first book *in octavo*: [Ex.39]

Au secours ma raison.

Example 39 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.28]

Au se - cours Au se - cours ma rai - son
6 #

luth Au se - cours ma rai - son

Another example can be found in the same book on page 40, on the last syllable of the word *celer* [Ex.40], unless one /153/ prefers to sing a *demy-port de voix*, which is also possible:

C'est un bien de celer, etc.,

Ex.vii: Bacilly, *animer* (ed.):

Arger (1921), p.31 illustrated one of the definitions of the *port de voix* in François David's 1737 *Méthode nouvelle ou principes généraux pour apprendre facilement la musique et l'art du chant* (Paris, Lyon, 1737): this is an ascending and descending ornament which can be related to Bacilly's *animer*, but which David qualified as 'too intolerable to use' in most instances. However, Arger (p.105) noted that David often disagreed with the majority of his contemporaries on the definition of ornaments.

Example 40 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.40]

C'est un bien de ce - ler

C'est un bien de ce - ler

One can even be performed on the word *fois*, which occurs at the end of the following verse on page 41 of the book *in quarto*: [Ex.41]

Mais, Philis, quand j'aime une fois.

Example 41 [Lambert 1666, p.41]

mais pour moy quand j'ay - me u - ne fois

5 6 5 6 5 #6 4 3

In all these places it would be better, and even more elegant, to omit the *port de voix*, but this omission must be replaced by a somewhat bold move achieved by repeating the note imperceptibly. This is commonly called *animer*, in comparison to what is achieved with the stroke of a violin bow. If nothing replaced the *port de voix*, the air would sound dull and pitiful.

If you ask me the reason for this licence and why this liberty can be taken in these examples and not in others, I shall tell you that often, it is only a question of *bon goust*. And yet, to satisfy your curiosity, I am willing to tell you that /154/ in the first example, the word *beauté* does not seem to require any additional ornament to embellish it, because the word speaks for itself. This is also true of other words, which appear to require something plain and simple, as in the following examples taken from airs which, though unpublished, are quite well known in the singing world:

Philis on diroit à vous voir, etc., [Ex.42]²²⁰

²²⁰ Although Bacilly mentions that these airs were not published at the time of the treatise, this one appeared in Ballard's 1656 *Livre d'airs de devotion*, pp.11-12, for which Berthod adapted the poetry of airs to suit devotional singing. The first line of the original lyrics is placed as a heading at the top of the page and becomes 'Jesus on diroit à vous voir' in the parody. The text of the second verse is provided at

Example 42 [(Lambert) 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.230]²²¹

Phi - lis on di - roit a vous voir

Je meurs, vous le voyez, etc., [Ex.43]²²²

Example 43 [(Lambert) Ballard IV 1661, fol.9v]

Je meurs, vous le voyez

Je meurs, vous le voyez, et quel - que vi - o[lence]

Toy, Philis, qui connois, etc., [Ex.44]

from the air *Pourrois-tu douter de ma foy?*

Example 44 [Ballard I, 1658, fol.38v-39]²²³

Pour-rois tu dou-ter de ma foy Toy Phi -

Pour - rois tu dou - ter de ma foy Toy Phi -

the foot of p.11 and the *dessus* and vocal bass part are on facing pages. Musically, there are only minor rhythmic differences between the two versions in the bass part owing to the fact that one is vocal, the other instrumental.

²²¹ This air has been identified as Lambert's in Massip (1999), p.321. Only one verse is provided.

²²² Although Bacilly claims that these airs are unpublished, Ballard published a version of this air for two voices in 1661 (Ballard IV [1661], fol.9v-10r). A later version exists in the Foucault manuscript, which differs melodically in the *dessus* part and in the vocal bass part. Massip (1999), p.176-7, has listed the airs in the Foucault manuscript whose authorship by Lambert is contradicted in a manuscript dating from c.1670-80, 'Airs de Boesset, Lambert, Lully, Le Camus', in the B.N.F. music department, Vm⁷ 501, in which 'Je meurs, vous le voyez' is given on fol.26r. However, she suggests that the attribution of the airs from fol.1-29 in this manuscript to Jean-Baptiste Boesset (1614-1685, successor to his father Anthoine Boesset as 'Surintendant de la Musique du Roi' in 1643, a position he later shared with Lully) may be a copyist's error, and that Lambert's airs in fact begin on fol.25 rather than fol.29.

²²³ The words of a second verse are provided at the foot of f.38v. The vocal bass part is provided separately on f.39. This air is also included in 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.265; there are minor rhythmic changes in the *dessus* and bass part, which is instrumental.

The *port de voix* is rightly omitted from these examples, for it would sound too harsh. One must break the usual rule so that the last syllable in each of these three fragments retains a certain simplicity of pronunciation, which seems appropriate to the three words *voir*, *voyez* and *connois*.

In the second /155/ example I have cited [on pages 152-153, Ex.39], if the *port de voix* is omitted on the last syllable of the word *secours*, it is because the *doublement du gosier* would be too harsh due to the diphthong *ou*. The same applies in the fourth example [Ex.41] to the diphthong *oi* from *fois*. Thus the performance or omission of a *port de voix* in these two examples somewhat depends on the appreciation and the willingness of the singer. The following example can be added to the above two, from the second verse of the air *Je meurs vous le voyez*, which I have already mentioned [on page 154]:

Ce n'est point par des cris, etc., [Ex.45]²²⁴

²²⁴ The Ballard IV (1661) edition used in Ex.42 only provides the text for the second verse, not the music. However, the Foucault manuscript version contains a *double* for the *dessus* part, although the text is altered to 'ce n'est point par des pleurs, ce n'est point par des plaintes'. The first verse to which this *double* corresponds begins as follows (Ex.viii). Its *double* is Ex.45.
Ex.viii [Foucault ms. fol.27v]

Example 45 [Foucault ms. fol. 28v]

Ce n'est point par des

pleurs ce n'est point par des plain - tes

The *port de voix* which could be sung on the word *cris* is also omitted here, perhaps due to the letter *i*; but this is not a general rule, for one can sing a *port de voix* on an *i* just as well as on other vowels and this is only a matter of *bon gust*. *Goust* must also help in deciding whether to omit the *port de voix* on the word *celer* in the third example [Ex.39], though the grounds for this omission /156/ would seem to be that the word requires some plainness. However, this reason cannot apply in the following example of a well-known air:

Cessez de m'attaquer, etc. [Ex.46]²²⁵

Example 46 [(Lambert), 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.203]²²⁶

Ces - sez de m'at - ta -

- quer a - vec des yeux si doux

²²⁵ The authorship of this air is questioned in Vm⁷ 501, fol.27r (See fn.222) but is probably by Lambert (Massip [1999], pp.177 and 322). Bacilly attributes the music to Lambert and the poetry to Michel Le Clerc in his *Recueil* of 1661 (see Lachèvre [1967], vol.2, p.333). It is provided in the Foucault manuscript, fol.7r-8v with a *double*.

²²⁶ Bacilly, in his 1661 *Recueil*, attributes this air to Lambert, with words by Le Clerc (see Lachèvre [1967], vol.2, p.333). This air also appears in the Foucault ms., fol.7r-7v, with minor rhythmic differences in the *dessus* part and minor rhythmic and harmonic alterations in the instrumental bass part; this source also provides a *double*, whereas the 'Airs' ms. c.1661 provides the text only for the *double*. Ballard published a version of this air in the 1656 *Livre d'airs de devotion*, pp.29-30, as 'Cessez de m'attaquer vous n'avez rien de doux'. There are minor rhythmic differences in both parts of the Ballard edition compared to the manuscript sources.

in which it seems that the word *attaquer* requires something powerful; yet the author has rightly decided that only one note should be sung on the last syllable. However, if the note is pushed a little,²²⁷ as the author wishes,²²⁸ then it eminently contains a *port de voix*, which is in fact diverted and does not follow the main track,²²⁹ an effect which could seem contrary to the meaning of the word *attaquer*.²³⁰

I could give many more examples which all rely on *bon goust*, such as the last syllable of the word *déclaré* in the air *Vous ignorez encor mon amoureux martyr*.

Ay-je parlé trop bas quand je l'ay déclaré? [Ex.47]

Example 47 [Ballard I, 1658, fol.34v-35]²³¹

The image shows a musical score for the air 'Ay-je parlé trop bas quand je l'ay déclaré?'. It consists of two staves: a vocal line in treble clef and a bass line in bass clef. The vocal line has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The final note of the vocal line is marked with a sharp sign (#) and a square box containing a checkmark (☑). The bass line starts with a double bar line and a common time signature, followed by a key signature change to one sharp (F#). The lyrics for the bass line are written below the notes.

The author of this air often takes the liberty of omitting the *port /157/ de voix* when he sings it. The same is true of

Pleurez cruels Auteurs, etc.,²³²

²²⁷ 'cette note estant poussée'; this could mean either that the note is 'prolonged' or that the volume is increased. However, later in the treatise Bacilly seems to suggest it is the latter: in article 3 below (Bacilly [1668], p.194) he explains that the sound of the voice must not be moderated 'sur tout dans le *port de voix*, qui souvent se fait sur des paroles qui demanderoient bien plutost qu'on le poussast avec quelque violence'. He makes the meaning of 'pousser' clearer by further specifying on the same page that the voice can get quieter but only after it has achieved the contrary: 'l'adoucissement vient fort à propos, mais c'est apres son contraire, je veux dire apres avoir poussé en avant la finale, ou d'une *cadence* [...] ou d'un *port de voix plein*'. Thus 'pousser la voix' and 'pousser la notte' appear to involve the same action: an increase in volume.

²²⁸ We must assume that Bacilly heard the author express his wish for it is hard to see how this could be represented in notation.

²²⁹ The effect is a crescendo on the last syllable of 'attaquer'; a crescendo, we are told on p.194, is the penultimate step involved in the performance of a *port de voix*. Therefore the other steps of the *port de voix* have been bypassed entirely, which is why the ornament here 'does not follow the main track' ('lequel dans le fonds semble biaiser et ne pas aller le grand chemin'). When Bacilly writes that this crescendo 'eminently contains a *port de voix*', he must be taking the term *port de voix* literally, as in 'porter la voix', 'projecting the voice'.

²³⁰ Though the word 'attaquer' may normally require a powerful expression, this particular line means 'Cease attacking me'; the author's decision not to perform a strong *port de voix* on this occasion reflects the meaning of the text.

²³¹ The authorship of this air is questioned in Vm⁷ 501, fol.26v but is probably by Lambert (Massip [1999], pp.177 and 322). Bacilly attributes the music to Lambert and the poetry to Benserade in his *Recueil* of 1661 (see Lachèvre [1967], vol.4, pp.58 and 235). It is given in the Foucault manuscript, fol.131v-132r, with no *double* and with some alterations: the *dessus* part begins after an additional minim rest and the instrumental bass part provokes some harmonic differences.

²³² Lachèvre (1967), vol.3, p.533 lists Jean-François Sarrasin as the author of the poem.

from the air *Puisque vous connoissez mes yeux*, and

J'aime encor l'injuste Silvie,²³³

in which one may omit the *port de voix* on the final syllable of *auteurs* and *encor*.

I could go on forever, but this would become a sterile rather than fruitful commentary on airs. Nevertheless, in order to elucidate further the matter of the *port* and *demy-port de voix*, I find it necessary to point out all the differences that occur in a single air, so as to group together all the points that can be made. For this purpose I have chosen the air *Après mille rigueurs*, which is on page 73 of the second book of airs *in octavo* [Ex.48].²³⁴ One can clearly observe the three different ways of performing a *port de voix* when ascending from one note to the next immediately above it, that is to say a semitone or tone above it. For it is usually on such occasions that the singer has difficulty in knowing whether /158/ to perform the *port de voix* or to omit it; whether, if omitted, to perform a *tremblement* instead; whether to sing a full *port de voix*, that is to say, a strongly emphasized *coup de gosier*²³⁵ that sounds somewhat 'harsh' (though only to the ill-informed) or a softened and sliding one, which results in a soft *port de voix*, as if it was only a *demy-port de voix*; or finally whether a third type is required, a *port de voix perdu* with regards to the sustaining of the upper note, for this note is almost suppressed in this third way of performing a *port de voix* by being made very short, though it is reiterated.

Example 48 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.73]²³⁶

The image shows a musical score for the air 'Après mille rigueurs'. It consists of two staves: a vocal line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The time signature is 3/2. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'A - prez mil - le ri - gueurs vous par - tez'. The vocal line has a fermata over the final note. The bass line has a fermata over the final note. There are some markings above the bass line, including a sharp sign and the number 6.

²³³ Massip (1999), p.333, lists the author of the text of this air by Lambert as anonymous, but the music is lost.

²³⁴ The *double* of this air contains a number of indicated *ports de voix* and is provided as a useful comparison as Appendix I.

²³⁵ This refers to the firm move from the lower to the upper note and not to the *doublement de gosier*.

²³⁶ Lachèvre (1967), vol.3, p.495, lists Quinault as the poet of this text.

-tez donc Cli-me - ne Sans au - cun soin des maux où
 donc Cli- me - ne Sans au - cun soin des maux des maux où
 vous m'a- ban - don - nez Dûs- siez vous re - ve - nir
 vous m'a- ban - don - nez *Luth* Dûs - siez vous re - ve -
 en - cor plus in - hu mai - ne
 - nir en - cor plus in - hu mai - ne He - las cru - el -
 He - las cru - el - le re - ve - nez He -
 - le re - ve - nez re - ve - nez He - las cru -
 - las cru - el - le cru - el - le re - ve - nez
 - el - le re - ve - nez cru - el - le cru - el - le re - ve - nez

Let us therefore ‘dissect’²³⁷ this air, especially the passages that can illustrate these differences. One could be in trouble right from the start, by not knowing whether a *port*

²³⁷ ‘pour faire donc l’*Anatomie* de cet Air’. The foundation in Paris of the Académie des sciences (1666), in imitation of the London Royal Society (1662), stimulated great enthusiasm for scientific observation and experiment amongst the intellectual elite and the salons: that of Mme de la Sablière, whose personal interests extended to attending dissection sessions, drew a number of eminent philosophers, theorists and writers, including La Fontaine (see La Fontaine [1967], pp.11-15). Descartes’ *Discours de la Methode*, containing a discussion on blood circulation in which he urges his readers to witness a dissection themselves (Descartes [1992], pp.157-167) was also widely known and discussed amongst salon society.

de voix should be sung between the *sol* on the last syllable of the word *apres*, and the *la* on the first syllable of the word *mille*.²³⁸ For the general rule is to sing one when one note is followed by another a tone or semitone above it, /159/ unless there is an exception. But here it is better not to sing one, that is to say, one should not repeat the *sol* (or the *re*, as you wish, for the benefit of those who sing with the system of ‘mutations’ and not the ‘[méthode du] si’)²³⁹ on the syllable *prez* so as to anticipate the following syllable on the repeated *sol* in the usual way. As I say, it is better to sing the notes as they stand.

A full *port de voix* must be sung on the word *rigueurs* between the *ut* and the *re*.²⁴⁰ The reason for this is simple: this cadence resembles a final cadence, on which a full *port de voix* must always be performed when the opportunity arises.

All three types of *port de voix* could be sung on the word *partez* between the *mi* and the *fa*,²⁴¹ though mainly a *port de voix glissé* or a *port de voix perdu* rather than the full *port de voix* which would be too harsh. But it would be even better to sing it all plainly, taking care to pronounce the *r*, according to the rules of pronunciation, /160/ which I shall discuss in the second part of this treatise. This firm and solid pronunciation compensates greatly for the lack of a *port de voix*, which should not be performed repeatedly when it is possible to sing something else that will pleasantly add diversity to singing.

A *port de voix* could be sung on the word *Climene*, between the rising fourth from *re* to *sol*,²⁴² but again, nothing should be done, not even three ascending notes on the syllable *Cli*, as a number of ignorant people do, or rather, people who lack *bon goust*, considering that this remark is based only on common sense.

Another *port de voix* can be sung between the *mi* and the ‘sharpened’ *fa*²⁴³ on the words *des maux*, and it should be a *port de voix glissé*, gently passing through the plain *fa* before reaching the *fa* on which a ‘sharp’ is indicated, that is to say, one should rise

Bacilly’s proposal to ‘dissect’ this air alludes to the scientific interests of the salon milieu which he is likely to have encountered.

²³⁸ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. between *d''* and *e''*.

²³⁹ (See p.250, fn.200.) Bacilly uses the hexachord system in references to all other musical examples. He may have believed it to be the more familiar system to singers.

²⁴⁰ Bacilly employs the ‘méthode du si’, or dodecadization here rather than hexachords but fails to acknowledge the accidental, i.e. *c#''*.

²⁴¹ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. between *b'* and *c''*.

²⁴² Natural hexachord on C, i.e. between *d'* and *g'*.

²⁴³ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. between *b'* and *c#''*.

via the semitone to the tone above the *mi*. This manner of performance is better learnt through practical demonstration than through a lot of theory and explanation.

/161/ But as regards the three different types of *port de voix*, the following words, *helas! Cruelle* are of great interest, in both places where they occur, as is the third repetition of the word *cruelle*. Here, one has to plan ahead and perform alternately a *port de voix glissé*, a *port de voix plein* and a *port de voix perdu*. On the first *helas*, the first type can be sung between the ‘sharpened’ *fa* and the *sol*.²⁴⁴ On the following word, *cruelle* (the first one), the third type, the *port de voix perdu*, is very suitable; and the second type, the *port de voix plein*, can be sung on the second *cruelle*. A *port de voix perdu* can be sung on the third repetition of this word, followed by the type which is suitable for the final cadence of an air,²⁴⁵ on the last syllable of the word *revenez*.

Before ending this article, I must answer a question which may arise, namely, when is it suitable to sing *ports* or *demy-ports de voix*; when should they be omitted in favour of a *tremblement*; and when should neither a *port de voix* nor a *tremblement* be sung, but just the note alone. For surely (people will say) it is not enough to /162/ be able to tell them apart if one does not know where to place them and where to omit them, and if in the end this matter is more a question of practice than theory.

To this I reply that a few rules regarding these observations can be established, that do not apply in all circumstances where *bon goust* can be the only rule, along with a reference to the examples I have given, which can be used as models for other similar circumstances when one is in doubt.

Making people aware of the different ways of singing a *port de voix* is already an achievement. It is particularly important to disillusion those who think that a full *port de voix* is simply achieved by idly sliding up to the next note,²⁴⁶ for fear of ‘roughness’ when it is a question of ‘firmness’, as do most musicians who were not trained properly and confuse the full *port de voix* with the *demy-port de voix*.

Secondly, an infallible rule is that a full *port* /163/ *de voix* should always be performed at the final cadence of airs (that is, when it is appropriate and when the penultimate note of the air is lower in pitch than the last note by a tone or semitone) and at secondary cadences without hesitation, except in the few examples I have given²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Bacilly refers to these notes following the ‘*méthode du si*’, i.e. *fa#-g*’.

²⁴⁵ That is, the full *port de voix*.

²⁴⁶ ‘*glisser nonchalamment le coup de gosier*’

²⁴⁷ See p.152/ 260-1.

which, as I say, are more suitable for studying than for copying; they should also be performed at most other cadences during the course of an air, provided there is time enough and that the note on which the *port de voix* is placed is quite long.

As for other places where two consecutive notes are one ascending tone or semitone apart, the ability of the singer must take care of the situation. One should bear in mind that for the sake of diversity in singing the different types of *ports de voix* must be mixed and one should alternate a *port de voix plein* here with a *glissé* there, or sometimes leave the notes as they are.

As regards intervals of a third, a fourth, a fifth or a sixth, it would be useless to attempt to establish /164/ rules for them other than the examples I have given, to which one can refer for other similar situations. Let us turn to the second ornament in singing, the *cadence* or *tremblement*.

CHAPTER XII

ARTICLE 2

Cadences and Tremblemens

/164/ I do not wish to speak here of ‘cadences’ found in compositional treatises,²⁴⁸ only of vocal *tremblemens*,²⁴⁹ which everyone knows are amongst the most important ornaments, since without them, singing would lack perfection. This generally leads teachers to find out as much about the quality of the *cadence* of singers aspiring to the method of singing, as the beauty of their voice. This would imply that the *cadence* is a natural gift, yet it can be acquired or at least corrected and perfected through Art and good practice.

There are therefore many singers /165/ who have a voice and yet have no *cadence*.²⁵⁰ Some have a *cadence*, but it is too slow for the circumstances where the

²⁴⁸ Bacilly’s use of the term ‘cadence’ to mean two different things can lead to some confusion. He explains that in composition, the term ‘cadence’ means a cadence (i.e. the cadential progression closing a musical phrase). When it has this meaning, the term has not been italicised. In this chapter, however, he deals with the *cadence* as a vocal ornament, so called for its customary appearance at cadences: Bacilly tells us that the *cadence* always occurs on a long syllable at the end of an air, at the end of the first section or at the caesura and line-endings in poetry which always coincide with a musical cadence. Whenever Bacilly is deemed to have used the term to mean an ornament, it has been italicised in the text, as with all technical terms in this edition.

²⁴⁹ Rousseau (1710), p.54, explains this blurring of terminology, saying that the *tremblement* is almost inseparable from a cadential close and that when speaking of *cadences*, he therefore means *tremblemens*. There is, however (to confuse the issue further), a difference between the terms *cadence* and *tremblement*: the basic *cadence* is normally a three-step procedure which involves a *tremblement* (the alternation of two neighbour notes) but also involves two other components (which Bacilly explains on pp.167-8); the term *cadence* therefore necessarily indicates a *tremblement*, but the term *tremblement* is not always a *cadence*: for Bacilly explains further on in this article that the *tremblement* can indicate a shorter ornament which can vary in length and preparation and can occur anywhere in an air. Bacilly also points out that the *cadence* is a natural vocal ability, which is not possessed by all singers, and which can be either too fast or too slow. This may explain Bacilly’s use of the two terms *cadence* and *tremblement* on p.165 to differentiate between the vocal and keyboard performance of the same ornament. Mersenne differentiates in the same way: ‘les Cadences, qui consistent aux roulemens de la gorge, qui respondent aux tremblemens & aux martelemens que l’on fait sur le clavier de l’Orgue & de l’Epinette, & sur le manche du Luth & des autres instruments à cordes’, (‘the *cadences*, which is a beating of the throat, correspond to the *tremblemens* and *martelemens* performed at the organ and the spinet, and on the fingerboard of the lute and of other string instruments’,) (1965), 2, Bk.6, p.355.

²⁵⁰ ‘Il y a donc beaucoup de personnes qui ont de la voix, sans avoir nulle Cadence’. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.83, has interpreted the term *cadence* as meaning vibrato here. However, it is hard to believe that Bacilly, having begun this section by explaining exactly what he means by his use of the term *cadence*, is referring to vibrato in this sentence. Caswell’s assumption is unjustified; rather, it seems that Bacilly is referring to the ability to trill. J.-J. Rousseau (1768), p.68, used the term in the same way as Bacilly when he wrote that the phrase ‘cette actrice a une belle *cadence*’ (‘this actress has a lovely *cadence*’) was used to indicate an individual’s ability to perform a trill.

tremblement must be quicker. Others have a *cadence* that is too fast, and also too harsh, which is commonly called ‘bleating’.²⁵¹

As for those who have no *cadence* at all, forcing nature to give what was denied in the first place is a very painful, thankless and disheartening task. However, it must be said that just as everything can be achieved through hard work, a *cadence* can be acquired by training in the proper way, that is to say, by repeatedly beating equally with the throat the two notes that compose the *cadence* one after the other. It is achieved at the harpsichord in exactly the same way, by beating the two notes of the *tremblement* with two fingers.

As for the *cadence* which is too slow, it could be said that it is ‘too good to be true’, since the slowness of a *cadence* is what is most desirable, provided that /166/ it speeds up towards the end.²⁵² This slowness is an advantage for the *cadences* and *tremblemens* that are performed in the more important places, such as final or secondary cadences, which are the real ‘cadences’. However, this slowness is a great disadvantage for the *tremblemens* called *flexion de voix*²⁵³ by some people, which are performed quite frequently to make singing more brilliant, since they contribute greatly to the expression and *mouvement*. Singers who are slow by nature and consequently do not have a fast enough *cadence* cannot do these *tremblemens*, for they lack the fire and energy required for expression in singing. In this respect, men have an advantage over women for *mouvement* and expression, though their voice and their *cadence* are less beautiful.

A *cadence* that is too compressed and rough is also rather difficult to correct and needs lengthy and continuous practice in very slowly beating the same two notes, /167/

²⁵¹ *chevrottante*: this does not appear to have been a widely-used term. It appears in Furetière (1690, vol.1: ‘Cadence’ [unpaginated]) but he gives a paraphrase of this passage from the *Remarques* as an example to explain the term. J.-J. Rousseau (1768), pp.87-8, also uses the term and is equally plain in his condemnation of it: ‘C’est, au lieu de battre nettement & alternativement du gosier les deux sons qui forment la cadence ou le trill, en battre un seul à coups précipités, comme plusieurs doubles-croches détachées & à l’unisson...[c’est] la désagréable ressource de ceux qui n’ayant aucun trill en cherchant l’imitation grossière’. (‘Instead of beating the two notes which form the *cadence* or the *tremblement* clearly and alternately with the throat, only one note is rapidly beaten, as if there were several detached semiquavers at the same pitch...[it is] the unpleasant resource of singers who, lacking the ability to perform a trill, seek to produce a crude imitation’.) Here Rousseau would seem to be describing the Italian *trillo*, long out of use. It seems unlikely that Bacilly could also have meant an Italian *trillo*.

²⁵² Bacilly’s recommendation to accelerate towards the end of the *cadence* if it is slow is unusual in French vocal and instrumental sources; it only appears notated in instrumental sources at the beginning of the eighteenth century, such as in the prologue of Marais’ *Semele* (1709) and Couperin’s *Pièces de clavecin* (‘quatorzième ordre’, 1722), (see Neumann [1993], pp.180, 182).

²⁵³ This ornament must be a short, quick trill: it is also mentioned later in Ch.XII, art.3, p.195/ 294 as ‘un petit *tremblement*, ou *flexion*’. Bacilly does not say whether it involves a preparation, or *soutien*. It is likely to be what 18th-century writers call the ‘pincé’, a quick mordent figure and can also be related to Loulié’s first example of a ‘martellement’ (Loulie [1965], p.76).

so that the throat may be moderated to the requisite speed for a real *cadence*.²⁵⁴ People must not think, as some do, that softening this shrill *cadence* can be achieved by practising quietly, any more than singing softly can remedy a voice that is too loud, as I have already mentioned.²⁵⁵ However, making either the voice or the *cadence* softer is like needing at first a very rough file to polish a piece of rough iron or steel; one can never be too rough in order to eliminate all roughness through practice.

There are usually three points to consider about the *cadence*, namely the note which precedes it, which often is not written but merely assumed,²⁵⁶ the beating of the throat which constitutes the *cadence*, and its conclusion, which is a *liaison* made between the last note of the *tremblement* and the note on which one wants to land, with the help of another note only very delicately touched.²⁵⁷ For example, if the *tremblement* is on a *mi*, the *liaison* must be on a *re* which is only very lightly touched, to then /168/ end on the same *re*, or even on an *ut* if that is the final note.

There are no examples of this *liaison* in the book *in quarto* because the author found it superfluous to write it down, since it must be only lightly touched with the throat, for fear that ignorant singers would sing it as loudly and with as much importance as the other notes. This would be very harsh and unpleasant, as can be seen on the word *pourveüe* on p.34 [Ex. 49] and that of *preveüe* on p.32 [Ex. 50]. The same goes for the word *envie*, p.42 [Ex.51] and generally in all the places that can take this *liaison* after a *cadence* on the penultimate syllable of words.

Example 49 [Lambert, p.34]

²⁵⁴ 'afin de reduire le gosier à la mediocrité necessaire pour la véritable cadence'.

²⁵⁵ Ch. VII, p.43/ 191.

²⁵⁶ Bacilly uses four terms to describe the preparation of the *cadence*: *soùtien*, *preparation*, *anticipation* and *appuy*. It is normally a sustained appoggiatura on the upper auxiliary.

²⁵⁷ This lightly sung note anticipates the final note at the same pitch or lies one step above it; it is frequently notated in the two books *in octavo*. In other sources, the term *liaison* means a slur (Rousseau [1710], pp.48-9, describes the different uses of the slur).

Example 50 [Lambert, p.32]

bien pre - veü - - e

6 #3 3

Example 51 [Lambert, p.42]

[au]roit en - vi - - e

3 5 8 3 6

[au]roit en - vi - - e

And yet, as it is almost as hazardous eliminating the *liaison* completely as it is to sing it with too much force and emphasis, the author found it useful to write it in the books *in octavo*, as for example on the second syllable of the word *silence* and that of *convie*, on pp. 27 and 23 of Book II respectively [Exx. 52 and 53]. It also appears on the first syllable of *vostre*, p.64 /169/ of Book [II] *in octavo* [Ex. 54] and in a hundred other similar places, which I need not mention since they are evident in these printed books.

Example 52 [Bacilly II, p.27]

gar - dent le si - len - - ce

Example 53 [Bacilly II, p.23]

vous y con - vi - - e

Example 54 [Bacilly II, p.64]

le vos - - - tre

When I say that there are three points²⁵⁸ to consider in *cadences*, I am only referring to those which are performed on the penultimate syllable of a feminine word,²⁵⁹ for example at the end of an air, or in the middle, or even in other significant places. I do not refer to those *cadences* on antepenultimate syllables of a masculine word, which are found in the same places but for which this rule does not apply. (I am using the word ‘antepenultimate’ so as to avoid any circumlocution.) For in the case of those on masculine words, the third point about a *cadence*, i.e. the *liaison*, must be omitted. This is what ignorant singers often fail to do, having got into bad habits through unsound practice. The reason for this omission is simple, since in masculine words the penultimate syllable is a substitute for this *liaison* which is necessary on feminine words so that the *cadence* does not seem truncated.²⁶⁰ Note that by the ‘antepenultimate’ syllable of a masculine word, I mean the third syllable from the end /170/ of the final masculine word, be it of one, two or three syllables, as for example:

Soûpirer pour vous,

from the air ‘Superbes ennemis’, etc. in which by the antepenultimate I mean the last syllable of *soûpirer*, on which the *cadence* or *tremblement* must be made.²⁶¹

It must also be noted that together with feminine words, there are some masculine ones with a long penultimate syllable, which are the exception mentioned later on in this treatise when dealing with quantity. Here are some examples: *langueur*, *consentir*, *plaisir*, *changer*, *vanger*, etc., which consequently can bear a long

²⁵⁸ See p.167/ 274, namely the *soutien*, *tremblement* and *liaison*.

²⁵⁹ Bacilly refers to ‘feminine words’ when discussing words with a feminine ending or rhyme; similarly, a ‘masculine word’ is a word with a masculine ending.

²⁶⁰ The *liaison* is usually performed on the same syllable as that of the *tremblement*, or it can anticipate the final syllable, or it can have its own syllable, in which case it becomes ‘detached’ from the *cadence*. It is this verbal *liaison* which Bacilly is discussing: the note of the *liaison* is still sung, but it falls on a different syllable. Bacilly explains this further on p.175. Ex.53 above demonstrates the feminine rhyme (which ends in a mute *e*) with the *liaison* on the (long) penultimate syllable of ‘convie’; in a masculine rhyme, such as ‘malheureux’, the *tremblement* is on ‘mal’ (a long syllable) and the *liaison* on ‘heu’ (a short syllable), before falling on the last, long syllable, as in the following example from Lambert (1666), p.38: Ex.ix:



²⁶¹ Lambert (1666), p.21: Ex.x



tremblement, if not on the last note of an air (a matter not yet settled and on which many disagree) at least at other important cadence points. I have clearly said, when speaking of the three points of a *cadence* that these are usually but not always performed. /171/ For in the first place, in a descending passage, there are *cadences* on a ‘sharp’, or on a *mi* or other semitone, which are not connected to anything, since they are always either on a monosyllable or on the last syllable of a word of several syllables. Thus for this sort of *tremblement*, one only needs to consider the *soûtien*, or *anticipation*, and the *tremblement*. There is no opportunity for a *liaison*, since a *liaison* necessarily involves a connection with what follows.²⁶² These *cadences* stop and end by themselves, unless they are cut short by a *coup de gosier*, which is done by returning from the *tremblement* to the *soûtien* of the same note.²⁶³ This must seldom be performed in singing and only with the usual reserve. Hopeless singers, especially those who have learnt to sing in the provinces, do them everywhere.²⁶⁴

²⁶² For example, Lambert (1666), p.7 (Ex.xi)

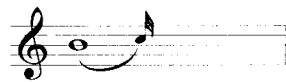
Ex.xi:



²⁶³ The *soûtien* to which one must return must be one step above the main note of the trill. This would result in an upper-note finish.

²⁶⁴ Bacilly seems to be describing something much like Millet’s *reste de son*, although Millet reflects the particular musical tradition of Besançon, the capital of Franche-Comté. Millet’s ornament can be performed ‘sur la dernière note de la cadence ou sur une note qui précède immédiatement une pose, soit longue ou brève [...]. [Il] doit être presque imperceptible à l’oïe; c’est un son adoucy que l’on doit faire mourir à mesme que l’on le produit, c’est pourquoy je le marque avec un triple crochet’ (1666), p.5, (‘on the final note of the *cadence* or on a note immediately preceding a rest, be it long or short [...]. [It] must be almost imperceptible to the ear; it is a soft sound which must die away as soon as it is produced, which is why I have written it as a demisemiquaver [...]'). Millet’s illustration is given as Ex.xii a.

Ex.xii a:



He adds that sometimes, when this occurs on a *mi*, the *reste du son* is composed of two notes (Ex.xii b).

Ex.xii b:



Bacilly mentions this ‘provincial’ practice again in the following article on the use of the *accent*, or small grace-note, when it is wrongly placed at the end of a *cadence* or *port de voix* (p.190), resulting in a superfluous ‘hiccough’ (p.194). This was not only a vocal ornament, for an example can be found, after a trill, in Nivers’ *Livre d’Orgue*, (1665), p.37 (Ex.xiii).

Ex.xiii:



Although written examples are absent from Bacilly’s musical sources, this seems a likely explanation.

This type of *tremblement*²⁶⁵ is therefore an ornament in certain places, and is called ‘finishing the *cadence*’ by some people. It occurs for example in long pieces, principally /172/ in the Lessons of Jeremiah, but it is quite wrong to apply this *coup de gosier* at the end of every *tremblement* to finish the piece.²⁶⁶ For sometimes, the procedure of returning to the *cadence* is quite rightly applicable to certain small *tremblemens*. This is done by re-striking the note of the *tremblement*,²⁶⁷ in order then to do a longer *tremblement*, by which I mean a real *cadence*. Examples can be found here and there in the two books *in octavo*, such as on p.31 of Book I, at the end of the first verse, on the word *que* [Ex.55], where this *retour de cadence* is expressly indicated.²⁶⁸ Another is on the word *dire*, on the last line of p.11 in the same book [Ex. 56].²⁶⁹

Example 55 [Bacilly I, p.31]



Example 56 [Bacilly I, p.11]



Incidentally, I must not forget to mention an error common to a number of musicians, who, though they are accomplished, never fail to perform a *tremblement* on a ‘sharp’.²⁷⁰ Nothing in the world can stop them from doing it, I mean when the ‘sharp’ is

²⁶⁵ i.e. one which ends with a *coup de gosier*.

²⁶⁶ It is not clear what exactly this new paragraph refers to. Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.87, has substituted *tremblement* at the beginning of the paragraph for *liaison* as this would appear to fit the examples that Bacilly gives below. However, there is no reason to think that Bacilly is no longer speaking of the *tremblement-plus-coup de gosier* which he discussed in the previous paragraph, nor that he meant *liaison* when writing *tremblement*. The question is resolved if we understand Bacilly to be speaking of two separate ornaments in this paragraph; examples 55 and 56 therefore refer to the ornament which Bacilly discusses in the next sentence.

²⁶⁷ ‘en rebattant la notte de ce retour’: from the given examples, the ‘return’ seems to be a return to the note of the *tremblement*, in order to start a second, longer ornament before the final note of the piece.

²⁶⁸ By ‘expressly indicated’ Bacilly does not mean indicated with a symbol; rather, in both cases Bacilly has provided a more embellished version of the final cadence after the final double-bar of each air.

²⁶⁹ This example seems to end with a *port de voix*. Bacilly does not comment on this, but in Ch.XII, art.1, pp.162-3/ 270-1, he mentions that a *port de voix* can occur at the end of a *cadence* when the final note ascends.

²⁷⁰ Rousseau (1710), p.58, writes: ‘il faut observer que toute chute qui se fait sur la seconde Note d’un Semiton en descendant, comme sur le Mi, le Si, ou quelque note marquée au Dièze ou au b quarré ou quand la Note dont la situation est au dessus d’elle a un b, il faut trembler suivant les regles de la

ascending (for if it is descending, there is no way of /173/ avoiding a *tremblement*, provided that the syllable is a long one), and by doing so, they abandon delicacy and refinement in favour of banality and coarseness. For example, a singer who performs a *tremblement* on ‘sharps’, which I am about to discuss, would not be singing according to the composer’s intentions. Also there are often ‘sharps’ on short syllables, to which it would be unsuitable to assign the characteristics of a long syllable, of which the *tremblement* is an example. This can be seen on p.33 of the book *in quarto* [Ex.57], where although there is a ‘sharp’ indicated on the first syllable of *espoir*, the author does not intend the singer to perform a *tremblement* since it is a short syllable, as I shall explain when discussing quantity. Even though there are two consecutive consonants, this does not always make the syllable a long one.

Example 57 [Lambert, p.33]

The same happens on p.13 of the same book, on the ‘sharp’ note of the word *attirer* [Ex.58]. The penultimate syllable is very short, so it would be ridiculous to perform a *tremblement*.

Example 58 [Lambert, p.13]

Yet there are some examples where, /174/ as I have just said, even relatively accomplished musicians stray from the delicacy of singing by performing *tremblemens* everywhere, as for example, on the word *helas*, on p.74 of the second book of airs *in*

cadence’. (‘It must be noted that each time there is a fall onto the second note of a descending semitone, such as a *mi* or *si*, or a note with a sharp, or one with a natural sign when the note above it has a flat sign, one must trill according to the rules of the *cadence*’.)

octavo, on the third line [Ex. 59]. Even though there is a ‘sharp’ on this note, a *tremblement* is not required, for it would remove all the sweetness that the author wishes to express. Instead, one must slide as in an imperceptible *port de voix* in semitones to reach the ‘sharp’, without performing a *tremblement* on it.²⁷¹

Example 59 [Bacilly II, p.74]

The musical score for Example 59 consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both are in 3/2 time. The melody is in G major. The lyrics are: Hé - las cru - el - le cru - el - le re - ve - nez. The final note of the melody is a sharp (F#) on the third line of the treble clef.

This example illustrates a thousand other instances, which must be judged by common sense and for which there cannot be a general rule.

To return to these three points which are usually relevant to main *cadences*, I have already excluded what I call the *liaison* from many places, where it is not only advisable to omit it, but also where there is no reason to perform one. I must add to this that there are problematic areas, where it often /175/ does not matter whether a *liaison* is performed or omitted. The situation must be dealt with according to *bon gust*. The *liaison* occurs only when the *cadence* or *tremblement* is followed by two descending notes, the first of which can be treated as this type of *liaison* (and consequently is joined to the *tremblement* on the same syllable, which is either the penultimate syllable of a feminine word or that of a masculine word if it is a long syllable). The second note remains on its own on the last syllable, on which syllable one can also place both notes which follow the *cadence*. In this case, the *liaison* does not occur. As I say, this is what sometimes causes confusion. Here are examples of both these situations.

On the word *rebelle* p.58 of the book *in quarto*, the author has expressly written the *mi* and the *re* on the last syllable, to indicate that he does not intend the first note to be a *liaison* on the syllable *bel* [Ex.60].

²⁷¹ This would suggest a *port de voix coulé* which Bacilly describes in Ch.XII, art.1, p.138/ 248.

Example 60 [Lambert, p.58]

[de]vien - droit re - bel - le
[devien]droit re - bel - le

The reason for this is that a *liaison* is quite soft, since it is only lightly touched with the throat. Therefore it can also be said that in an air, a *liaison* would be too weak in certain main *cadences*. /176/ These *cadences* need to be stronger, since their function is to conclude what has preceded them, and therefore they require something more definite. The author has done the same on p.44, on the word *fidelle*, where he did not wish to leave any doubt as to whether there should be a *liaison* on the second syllable or two notes on the last syllable [Ex.61]. He has expressly indicated the latter, although it does not even have the status of a secondary cadence.

Example 61 [Lambert, p.44]

Que me sert il d'es - tre fi - del - le

There are other examples concerning the *liaison* that can be performed spontaneously (instead of these two 'folded-in' notes I have just mentioned), in which [the *liaison*] is indicated on the page so as to avoid any doubt. This can be seen on the words *mon cœur*, on p.7 of the second edition of the first book *in octavo* [Ex. 62].

Example 62 [Bacilly I, p.7]

mon cœur

In these examples one can see that the *liaison* is almost always performed in places which are not *cadences*, or at least, not important ones. It is a very common error

amongst /177/ singers to perform inappropriately a *liaison* on the principal *cadences*, or where the *mouvement* requires stronger expression (to which the soft, weak *liaison* is unsuited). People with soft voices lacking energy, which I mentioned earlier in the treatise, are those normally guilty of this practice, believing that softness means refinement in singing. They use softness in all circumstances and are content to slide over notes,²⁷² dismissing the firmness that brings strength to singing and prevents it from becoming tiresome at length, which is what happens to those who sing softly all the time, not to say ‘dully’. One could compare those who favour singing in this way to people who always flatter others, who are constantly willing to please and applaud everything they hear, even that which is far removed from reason and common sense. Although the desire to please is a highly commendable quality, it is clear that if it is encountered too frequently in society, people /178/ tire of it, mainly when it is obvious that it is either too affected, or stems from a poor judgement of what should be praised or at least not so warmly applauded.

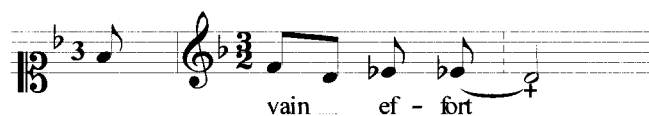
Another exception must be made concerning the three points of a *cadence* discussed above. It is the one which I call *anticipation* or *soûtien de voix* before the *cadence* and which many people confuse with what I call *port de voix*.²⁷³ This *soûtien* should often be omitted, and quite rightly so in hundreds of cases.²⁷⁴

Those who believe themselves to be great experts in singing would on no account wish to omit this ‘preparation’ of the *cadence*, as if it were part of its essence, even down to the smallest *tremblement*, and believe that it is a crime to perform it any

²⁷² ‘ne font que glisser les notes’: the term ‘glisser’ is employed to describe the slide in a *port de voix coulé ou glissé*. Here it seems to indicate a manner of skimming over notes.

²⁷³ Bacilly mentioned this confusion of terminology in Ch.XII, art.1, p.137/ 247. However, he explains that the *port de voix* is an ascending ornament, whereas the *soûtien* descends. There are many examples of notated *soûtiens* in Bacilly’s and Lambert’s airs (Ex.xiv) which on paper appear to be much the same as a notated *port de voix* (Ex.xv) but in the opposite direction: both anticipate the following syllable:

Ex.xiv: [Bacilly I, p.46]



Ex.xv: [Bacilly I, p.30]



In performance, the ornamented note would also be delayed in both cases. This may account for the confusion mentioned here.

²⁷⁴ This omission of the preparation is comparable to the 18th-century ‘tremblement subit’ described by Montéclair in 1736 (see also Arger [1921], p.64).

other way. As a result they make the song sound dull and colourless, for they never consider the possibility that exceptions to the basic rule often result in a far better effect than the rule itself. There are even final *cadences* where this preparation is unsuitable and where instead one launches straight into /179/ the *tremblement* from the lower to the upper note,²⁷⁵ without first having to reach and sustain the note which precedes the *cadence* by way of a *port de voix*,²⁷⁶ so that this note merges with the neighbouring note to create the *cadence*.²⁷⁷ From all these observations, it would be naïve to attempt to establish some rules for when this preparation is suitable or not. Only *bon goust* can judge the situation.

I shall only say that when this *preparation* is appropriate, which is no doubt the right way to perform a *cadence*, it must not be done half-heartedly. Instead the singer must delight in it so much that it does not seem to be related to the *tremblement* to which it leads, and must seem completely independent. As a result a certain impatience in these preparations is usually noticeable with most learners, resulting in a less accurate and less beautiful *cadence*. What is more, this is a noteworthy tactic in singing for people with an ugly *cadence* who, being unable to correct it, want to conceal their defect. /180/ For by holding the *soûtien* or *preparation* for so long, almost all the time allocated to the *cadence*, which they know they cannot do well, is taken up and thus they need only perform a very short one.²⁷⁸

The most frequent error in performing *cadences* is made when, after having sustained the note that usually prepares the *cadence*, some singers are not content with

²⁷⁵ This sentence has been highlighted by Neumann (1983), p.249, as a clear description of on-the-beat, main-note trills. The anticipation, which precedes and prepares the cadence, is done away with altogether. Bacilly points out that the main-note start described here is not the usual manner of performing a *cadence*.

²⁷⁶ Bacilly is implying that the *soûtien* must be reached by a *port de voix* in certain instances. This must be when the melodic line is ascending (since the *port de voix* ascends) and the *soûtien* (which is above the ornamented note) must be reached. The following examples illustrate this combination of *port de voix* and *soûtien*. The second example is the corresponding place in the *double* to the first example (Ex.xvi.a): the *soûtien* for the *cadence* in Ex.xvi.b is clearly reached by a notated *port de voix* through a third.

Ex.xvi.a: Lambert, p.8

Ex.xvi.b: Lambert p.10



²⁷⁷ the upper auxiliary is employed in the *tremblement* itself rather than in preparing it.

²⁷⁸ Eighteenth-century sources name this type of *tremblement* (in which the *soûtien* is held for as long as possible before ending with a small *tremblement*) the 'tremblement feint' or 'cadence feinte' (Neumann [1983], p.271 and Arger [1921], pp.66-7). Bérard (1755), p.116, calls it a 'demi-cadence'. Bacilly does not name this *tremblement*. Bernhard gives comparable advice to singers who do not possess the ability to perform an adequate *trillo*: 'one who does not execute it well should keep it short, so that his audience may not be aware of the shortcoming' (Bernhard [1973], p.15).

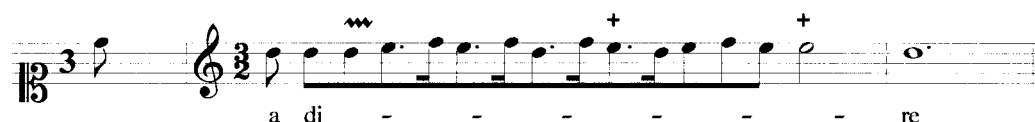
performing a *tremblement* on the following note, and instead, they first repeat the note by a *coup de gosier* before performing the *tremblement*.²⁷⁹ This is only appropriate on instruments, unless [this repeated note] is sung slowly and without precipitation, which can only be done in long pieces where the *cadence* can be held for as long as desired. Yet even in these pieces where the singer may repeat the note of the *tremblement* in this way, he still has the other option of beating it with the upper note. For example, if the *tremblement* is on a *mi*, and that *fa*²⁸⁰ is consequently the note which prepares the *cadence*, the *mi* must not be repeated before the *tremblement*. If it is repeated, it must be done slowly, or else one should /181/ alternate it with the *fa*, resulting in *fa mi fa mi re re*.²⁸¹

There are a few examples of this in the books *in octavo*, as on p.31 of the first book, on the last word before *j'attens* [Ex.63], as well as on the last repetition of the word *dire*, on p.9 of the same book [Ex. 64].

Example 63 [Bacilly I, p.31]



Example 64 [Bacilly I, p.9]



²⁷⁹ The *coup de gosier* is inserted between the *soutien*, on the upper auxiliary, and the first note of the *tremblement*, thus anticipating the *tremblement* at the same pitch. An editorial realisation is suggested as Ex.xvii: (ed.):



²⁸⁰ These are relative pitches in the hexachordal system; Bacilly is referring to the third and fourth degrees of the major scale.

²⁸¹ Ex.xviii (ed.):



Although the *liaison* is usually done spontaneously, as part of the *cadence*, it is difficult to teach it to beginners when the voice does not do it naturally so that one has to ask them to perform it with emphasis at first, and to soften it later. This is quite difficult to do. It is also difficult to correct those who perform it too easily in places that do not require it, particularly when the note on which the *cadence* or *tremblement* falls is not the same as the *liaison*, but is a tone lower.²⁸² They must also learn that the *liaison* should be omitted to emphasize the *mouvement* of the air, /182/ by which I mean that the *liaison* should be separated from the syllable on which the *cadence* is performed and joined to the note on the next syllable, on which the *cadence* ends, as in the examples I have given.²⁸³

One must draw attention to the fact that when the note for the *liaison* at the end of the *cadence* is omitted,²⁸⁴ the *liaison* must not be lightly touched (I mean weakly) with the throat, as if it were joined to the *cadence*, but on the contrary it must be firmly articulated. In this instance, as well as in every other where there are consecutive descending notes, the most common mistake is not to pay enough attention to the first note, as if only the second note mattered. Instead, the main emphasis must be on the first note, especially since the following one stands out enough by itself; otherwise they would become confused with each other. To avoid this fault, the throat must get accustomed to emphasize loudly when practising, since it is true that a singer can /183/ always soften the sound once he has mastered this steadiness. I shall explain this further in the article on *passages* and *diminutions*.²⁸⁵

I must again repeat that although the composer does not indicate the *liaisons* after *cadences* on paper,²⁸⁶ especially after those in the middle or at the end of a piece, the general rule is to assume that they are there and that they must never be omitted. Otherwise, the *cadence* would be truncated and incomplete when it descends not by a third but by the interval of a second, and that the *liaison* is on the same note as the last note. I was anxious to repeat this point because many teachers do not agree with it, in which I am sure they are mistaken. For I cannot understand their obstinacy, unless it is that they find my advice superfluous or else hard to accept. However, one must take

²⁸² For instance see above Ex.61, p.176/ 281.

²⁸³ See above, Ex.61, p.176/ 281.

²⁸⁴ This means that it is joined on to the following syllable.

²⁸⁵ See Ch.XIII, art.3, p.228/ 318.

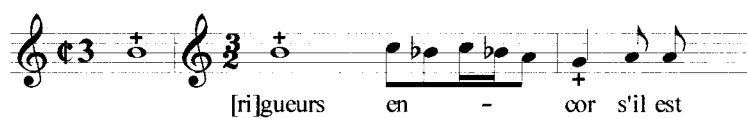
²⁸⁶ As Bacilly indicated on p.168, the *liaison* on *cadences* on feminine rhymes is not notated in his airs, whereas some are notated for *cadences* on masculine rhymes.

care to perform the *liaison* with the softness it requires, for if one does not, it is an error of execution and not of application.

As for the *tremblemens* found /184/ here and there in a piece of music and which give it all its brilliance, great experience and talent are required to perform them in the right places. The main point to remember is that they are almost never done on short syllables. It is therefore very important to know the syllable-lengths of the words that are sung since only long syllables can sustain a *cadence* or *tremblement*, as well as *accens* or *plaintes* and certain *douplemens de gosier* used to further emphasize the *mouvement* in an air.

One could also add that there is a type of *tremblement* done from the back of the throat and which is usually very quick and short. It is very effective in singing, particularly in places where a passion needs to be expressed. However, since these types of *tremblemens* are better felt than explained they can only be demonstrated in practice, and even then are only grasped by a small number of singers who possess the ability to perform them.²⁸⁷ Here are some examples showing where /185/ this type of *tremblement* can be executed, but those who want to execute them properly should seek the advice of the very few singing teachers capable of teaching them. On p.75 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.65], the *tremblement* on the last syllable of *encor* is one of these short ones, and this also applies to the word *encore* on p.74 [Ex.66], where a *liaison*²⁸⁸ is added to the first syllable, even though there is none indicated on the page. This is due to the fact that in *simples*, or first verses, it is traditional not to indicate ornaments, which are left up to the individual to insert in his own way.

Example 65 [Bacilly II, p.75]



²⁸⁷ This type of *tremblement* is possibly related to the *flexion de voix* but appears to require a greater degree of skill.

²⁸⁸ This implies a light *a'* in between the *b'* and the *g'* of '-cor'.

Example 66 [Bacilly II, p.74]

en - cor plus

6

This short *tremblement* is also very suitable on the words *mon cœur* on p.7 of the first book *in octavo*, according to the additions to the revised edition²⁸⁹ [Ex.67].

Example 67 [Bacilly I, p.7]

mon cœur

It is also suitable on the last syllable of the second repetition of the word *commander*, on p.61 [Ex.68], but one must carefully avoid an *appuy* before the *tremblement*, by which I mean /186/ an *anticipation*, *preparation*, or whatever you like to call it. For if an *appuy* were done, it would become an ordinary *tremblement*, whereas this other type is always performed without preparation. And since I have said that this *tremblement* is very short and quick, it must be noted that although the *mi* on which I say it should be performed is very long, it must be treated as short. The singer must then do as for a *tacet*²⁹⁰ in order to make up for the value of the note, otherwise, if a normal *tremblement* with *appuy* is done, it would be incredibly dull and quite contrary to the meaning of the word *commander*, which requires a firm and determined expression.

Example 68 [Bacilly I, p.61]

C'est me com-man-der de mou-rir

[com]man - - - der de mou - rir

²⁸⁹ Bacilly is referring to the fact that the 1668 edition of the *Trois livres d'airs* incorporated and revised the airs contained in three earlier publications (see Editorial notes, pp.156-7).

²⁹⁰ If this is a short *tremblement* then one should probably insert at least a dotted crotchet rest.

Singers who will want to reflect on this example will find it worth their while. But I fear that few people will appreciate it since, as I have already said, very few people are capable of executing this *tremblement* or even of understanding it. In this instance, as in many others, they confuse ‘steadiness’ with ‘harshness’. I shall give no further examples, for surely this one will do for all the others, provided it is clearly understood.

/187/ As for the *double cadence*, it is an ornament done with a certain turn of the throat and which is more a matter of practice than of theory. It consists of a sort of *tremblement étouffé*. To perform a *tremblement étouffé*, the throat prepares itself for a *double cadence* but suddenly and prematurely nips it in the bud.²⁹¹

There are two ways of performing a *double cadence*, either by ascending from a lower note²⁹² or by beating again on the same note, which is a more unusual and less

²⁹¹ It is unfortunate that Bacilly should choose to explain the performance of one obscure ornament with a reference to another equally obscure one. Bacilly goes on to explain that there are two ways of performing a *double cadence*: it is unclear whether the *tremblement étouffé*, which is tackled in the following paragraph, is involved in both versions or just the one.

²⁹² Neumann (1983), p.249, does not commit himself to giving any realisation of this ornament, as the description is very vague. What Bacilly means by ‘ascending from a lower note’ (‘en montant sur une note au dessous’) is open to question. The definition of the term *double cadence* was by no means fixed, though models in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources most commonly involve a turn: Brossard (1705) says that the Italian ‘*ribattuta di gola doppia*’, which he illustrates, is called *double cadence* by the French (1705), p.95. Ex.xix:



Nivers (1665), preface, fol.2^v, defined it as a trill with a turn-figure at the end. Ex.xx:



The same figure is called a ‘*tremblement et pincé*’ by d’Anglebert (1689). This differs from what Chambonnières calls ‘*double cadence*’ (1670), preface, f.5^r, which is perhaps the earliest example of the now conventional turn symbol. Ex.xxi:



Saint-Lambert (1702), p.48, gives d’Anglebert’s and Chambonnières’ models as examples, adding that the latter is most common, and (p.53) assigns it a new symbol, ∨, which follows the note. Rousseau’s ‘*double cadence*’ ([1687], pp.97-100) can be performed in a variety of ways, each of which involves a turn. Bacilly’s term ‘*turn of the throat*’ (‘*tour de gosier*’), used to perform the *double cadence*, reappears in Loulié (1965), p.78, whose ‘*tour de gozier*’ is a turn (the editorial slur is Cohen’s). Ex.xxii:



It is unclear exactly where the ‘*ascent from a lower note*’ occurs in Bacilly’s ornament, but the involvement of a turn of some kind is very likely.

known way,²⁹³ but this, as well as the secret of acquiring it, all belongs to practical experience. I think I have found this secret and want to confound those who believe that only singers with a natural gift and disposition can execute a *double cadence*, without there being any other means of achieving it.

The *tremblement* which I call *étouffé* is a very common ornament in singing and among the most important. Once the *appuy* has been sung (the note which precedes and prepares the *cadence* or *tremblement*) the throat prepares itself for the *tremblement*, and yet only /188/ pretends to do so, as if it only wanted to repeat the note on which the *cadence* should have been done.²⁹⁴ As it has a great appeal in singing, those who can execute a *tremblement étouffé* have a great advantage over those who cannot, due to a lack of disposition, or of a good teacher, or through ignorance, or the inability to put it into practice having learnt it. Providing examples would not be helpful, since other than the fact that these types of *tremblement* are never indicated in the music, it would be useless to know about them if one cannot perform them. And since [the *tremblement étouffé*] is as frequent an ornament in the art of proper singing as it is important, one cannot take enough care in mastering and executing it perfectly. The problem is that most people, through lack of patience, are immediately discouraged because of the care and application required to master it properly. Instead, they content themselves with doing either an ordinary *tremblement* or nothing at all. This results in impoverished singing, which can be said to be more worthy of shame than of praise.

²⁹³ Bacilly's direction of 'beating again on the same note' ('en rebattant sur la mesme') is not clear as to how many times the note should be 'beaten again', nor whether there is any pitch alternation. However, Brossard (1705), pp.169-70, mentions that the Italian *trillo* is also called *double cadence* by the French. Brossard's *trillo* is shown here: Ex.xxiii:



This would seem to correspond to Bacilly's 'more unusual and less known' method of performing a *double cadence*. It is not possible to say whether Bacilly's is also meant to accelerate towards the end if this is its correct interpretation.

²⁹⁴ That this *tremblement* is a *double cadence* 'prematurely cut-short', and is 'smothered' after re-iterating ('doubler') the first note of the *cadence*, suggests that Bacilly's above remark (that the *double cadence* mainly involves a *tremblement étouffé*) refers to his second description of the *double cadence* (that of several note-repetitions). Neumann (1983), p.271, has suggested that Bacilly's *tremblement étouffé* is the same as what later sources called a *tremblement feint*. However, Bacilly has already described this ornament (above, p.180/ 283-4) involving a long *soûtien* terminated by a small *tremblement* (which, however, he does not name). The *appuy* of the *tremblement étouffé* described here is not ended by a *tremblement*, only a note-reiteration.

CHAPTER XII

ARTICLE 3

The *accent* or *aspiration*

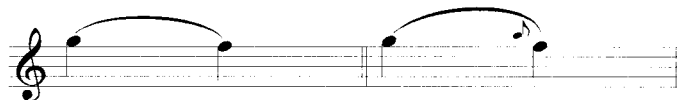
/189/ In singing, there is a particular note which is only lightly struck with the throat, which I call *accent* or *aspiration*. Others incorrectly call it *plainte*, as if it were only performed in places where one is plaintive.²⁹⁵

This *accent*, or *aspiration*, is always performed on a long syllable and never on a short one. It is usually performed when a note is followed by the same note or by one a step lower, and serves as a kind of link between the two. For example, if the written note is a *sol*, and it is followed by another *sol* or by a *fa*, or another lower note, and the syllable is a long one, an *accent* must be done to link the two; it would be a *la* in this case, but a very delicate one, very lightly touched and almost imperceptible.²⁹⁶

/190/ It is as difficult to teach learners when to perform it as it is difficult to teach thousands of people when to omit it, especially ill-informed people, who think that it is a decoration²⁹⁷ and as such do not fail to overdo it. They let their throats form these *accens* with a free rein, particularly at the end of final notes and of *ports de voix*, which is quite ridiculous. As such, nothing is more revealing of a provincial performance as the incorrect placing of *accens* and their excessive use.

²⁹⁵ Montéclair (1736), p.80 described the *accent* as a sorrowful vocal effect used mostly in plaintive airs.

²⁹⁶ Although Bacilly explains that the *accent* (Ex.xxiv) is not usually notated so as not to spoil its performance as a very lightly struck note (p.191/ 292), when it is notated (such as in Ex.72, below) the note of the *accent* must be performed shorter than its notated value, a practice which Bacilly calls the 'usual way' (p.192). Ex.xxiv (ed.):



Bacilly's *accent*, of indeterminate rhythmic value, is comparable to later 17th- and 18th-century descriptions of this ornament, such as Rousseau (1687), p.90, who calls it an *aspiration*, Loulié (1965), p.79, Saint-Lambert (1702), pp.56-7 (an *aspiration* that can use both the upper and lower auxiliary) and Bérard (1705), p.119. Bacilly gives no symbol for this ornament, and although Bérard was still complaining of the lack of one in 1755, Loulié and Montéclair (1736), p.80, both use a vertical dash above the note to be graced with an *accent*.

²⁹⁷ Bacilly's use of the term 'agrément' has caused some confusion here. Caswell translated it as 'ornament', and claimed as a result that Bacilly does not qualify the *accent* as a true vocal ornament, being a vocal inflection rather than a melodic formula (Bacilly [1964], p.95). However, the 'Accent, ou Aspiration, que plusieurs nomment, *Plainte*' is clearly listed in Bacilly's list of vocal ornaments on p.136/ 246) and his treatment of the *accent* suggests that he considers it to be a substantial ornament. Although he uses the terms 'ornement' and 'agrément' interchangeably to refer to vocal ornaments, he also uses the word 'agrément' in a non-technical sense meaning 'decoration'. This makes clearer sense of this sentence: the *accent* is more substantial than a mere decoration; it should therefore be applied with care.

These *accens* also have something in common with the last note of a *passage*, when the latter rises a tone or semitone above the penultimate note; for in this case, it more or less becomes an *accent* and is not struck with the throat in the same manner as the other notes. This can be seen in three different places in the second verse of the air *J'ay juré mille fois*, on page 48 of the book *in quarto*, namely on the last syllable of the word *rangeoit*, on page 50 [Ex.69]; on the last note of the *passage* on the word *plus* [Ex.70] and on the last note of the word *connois* [Ex.71], both of which are /191/ on page 51, provided one respects what is written, for one can lengthen the diminution on the word *connois* by adding a *sol* above the *fa*,²⁹⁸ which is faintly repeated with the throat.²⁹⁹ In this case, the *sol* would become an *accent* or *plainte*.

Example 69 [Lambert 1666, p.50]

dieu ne ran - geoit soubz ses loix...

dieu ne ran - geoit soubz ses loix

Example 70 [Lambert 1666, p.51]

[vous] ne fait plus son de-voir

plus ne fait plus son de-voir

²⁹⁸ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. adding a *d''* after the *c''*. Ex.xxv (ed.):

co - gnois le pou - voir

²⁹⁹ 'doublé à demy du gosier'.

Example 71 [Lambert 1666, p.51]

[en]fin je cog - nois le pou - voir
 [cog]nois je cog - nois le pou - voir

As for examples of *accens*, none can be written down; for although it is a note that really exists, it is better not to write it because it must not be struck, only lightly touched, leaving their placing to those who know where an *accent* may be performed, namely on long syllables, and when two similar notes, or descending notes, need to be linked.

It is therefore a mistake to sing these *accens* too heavily; if one wishes to emphasize them, they should be repeated with the throat and two should be sung instead of one, in which case the name *plainte* would be appropriate. But since this type of repetition holds up the song and prevents it from running smoothly, it is only rarely performed and only when there is a valid reason for it. Here is an example /192/ which will be useful for this observation, especially as it is expressly written in the book *in quarto*, on page 12, on the first syllable of *ô Dieux!*, I mean on the exclamation *ô*. [Ex.72]

Example 72 [Lambert 1666, p.12]

O dieux com - ment se
 O dieux com - ment se

The author, in writing the *accent*, wanted to show that it can either be sung lightly (and therefore executed much shorter than written, in the usual way) or it can be repeated with the throat, (by giving the crotchet its full value) turning it in this way into a real *plainte*.³⁰⁰ This would be in accordance with the meaning of the words, which are all

³⁰⁰ Ex.xxvi (ed.):

O dieux

about complaining and rebuking. It is actually better to sing a simple *accent*, which is what is usually done. This is considered the safest way in which one cannot go astray; for in the other manner of performance, one is often in danger of a misunderstanding because of this *doublement de gosier*,³⁰¹ which is an undesirable superfluity in most cases.

On the subject of loudness and of softness,³⁰² I must not forget to mention a great error frequently made in singing, mainly by provincial singers, /193/ which is that of lowering the voice now and then without any reason and not observing any consistency in singing. They think they are making their singing more varied, by projecting their voice as much as possible one moment and dropping it the next, until it can no longer be heard. This occurs principally at cadences, which are swallowed by poor singers. This practice is suitable when playing the lute, the theorbo, the viol and other such instruments, whose strings can be struck as much or as little as desired, which differentiates them from the harpsichord. People who play these instruments have a great advantage, claiming that by this method, they bring their instruments to life and make them speak, and they even make them express passions such as tenderness or anger, which is achieved by striking the strings either lightly or powerfully, to obtain a softer or louder sound. It is as if players were ‘arguing’ with their instruments. But the voice, which can express words with meaning, has no need of this tailing off to express what it wishes; it is therefore /194/ laughable to lower the voice at the wrong moment, above all in a *port de voix*, which is often sung on words requiring it to be projected quite loudly, as well as on the last note of airs and on the note which follows the *cadence*, which must always be projected forward a certain amount, and only relaxed afterwards (by manner of a return; it should not be terminated with a superfluous *accent*, which some people call ‘hiccough’ so as better to illustrate its ugliness).³⁰³ In this case, the softening of the voice is quite correct, but it should only occur after performing the opposite, by which I mean after the final note of a *cadence* or full *port de voix* has been projected forward.³⁰⁴

³⁰¹ The confusion to which Bacilly is referring results from combining two distinct ornaments, that is a note repetition (the *doublement de gosier*) with the *accent*, in order to create a *plainte*.

³⁰² ‘de marquer & d’adoucir’

³⁰³ This practice has already been mentioned in Ch.XII, art.2, p.171/ 277 (see fn.264 and Exx. xiiia-xiic) as closely resembling Millet’s *reste de son* (which the reference to provincial practice seems to corroborate) and is also illustrated by Nivers in 1665. Unsurprisingly, there are no instances of a written-out ‘hiccough’ in either of the two books *in octavo* nor in the book *in quarto*.

³⁰⁴ This increase followed by a decrease in volume on the last note of a *cadence* or *port de voix* has been noted in Ch.XII, art.1, p.156/ 266.

I think I have already said that these *accens* or *plaintes* are signs of a long syllable and that they can never, without exception, be sung on a short syllable. This is not the case for other ornaments such as the *tremblement* and the *doublement de gosier*, normally performed on a long syllable. The *tremblement* is sometimes sung (in truth, as /195/ short as possible) on syllables which are not entirely long, which is to say, not long enough to be able to sustain an *accent*. The *doublement de gosier* (which I shall discuss in the following article) can similarly be performed on syllables which are not very long but only, so to speak, semi-long. They steer the middle course between the short syllable and the long syllable, such as when there is an *r* before another consonant, as in *pourquoy*, *parfait*, *mortel*, or in the monosyllables *pour*, *par*, *car* when in front of words beginning with another consonant. One could say that these syllables which contain an *r* are neither long nor short; that is to say that they are not long enough to sustain a final or secondary *cadence* and any other long *tremblement*, nor even an *accent*, or *plainte*, but only a *doublement de gosier*, a small *tremblement*, or *flexion*,³⁰⁵ which a normal short syllable could not sustain. I shall mention this subject in my discussion on quantity, where I shall compare /196/ the *r* with the *n*, and show how the *n* has an advantage over the *r* in making the syllable long in all circumstances and can sustain an *accent*, and even sometimes a final *cadence* and a long *tremblement*.

What I say about the letter *r* can also be said for the letter *l*, and even for some consonants when they precede other consonants, like the *c* and *s* in masculine words such as *quelqu'un*, *malgré*, *effectif*, *respect*, *destin*; these three consonants make the syllable so to speak 'semi-long', as I shall discuss later on the subject of the quantity of masculine words.

³⁰⁵ See Ch.XII, art.2, p.166/ 273 and glossary.

CHAPTER XII

ARTICLE 4

The *doublement du gosier* on the same note and the sustaining of final notes

/196/ The third ornament which denotes a long syllable and which is never performed on any short syllable, is the repeat of the same note with the throat. /197/ It is done so quickly that it is hard to hear whether there is one note or two. This is easily performed on the violin with the bow and is commonly referred to as *animer*, that is to say, bringing *mouvement*, to which this ornament greatly contributes.³⁰⁶ Without it, airs would have no soul and would become tiresome.³⁰⁷

This is why this type of ornament is so frequent in airs. Several may even be done in succession,³⁰⁸ as long as the syllable is a long one. They may never be done on

³⁰⁶ Caswell (Bacilly [1968]) saw no need to question the literal meaning of *doublement*, or ‘repetition’ in his editorial realisations, though in the context of a *port de voix*, Neumann (1983), p.55, disagreed with Caswell and interpreted it as a mordent. Bacilly makes it clear that the *doublement* is an immediate, light note repetition, not only here but also in Ch.XII art.1 (p.149/ 258) and later in Ch.XII, art.5 (p.203/ 300) and Ch.XIII, art.3 (p.238/ 327).

³⁰⁷ ‘les Airs seroient sans ame’. The mention of *mouvement*, to which Bacilly devotes the following article, and of the soul in relation to *animer* could point to a literal use of the word derived from the Latin *anima*, or soul; this would reflect the capacity of this ornament to move the passions of the soul. Without it, not only would airs ‘have no soul’ but they would not reach the soul either.

³⁰⁸ Bacilly’s statement that the *doublement* is successfully performed with a violin bow and furthermore may be performed in succession indicates that it may be what later theorists call the vocal *balancement*, an intensity fluctuation producing the effect of the organ tremulant. Brossard [1705], p.168, pointing to the ‘trembleurs’ scene in Lully’s *Isis* as an example, called it *tremolo* and associated it with bow vibrato. Both he and Montéclair (1736), p.85, who equated the *balancement* with the Italian *tremolo*, made a comparison with the organ tremulant. Loulié’s realisation of the *balancement* (Loulie [1965], p.78), is reproduced here. Ex.xxvii:



Loulie illustrated it with a horizontal bracket, d’Anglebert in 1694 (Neumann [1983], p.514), Montéclair and Lalande in 1707 (Sawkins [1996], p.262) used a wavy line. The vocal realisation of this ornament is a matter of some difficulty. Arger (1921), p.52, has suggested that the vocal *balancement* is in fact vocal vibrato which was classified as an ornament so as to avoid excessive use of it, without delving further into the problematic and controversial question of vibrato in performance practice. Neumann (1983), pp.514-6, has suggested that Loulié and Montéclair described an intensity vibrato, while Sawkins (1996), p.264 questioned the wisdom of always interpreting this ornament as bow vibrato rather than a rapid alternation of bow-strokes and makes a tentative link between the *balancement* and the Italian repeated note ornament, the *trillo*, in the context of a specific repertoire. Bacilly usually describes the performance of a single *doublement*. Although Loulié’s illustration of the *balancement* shows several consecutive notes, he described it as ‘two or several small, soft and slow aspirations, performed on a note without altering the pitch’ (Loulie [1965], p.77). There could therefore be just two notes, that is, the initial note and its immediate repetition. Bacilly, however, describes it as a rapid repetition and not, as Loulié does, a slow one. Caswell (1964), p.100, likened Bacilly’s description of several consecutive *doublements* to the Italian *trillo*, a rapid note repetition. But this, together with Sawkins’ similar suggestion would not agree with Bacilly’s description of the *doublement* as being almost imperceptible since the notes in a *trillo* are

short syllables unless they are monosyllables which could neither sustain a *tremblement* nor an *accent*. But the safest way would be not to perform any on short monosyllables when they remain short and do not happen to be lengthened by their position or for reasons of symmetry, which I shall discuss later. Both of these can make a monosyllable long even though it is naturally short, if this is what is desired.³⁰⁹

Moreover, this *doublement de gosier* can be joined to the *accent* when the opportunity presents itself, as can be seen /198/ on page 64 of the book *in quarto* on the first syllable of the word *ingrate* [Ex. 73]. The *fa*³¹⁰ of the first syllable is repeated and a lightly touched *sol*³¹¹ is surmised to convey the *accent* that falls back onto another *fa*,³¹² on the syllable *gra*. This is used as a preparation for the *tremblement* which must be performed on the *m*³¹³ of this syllable.³¹⁴ Instead of this, most singers perform a *demy port de voix* on the first syllable of this word, by surmising a *mi* after that of the syllable *cett'* which precedes it, in the manner of a *port de voix perdu*, which I have already discussed.

Example 73 [Lambert 1666, p.64]

The musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: 'Puis - que cett' in - grat - te beau - té'. The first note of 'in' has a trillo symbol above it. The first note of 'grat' is enclosed in a box. Below the notes, fingerings are indicated: 5, 6, 5, 6, 3, 4, #3, #3.

Those who will take the trouble to study this example will find that it encompasses many aspects of singing all in one. But I fear that only knowledgeable musicians will

distinctly articulated and hardly 'imperceptible'. Moreover, the *trillo* may have already figured in the treatise as the *double cadence* (see fn.293). A rapid succession of *doublemens* may therefore be associated with intensity vibrato as a series of controlled pulsations; however, the *doublement* is more often a single, rapid pulsation. See Neumann (1991) and Gable (1992) for the problems of vibrato in historical performance, to which Bacilly's treatise only contributes a piece of the puzzle rather than any definite answer.

³⁰⁹ Bacilly discusses the role of symmetry in relation to quantity in Pt.3, pp.339-40/ 394; depending on its position in relation to the other words in a line of verse, a monosyllable can be lengthened when it should otherwise be short.

³¹⁰ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *c''*.

³¹¹ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *d''*.

³¹² Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *c''*.

³¹³ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *b'*.

³¹⁴ In his 'performed' version of this example, Caswell (Bacilly [1968]), p.100, inserts a lower auxiliary (a quaver *b*) between the first and second note (both *c''*), which is not described by Bacilly. This is inconsistent with Caswell's normal interpretation of a *doublement* as an accented throat repetition, and there appears to be no reason for this discrepancy.

understand it, and the ignorant ones will not find it worth their while for they will not be able to gain anything from it. For them, oral practice is more advisable than theory.

I shall now consider the sustaining of final notes, either in the middle or at the end of an air, at the end of a *port de voix* or a *cadence*, /199/ or any other long note that has no connection with the following ones, I mean when they are stopped either by an exclamation mark or a question mark.³¹⁵ The most common mistake, of which few singers are aware, is to put an *accent* at the end of the final note that must on no account be rounded off by these kinds of ridiculous hiccoughs and *aspirations*.³¹⁶ It should be finished by decreasing the voice little by little after having increased it gradually to a certain point.³¹⁷ The result is an impression of ebb and flow as I discussed in the preceding article when mentioning singers who inappropriately moderate their voices.³¹⁸

³¹⁵ As in his discussion of the liaison, (Ch.XII, art.2, p.169/ 275-6) Bacilly often does not clearly distinguish between the textual and musical elements of a composition; in this instance, the two are treated as one. There are in fact few instances of either punctuation mark in the two books *in octavo*; one which illustrates Bacilly's point here, however, is given as Ex.xxviii [Bacilly I, 1668, p.5]: (Ex.xxviii):

The musical score for Ex.xxviii consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains a half note 'pas', a quarter rest, a quarter note 'Ah!' with a slur over it, a quarter note 'qu'il', and a half note 'est' with a '+' sign above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same 3/2 time signature and key signature. It contains a half note 'pas', a quarter note 'Ah!', a quarter note 'qu'il', a half note 'est', and a half note 'mal - ai - sé' with a '+' sign above it. There are also some numerical markings (6, 6, 5) below the bottom staff.

³¹⁶ That Bacilly should equate the *accent* with the 'hiccough' (see fn.264) or *aspiration* here supports the notion in Ch.XII, art.3 that the 'hiccough' is a 'superfluous *accent*' (p.194/ 293) with no following note, which again is equivalent to that certain *coup de gosier* described in Ch.XII, art.2, p.171/ 277.

³¹⁷ This advice for the performance of the last note of a *cadence* or *port de voix plein* has already been offered in Ch.XII, art.3, p.194/ 293.

³¹⁸ See Ch.XII, art.3, pp.193-194/ 293 on the *accent*: Bacilly criticises those, mainly *provinciaux*, who sing very loudly one moment and very quietly the next without proper reason, if only for what they see as variety.

CHAPTER XII

ARTICLE 5

Mouvement and expression

/199/ Many people mistake *mouvement* for *mesure* and think that, because one commonly says *un air de mouvement* to distinguish it from a very slow air, all *mouvement* in /200/ singing consists of nothing more than those skips which are found in giges, minuets and other similar airs.

Mouvement is entirely different from what they think it is. I believe it to be a certain quality which gives singing its soul and is called *mouvement* because it moves people, I mean that it arouses the listeners' attention, even the most impervious ones.³¹⁹ One could say that it awakens in the hearts of the listeners whatever passion the singer wishes to inspire,³²⁰ mainly that of 'tenderness'. Due to this fact, most women never manage to acquire this ability of expression, which they think is contrary to their modesty because it partakes of the theatre;³²¹ thus their singing is utterly lifeless, for lack of wanting to act a little.

I do not doubt that the *mesure*, be it fast or slow, contributes much to expression in singing. But there is perhaps yet another, purer and more ethereal quality which holds the listener /201/ spellbound and prevents singing from becoming tiresome; it is the *mouvement* which makes an average voice with this quality more worthy than a beautiful voice lacking in expression.

The kind of *mouvement* suitable for sorrowful expressions of lament and grief can be represented by several types of vocal ornaments. These are: *plaintes* or *accens*, [which are] certain languid ornaments performed when descending from a long note to another by only striking very lightly with the throat; the *tremblement étouffé*, even a very slow *cadence* and particularly the *demi-ports de voix*, performed by ascending in

³¹⁹ 'qui donne l'ame au chant'. This, as Bacilly says in the following sentence, is associated with moving the passions, or emotions of the listener through singing; singing 'with *mouvement*' could therefore be called 'singing with emotion'.

³²⁰ Bacilly's depiction of the heart as the recipient of the passions is confusing in view of his association of *mouvement*, or emotion, with the soul, here and in the preceding article. Descartes (Descartes [1992], pp.711-12) explained that although the internal movement which provokes the passions can be felt in the heart through the nervous system and due to the alteration of the blood flow, the seat of the passions is the soul.

³²¹ The theatre was generally considered a disreputable place: actors were regarded as lacking in morality and excommunicated. The ladies of the salons, though highly appreciative of works written for the theatre

imperceptible steps;³²² certain pronunciations proper to singing and to declamation, such as the capital *m*³²³ (and others which I will discuss below) which is held back before being thrown onto the following vowel, which has been given the rather odd name ‘rumbling’.³²⁴ All these ornaments, as I say, are very effective for expressing tender expressions. The sustaining of final notes also greatly contributes to this effect. This seems contrary to many /202/ people’s opinion, who, through too much ‘philosophising’, I mean by being over-punctilious about the meaning of words, believe that, for example on the word *mourir*, one should feign the weakness of a dying man, to the point of no longer being heard. So on the words

Je me meurs,

or

Nous sommes trop pres de la mort [Ex.74]

they would on no account wish to sustain the voice for any length after performing the *port de voix* as required by the cadence of the air, so that they remove all the beauty of the passage by this inappropriate affectation.

Example 74 [Lambert 1666, p.4]

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a lute line. The vocal line is in 3/2 time and features a 'port de voix' ornament on the final note of the phrase 'la mort'. The lute line provides harmonic support with a bass line that includes fingerings 6, 5, 3, 4, 3.

I have the feeling that they stop singing altogether or even speaking when they come to the words *je me meurs*, *je suis mort* in this old air, *Vous doutez si je suis malade*, etc., [Ex.75] which is still very popular nowadays.

(plays were regularly read aloud and discussed) and supportive of their authors, were bound by their position in society to avoid the open displays of emotion performed by actors.

³²² Bacilly is referring to the *port de voix coulé*.

³²³ Bacilly explains later in Pt.2, Ch.V, art.1 (p.291/ 358) that by ‘capital *m*’ he means any *m* that comes at the beginning of a word (therefore the rules apply to both capital letters and small letters).

³²⁴ ‘gronder’. Bacilly discusses the use of this device, the suspension of consonants, in Pt.2, Ch. V, pp.307-311/ 371-6. Other consonants that can occasionally bear this treatment are *f*, *n*, *s*, *j* and *v*, depending on the meaning of the word.

Example 75 [Richard 1637, fol.21]³²⁵

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a figured bass line. The first system covers the lyrics "Je vay mourir, je me meurs, Je vay mourir," and the second system covers "-rir, je me meurs, je suis mort." The music is in a 3/2 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The vocal line is written on a treble clef staff, and the figured bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff. The figured bass line consists of letters (d, c, b, a, e, b, a, b, a, c, d) placed below the bass staff, with some letters having dots above them. There are also some letters (a, b, c, d) placed above the bass staff. The music includes various note values, rests, and ornaments. There are two first endings and two second endings marked with "1." and "2." and repeat signs.

As for the *mouvement* suitable for cheerful and lively expressions, nothing contributes towards it as much as the *doublement du gosier*, of which I spoke at length in /203/ the preceding article, which is performed, as I said, by striking a note twice instead of once; but so lightly and delicately that it is hardly noticeable. And since it is frequently performed in airs, more so than any other ornament, one must be careful not to execute it in the wrong place, that is to say, on a short syllable; it should almost always be done on a long syllable, for which the knowledge of long and short syllables is absolutely necessary. For although in singing four or five *douplemens de gosier*³²⁶ can be executed in a row on certain words, one could not do the same on short syllables.

The most important ornament and the most performed in singing is what is commonly called ‘diminution’. This name derives from the fact that the duration of a note is diminished into several shorter ones. It could therefore also have been called by the opposite name ‘augmentation’, since the number of /204/ notes is increased. As there is much to say about these and as they are found in both first and second verses (even though they are more abundant in the latter, so that diminutions are often attributed to second verses only), I deem it necessary to write a separate chapter on them.

³²⁵ The text of two subsequent verses is provided at the foot of fol.21.

³²⁶ In Ch.XII, art.4, p.197/ 295, Bacilly mentioned that several *douplemens* could be performed on the same note, although the impression he gives is that the single repetition is the most common form of *doublement*. The ‘four or five’ repetitions mentioned here correspond more closely to the later instrumental formula for the *balancement*. (See fn.308.)

CHAPTER XIII
On *passages* and *diminutions*

/205/ Music, according to a long-established tradition, is limited to straightforward notation, which differentiates it from the art of proper singing.³²⁷ All pleasurable embellishments in singing are therefore attributed to this art, which ordinary people are quick to label ‘method of singing’. They believe the entire method to be relevant only to second verses, because they are filled with *fredons*, *roullemens*, and *broderie*, which are the common names for *passages* and *diminutions*. These two words can be called ‘synonymous’ for they mean the same thing, so much so that the diminution of a long note into several ‘lesser’ ones, that is to say, ‘shorter’, can be called *passage*, for they /206/ function as a ‘passage’, a ‘transition’, a ‘link’, or whatever you like to call it, with what follows. So one could call ‘diminution’ everything which is added to the simple musical notation on the page, such as the *port de voix*, which is composed, as I have said, of several notes, or the *cadence* in all its different applications; in short, anything that ‘diminishes’ a long note, by which I mean divides it into several notes of smaller value in relation to the beat.

However, distinctions have been made between these diminutions. Some people even think, quite wrongly (as I will discuss below) that the term ‘diminution’ only applies to second verses. They do not wish the ornaments and embellishments performed in first verses to be called diminutions, for they find them abhorrent and want the first verses to be spared the contempt they have for all that is called *double* in singing.

I shall therefore say that opinions differ greatly as regards /207/ the feeling one should have towards diminution in singing, which ordinary people call *fredon*. And if this practice has its advocates, it can also be said to have its critics; and though they are fewer in number, they are all the more feared since they are, or at least give the impression to be, more ‘enlightened’. As for those who advocate diminution, some say that it represents all the refinement and charm in singing, while others say that it only greatly contributes towards it. And those who criticise it hold it up to ridicule, and try to

³²⁷ This is a comparison between printed music, where ornaments and embellishments are not written, and its vocal realisation.

destroy its merits with platitudes and empty comments, which sound nonsensical rather than reasonable.

Amongst those who discount *passages* and diminutions in singing, some of them do it out of pure whim and stubbornness. But an even greater number of people scorn them because they lack either the ability to invent them and to place them correctly in their songs, or the disposition to execute them and perform them well.

Another distinction can be made amongst /208/ those who criticise diminution: for some have never been able to acquire the necessary disposition to perform *passages*, while others have had it but no longer possess it to the degree they would like. Thus one can easily observe that they, like others, valued diminution in the past, from the fact that they cannot resist singing second verses, in particular those with the most *passages*, whenever they feel fit enough to perform them, which still happens from time to time.

If these numerous critics could, through their rhetoric, convince others of the unjust disdain which they have for such a well-established and favoured embellishment, they would no doubt gain the upper hand. They would be spared the just accusation of being ignorant, instead of having such a high opinion of themselves. I have noticed that a number of these critics, who for a long time dedicated themselves to singing second verses and who have composed a considerable number, have given up, upon seeing that they could not achieve the same success which they claim to have /209/ in other musical activities, in which they think they excel above all others. They realised that they could only have been pale imitators of a certain composer who is unrivalled, not only as regards the composition and application of *passages* but even as regards performance.³²⁸

This points to the fact that these vocal ornaments consist of three things: namely their invention, which requires great ability, or lengthy training, or rather both together; their application to the words, which requires many years' 'routine' practice, and moreover a perfect knowledge of long and short syllables; and performance, which requires a natural disposition of the throat, which should be supple enough to do all that is required, that is to say, correctly articulating or sliding over notes with due speed and lightness and executing other peculiarities encountered in the performance of *passages*.

A number of people possess the ability of inventing diminutions and could even teach others how to do them. And /210/ if singing did not involve words, they could stand up to the experts with less presumption; but the trouble is that they do not possess

³²⁸ Bacilly gives no clues as to which composer and singer he has in mind, though Lambert would fit the description well.

the skill of applying their *fredons* in the right places, because they lack the knowledge of long and short syllables in a language which they only know in its familiar form, and thus are ignorant of both quantity and proper pronunciation.

A small number of people are gifted enough to place diminutions correctly but lack the ability to invent them, and are thus only good at giving advice and correcting the mistakes of others. But there is no short supply of capable performers, some more talented than others. And although they are mere interpreters, they have a considerable advantage over both inventors and composers who lack the disposition to perform them. For it is true that one is content with what pleases the ear, without inquiring whether the performer is also the composer or not.

CHAPTER XIII

ARTICLE I

Reply to the criticism condemning *passages* and diminutions in singing.

/211/ People who wish to justify the contempt they hold for diminutions and *passages* start by saying that nothing is more beautiful than a simple unadorned melody through which the beauty of the singer's voice and the purity and clarity of his singing is revealed; then they suddenly become derisive, saying that diminution is nothing but sheer banter, and resort to the use of a jargon which would be more appropriate coming from the mouth of a jester than that of a reasonable man, who is meant to discuss things objectively.

To this I reply that if simplicity is beautiful, that which is adorned and enriched is even more so. Therefore the diminution, provided it is correctly placed in the melody, does not prevent the beauty of the /212/ voice and its clarity from being revealed where it should. It is like a good quality fabric which has been partly embroidered, and where the embroidered parts bring out the plain ones. Besides, these Gentlemen are the first to agree along with everyone else that in the first verse of an air, which is meant to be simple, one cannot help adding a few ornaments like the diminution of a long note into shorter ones to pass pleasantly on to the next note. I would like to ask these people whether or not they consider these ornaments to be diminutions and by what other name they would refer to them. For they also agree that suppressing diminutions in instrumental music, and harpsichord music in particular, would mean denying it its most beautiful adornment. Why then should one not use diminutions in vocal music, since the voice is the natural instrument which the other instruments merely try to mimic? And what advantage would a singer, born with an excellent disposition to perform all these vocal ornaments have, if he could not make use of it; for it /213/ is true that Nature does not give anything for nothing.

2. Critics claim that diminutions remove all the expression in singing and that they have to be added to instrumental music because instruments cannot speak. It is useless to explain to them that rather than suppressing the expression, *passages* in singing reinforce it, provided the words are of equal strength in the first and second verse (which is rarely the case because the strength of the words is usually concentrated on the first verse, leaving the second verse to be a weak repetition of what was said in

the first) and provided one takes care to retain the expression by not embellishing that which should be kept plain. Thus one of the great secrets of the art of diminution is to know when to refrain from performing one and when never to perform one. This can be observed here and there in the second verses in the engraved volumes of airs.

3. Those who are against diminution argue that it is prejudicial to the proper pronunciation of words and even to their quantity.

/214/ It is true that if singers sang second verses in the same manner as first verses without being able to overcome the drawbacks created by the fact that they bear little relation to each other as regards long and short syllables, as I shall discuss later in this treatise, then for sure, diminutions would make a terrible din amongst the words being sung. But if the singer has a perfect knowledge of quantity and knows how to overcome the situation by cleverly adjusting long and short notes to correspond to the length of the syllables, either by anticipating, delaying or transposing,³²⁹ or even by repeating more syllables or words in certain places and less in other places, then diminution, far from spoiling the pronunciation of words, contributes positively to this process of rearrangement and readjustment.

However, as these Gentlemen are completely ignorant of the quantity of syllables, they are right in saying that diminution destroys it entirely. Here are some examples which can be very /215/ useful in understanding how diminutions can affect singing when it comes to retaining long and short syllables.

An example of transposition can be found right at the beginning of the book *in quarto*, on page 6, on the words & *qu'au moins* [Ex.76b], which correspond to the word *parlons* in the first verse [Ex.76a].

Example 76a [Lambert 1666, p.4]

The image shows a musical score for Example 76a. It consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a lute line (bass clef). The time signature is 3/2. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line has the lyrics: [plain]dre, Par - lons, il n'est. The lute line has figured bass notation: #3, 7, 6. There is a slur under the first two notes of the lute line.

³²⁹ Bacilly explains the practice of transposition, which involves shifting the long note onto another syllable, or vice versa, below.

plus temps... de fin - - dre

3 3 5 4 #3 6

Example 76b [Lambert 1666, p.6]

[marti]re Et qu'au moins je

[marti]re Et qu'au moins

vous o - - ze di - - re

je vous o - - ze di - - re

One should observe in this example that to be in accordance with the word in the first verse, only two syllables were required in the second,³³⁰ and yet the author extended the *la*³³¹ of *parlons* until the word *moins*, saying *Et qu'au moins* rather than *Et qu'au* and then descend in pitch on the word *moins*, which a less skilled composer would have been happy to embellish in order to plaster over the fault³³² (rather than correcting it by rewriting the section, as should be done before embellishing it). Since the author added the extra word *moins*, and that three syllables correspond to the two syllables of the first verse, he is consequently short of one syllable for what follows.³³³ He therefore extended the number of beats to which one sings the word *je*, so as to regain, so to /216/ speak, the ground which was lost, and he has embellished it with a diminution, which the syllable can sustain because it is long in this case, though it is naturally short.³³⁴ I shall explain this later in the appropriate chapter and will demonstrate that the word

³³⁰ i.e. 'parlons' would become 'et qu'au' in the second verse.

³³¹ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. *f*'.

³³² The fault being that 'moins' is a long syllable and should therefore fall on the first beat of the bar instead of the syllable 'qu'au'.

³³³ As there are two syllables before the second bar instead of one, the composer is one syllable short for the rest of the bar.

vous, although it belongs to the category of monosyllables ending with an *s*, which are always long, is exempt from this rule, as are the monosyllables *tous* and *nous*.

Another similar example can be found further on in the same second verse, on the words *en mourant* [Exx. 77a and 77b].

Example 77a [Lambert 1666, p.4]

Nous som - mes trop pres de la mort

6 5 3 4 3

Example 77b [Lambert 1666, p.6]

En mou- rant que je meurs d'A - mour,

6 3 3 4 3

En mou - rant que je meurs que je meurs d'A - mour,

Before placing a diminution on the last syllable, the author has joined it to the other two, although in the first verse, the last syllables of *sommes*, which corresponds to the third syllable of *en mourant*, is as if separated in pitch, by which I mean that it descends to a *mi*,³³⁵ because the word *sommes* being feminine, its penultimate syllable is long; and as that of *mourant*, a masculine word, is short, one cannot pause on it. It was therefore necessary to go on to the last syllable, by repeating the *fa*³³⁶ of the penultimate syllable, though there is only one *fa* on the word *sommes*.

/217/ There is another example of this kind of readjustment of syllables which are short in one verse and long in another on page 10 of the same book [Exx. 78a and 78b].

³³⁴ The diminution on the first syllable of the word 'oze' in the third bar of Ex.76b is, like the previous bar, grammatically incorrect, as is frequently the case in Bacilly's examples. It must be noted that here, as in other similar instances, the alignment of the *dessus* part with the bass part is editorial.

³³⁵ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. *a'*.

³³⁶ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. *bb'*.

Example 78a [Lambert 1666, p.8]

I - nu - ti - les pen - sers

6

Example 78b [Lambert 1666, p.10]

Il est vray son hu - meur

Il est vray son hu - meur

6

It occurs on the words *son humeur*, where the author has rightly noted that the first syllable of the word *humeur* is short, as are generally all penultimate syllables of masculine words; instead, that of *pensers*, which is at the same place in the first verse, is long, although it is also a masculine word, but belongs to an exception based on the letter *n* which I will discuss later, which can turn a naturally short syllable into a long one. As I say, the author was aware of this and avoided writing as many notes as he could have done if this syllable had been a long one,³³⁷ or at least, he has shortened them rather than writing them in a different way. There are even more important examples which I must not forget to mention, which are very useful in proving that what I have said is true about diminutions being harmless to the quantity of syllables when correctly done. There is one on /218/ page 30 of the same book on the four syllables & *j'ay toujours*, which correspond to only three in the first verse: & *je sçay* [Exx. 79a and 79b].

Example 79a [Lambert 1666, p.28]

et je sçay qu'un au - tre

3 4 5 6 3 3 7

³³⁷ Only three quavers have been assigned to this syllable instead of one minim.

Example 79b [Lambert 1666, p.31]

et j'ay tous - jours su - jet

[tous]jours tous - jours su - jet de

The author has skilfully repeated the *re*, though there is only one on the word *et* in the first verse, not only because *j'ay* is a long syllable in this case and therefore cannot sustain the same short note as on *je*, but also so as not to linger on a short syllable, which is the first of the word *sujet*. So instead of saying & *j'ay toujours su*, the author has sort of redrawn the melody by joining the last syllable [*jet*] onto the end and assigning to it the *mi* which was meant for the penultimate syllable, and only after doing this did he embellish it. One should always do this before adding a diminution, I mean, one should always see whether the number of syllables and their quantity will correspond; one should not be content with 'embellishing' before seeing whether the words of the second verse, before any ornamentation is added, will fit those of the first; for if they do not, one must ensure that they do so by delaying or anticipating the notes on which they fall, and even by repeating more or less syllables than /219/ in the first verse and compensating for this with what precedes or follows. And once everything has been reworked, and the words of the second verse have been fitted to the melody of the first, then one can add diminutions to syllables which can sustain them, which are usually long ones. This is called the ability of producing *doubles* or 'second verses', which cannot be achieved without a great knowledge of long and short syllables, and of 'caesuras' in poetry and other features of the French language, all of which were entirely unknown to composers of the past.³³⁸

Here is an example of the repetition of extra syllables in a second verse than would be necessary in the first verse. It occurs on page 35 of the same book. [Exx. 80a and 80b]

³³⁸ 'anciens'. Bacilly considers the meaning of 'airs anciens' in Ch.XI, p.127/ 236, where he mentions composers of the early seventeenth century. According to Bacilly, the practice of creating a *double* dates from the early years of the century thanks to Monsieur le Bailly (see Ch.XIII, art.2, p.225/ 316; see also Essay, Chapter 3, pp.66-7).

Example 80a [Lambert 1666, p.33]

Musical score for Example 80a. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is 3/2. The lyrics are "a mou - rir" and "a mou - rir". The score includes fingerings: #3, #3, 3, 3, 6, 3, 5. There is a second ending bracket over the final note of the second staff.

Example 80b [Lambert 1666, p.35]

Musical score for Example 80b. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is 3/2. The lyrics are "Sçau - ra bien qui ma fait mou -" and "qui ma fait mou - rir". The score includes fingerings: 6, 7, #3, #3, 3. There is a second ending bracket over the final note of the second staff.

One can see that the author has not only repeated the three syllables *fait mourir*, to correspond to *à mourir* in the first verse, but has added to them the words *qui m'a*, so as to make sense of the words, the meaning of which would have been distorted otherwise. He has done this so cleverly that all five syllables, by the means of diminution, /220/ correspond exactly to the three syllables in the first verse.

On page 78 of the same book, the author could have been content with repeating the word *mourir*, corresponding to the word *revoir* in the first verse (and there would have been nothing wrong with that); but he preferred to repeat & *mourir* so as to make better sense of the words. [Exx. 81a and 81b]

Example 81a [Lambert 1666, p.76]

[al]lons re - voir re - voir Cli - me - ne

3 3 6 3

Example 81b [Lambert 1666, p.78]

et mou - rir... et mou - rir pour el - le

3 3 5 6 3

[mou]rir mou - rir vi - vre et mou - rir pour elle

Here is another example, where the author had to write fewer syllables at one point in an air and more at another and did not follow the pattern of the first verse so as not to pause on a word which is more linked to what follows than to what precedes it. It occurs on page 46 of the same book. [Exx. 82a and 82b]

Example 82a [Lambert 1666, p.44]

Que me sert il d'es - tre fi - del - le

5 3 6 5 5 6

Example 82b [Lambert 1666, p.46]

Ce se - roit me

5 3 6

Ce se - roit me

Musical score for the phrase "trom - per moy mes - mes". The score is written in two staves: a treble clef staff for the vocal line and a bass clef staff for the basso continuo line. The vocal line features a melodic line with a slur over "trom - per" and another slur over "moy mes - mes". A plus sign (+) is placed above the final note of "mes". The basso continuo line includes figured bass notation: 5, 3, 5, #6, and a final measure with a slur over "mes".

The author has only written the three syllables *ce seroit* to correspond to the four syllables *que me sert-il* in the first verse so that the *sol* falls on the last syllable of *seroit* instead of on the *me*, which would result in *ce seroit me*; this would sound rather clumsy to the experts, whatever embellishment is plastered over the deed. Instead he has placed the embellishment very cleverly on the word *ce*, and, by a skilfully placed anticipation, has assigned to this syllable the notes which rightly /221/ belonged to the following syllable *se*.

Another example of the repetition of one word rather than another can be found in the same book, and is noteworthy. It occurs on page 63. [Exx. 83a and 83b]

Example 83a [Lambert 1666, p.61]

Musical score for Example 83a. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has two measures: the first measure is in 3/4 time with the lyrics "le mal" and the second measure is in 3/2 time with the lyrics "le mal". The second system has two measures: the first measure is in 3/4 time with the lyrics "que le" and the second measure is in 3/2 time with the lyrics "re - me - - de". The score includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and figured bass notation in the bass line.

Example 83b [Lambert 1666, p.63]

Musical score for Example 83b. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has two measures: the first measure is in 3/4 time with the lyrics "que j'ay" and the second measure is in 3/2 time with the lyrics "ces - sé ces -". The second system has two measures: the first measure is in 3/4 time with the lyrics "bien" and the second measure is in 3/2 time with the lyrics "que j'ay que". The score includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and figured bass notation in the bass line.

A musical score for a vocal line and a bass line. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "sé de vi - - - vre." The bass line is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "j'ay ces - - - sé de vi - - - vre." Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5. There are some performance markings like a plus sign and a '2.' above the final note.

The author has appropriately repeated *cessé cessé* rather than *que j'ay que j'ay*, which would have corresponded to the first verse, because he judged the word *cessé* to be suitable for repetition and that it would have seemed strange to linger on the word *j'ay* which is only really half a word and needs to be joined to the other word, *cessé*, unless it is the *j'ay* of the verb *avoir*.³³⁹

Many more examples can be found in the book printed *in octavo* which are worth looking at. I believe that one cannot bring enough attention to this subject as most musicians are unaware of it. On page 69 of the first book *in octavo*, instead of stopping on the word *de*, in *par le secret de*, to match the five syllables *vous sçavez donner* in the first verse, the author saw fit to stop on the fourth syllable and joined the *de* to the following words, by placing the *fa* on the /222/ last syllable of *secret*, which would otherwise have been placed on the *de*. [Exx. 84a and 84b]

Example 84a [Bacilly I, 1668, p.68]

A musical score for two voices. The top voice is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Vous sça - vez don - ner de la - mour". The bottom voice is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Vous sça - vez don - ner de l'a - mour". There are some performance markings like a plus sign and a '3' above the final note.

Example 84b [Bacilly I, 1668, p.69]

A musical score for a single voice. The voice is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Par le se - cret de tout char - mer". There are some performance markings like a plus sign and a '#]' above the final note.

³³⁹ i.e. In *que j'ay cessé*, *j'ay* is only an auxiliary in the past participle of the verb *cesser*. It does not carry as much weight as the first person singular in its own right of the verb *avoir*.

He has done the same thing on page 78 of the second book *in octavo*, where instead of writing *taschent de*, he stopped on the last syllable of *taschent* and, by means of a diminution, managed to match these two syllables to the three syllables in the first verse, & *lassé*. [Ex. 85a and 85b]

Example 85a [Bacilly II, 1668, p.76]

Musical score for Example 85a. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef with a 3/2 time signature and a bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: plus Et las - sé de tant de re - fus. The second system has a treble clef with a 3/2 time signature and a bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: plus Et las - sé de tant de re - fus.

Example 85b [Bacilly II, 1668, p.78]

Musical score for Example 85b. It consists of a single system of music with a treble clef and a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: [rai]son tas - chent de for - cer ma pri - son.

There is an important example of the transposition of long and short syllables in the first book *in octavo*, on page 62 on the words *quand on est si prez*, which correspond exactly to the words *c'est me commander*. [Exx. 86a and 86b]

Example 86a [Bacilly I, 1668, p.61]

Musical score for Example 86a. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef with a 3/2 time signature and a bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: C'est me com - man - der de mou - rir. The second system has a treble clef with a 3/2 time signature and a bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: [com]man - der ... me com - man - der de mou - rir.

Example 86b [Bacilly I, 1668, p.62]

Musical score for Example 86b. It consists of a single system of music with a treble clef and a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: Quand on est si prez de mou - rir.

The author, noticing that the syllable *si* is short, and that *man* is long, has transposed the long note to which it belonged to the *est*, and ornamented this syllable with a diminution. Others would have built their second verse on shaky foundations and would have papered over the cracks with endless embellishments, as most of them do, instead of repairing them.

As regards pronunciation, I do not doubt that uninformed people find that diminution hampers it, /223/ because it seems to break up a word into several parts. They also find that the singer is so preoccupied with executing the notes properly that he cannot give his undivided attention to the correct pronunciation of words; for trying to do two things at once leads to neither of them being done properly. If this occurs, they should criticise the singer's lack of ability and ingenuity and not the diminution, for in truth a skilful singer will not be hindered by this, provided he keeps in mind that his listeners are often more interested in what flatters the ear than in what gratifies the mind, by which I mean in ornaments rather than the meaning of words, and therefore one can never take too much care over the distinct pronunciation of words.

CHAPTER XIII

ARTICLE 2

The correct and incorrect use of *passages* and diminutions

/224/ Everyone agrees that the less *passages* are performed in first verses, the better, for it is true that they prevent the air from being heard in its clarity. Similarly, a painter must first draw his work, which can be compared to the first verse of an air, before applying his colours, which are in a way to painting what diminution is to singing.³⁴⁰

As regards second verses, as the practice of filling them with diminution is nothing new, it is quite wrong to say that it is no longer fashionable to perform as many diminutions as in the past. It is true that formerly, it would have been considered a crime to let a syllable slip by unadorned, and /225/ that singers used to ‘embellish’ wildly without the slightest consideration for long or short syllables, even to the detriment of pronunciation, to which they paid little attention. But this does not mean that fashion has anything to do with the present change. For in fact, singers nowadays embellish even more than before, provided the words can sustain a diminution and that nothing else stands in the way.

Since it is generally accepted that it is easy to add embellishments to compositions, it should also be easy to avoid excesses. One is indebted to composers for this and one should hold them in reverence. It is also true that in singing, a certain number of old works such as those of Monsieur le Bailly, to whom we owe the invention of *passages* and diminutions, are still so highly regarded that no one has dared change them in any way, except the manner in which they are performed, which is nowadays a little more refined. And although they contain many mistakes of syllabic quantity /226/ one never tires of singing them as they were originally written, since they are ‘gems from the old stock’.³⁴¹

Thus, when it is said that nowadays fewer diminutions are performed than formerly, this does not mean that there are fewer vocal ornaments. On the contrary, many ornaments have been created which were unknown to previous generations.³⁴² This reduction must be understood in terms of their application to the syllables, which,

³⁴⁰ Bacilly has already made a comparison with painting in Ch.X, p.83/ 209, of his treatise.

³⁴¹ ‘diamans de la vieille Roche’. Bacilly uses the term ‘airs de la vieille roche’ in Ch.XI, p.130/ 244.

³⁴² See Ch.XII, art.2: some of these ornaments, such as one version of Bacilly’s *double cadence*, may have been imported from Italy.

being often short, cannot sustain indiscriminate embellishment, as can long syllables, according to the old manner of singing. In addition, there are vowels, such as *u* and even *i*, or syllables such as *on* and *ou* which in the current manner of singing can only sustain a very small amount of diminution, something to which singers formerly paid little attention.

Finally, as the correct application of *passages* and diminutions belongs entirely to the practical world, along with a natural disposition, the best advice I can give to perfect them is to contact proficient singers, and to follow their advice. /227/ For it is impossible to establish rules for what must be done, only for what must be avoided, unless one is speaking of their implementation, which I shall discuss in the following article.

One can also benefit greatly from studying the airs engraved by Richer,³⁴³ by comparing the first and second verses, and by observing above all, as I have already said, the action taken to correct the discrepancies concerning long and short syllables in the second verses by means of diminution. This gives an idea of how to deal with similar examples.

³⁴³ As Bacilly explains in the 'Réponse', these include the two 1668 volumes *in octavo*, Lambert's 1666 volume *in quarto* and the airs published in the (now lost) *Journal des nouveautez du Chant*. By 1679, the two volumes of *Airs spirituels* could be added to the list (Bacilly [1679], p.29).

CHAPTER XIII

ARTICLE 3

Some Views on Diminutions and particularly on their Execution

/227/ Firstly, it must be noted that not all syllables can be diminished indiscriminately /228/ according to the composer's whim. The syllables *on* and *ou*, for example, should not be over embellished.³⁴⁴ This practice is accepted by all contemporary musicians and is justified by the awkwardness that would otherwise result in singing.

2. There are diminutions suitable only for basses, such as downward, mainly octave, *coulemens*. These are commonly called *roullemens* and are little used in the *dessus* part, or *sujet*³⁴⁵ of an air.³⁴⁶

3. It is generally accepted as a rule in singing that performing *passages* with the tongue is totally incorrect.³⁴⁷

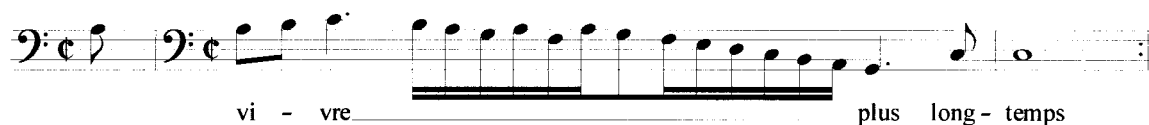
4. While practising how to perform *passages*, one must get accustomed to articulating with the throat as emphatically as possible and also quite slowly to begin with. As a result of this slowness and firmness in practising, accuracy may be mastered, and singing through the nose or with the tongue can be avoided.

³⁴⁴ The reasons for this are given in Pt.II, Ch.III, art.4, p.276/ 348 and Ch.IV, p.283/ 352: a diminution on 'on' would require the performer to 'sing through the nose'; as for 'ou', singers are reluctant to 'pout' in order to form the compound vowel properly.

³⁴⁵ The *dessus* is the uppermost part in an ensemble; the *sujet* is the principal melodic line.

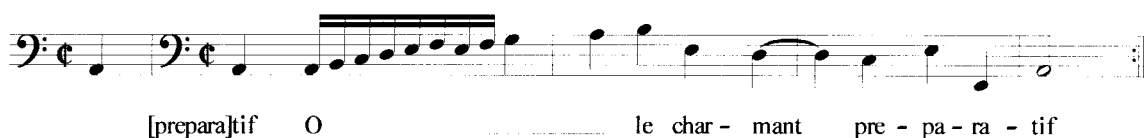
³⁴⁶ As the *dessus* parts in the two books *in octavo* and the book *in quarto* are written for high voice, we cannot turn to these volumes for illustrations of embellishments for bass voice. However, a few examples can be found in the *récits de basse* included in Bacilly 1677 engraved volume of *airs bachiques*; Ex. xxix is one such example:

Ex. xxix [Bacilly 1677, p.19]



Although Bacilly mentions only descending *coulemens*, the same volume contains an example of an ascending octave *coulement*.

Ex. xxx [Bacilly 1677, p.1]



³⁴⁷ See Ch.XI, p.90/ 212.

5. Even though it is the rule that the tongue must not be used in performing *passages* but only /229/ the throat,³⁴⁸ it must be noted that there are singers whose throat is not fine enough for this execution. They must therefore articulate these *passages* ‘with a ready voice’³⁴⁹ (so it is called) and thus a small movement of the tongue may well contribute to it. But in this case, it cannot be called singing with the tongue, since the throat is still the main instrument in the execution. The tongue is only the second instrument, like an assistant, helping to bring about its softness and delicacy. This observation applies to the vowels which need to be emphasized with the throat, such as *o* and *a*, and sometimes *e*, but not *i* or *u*. The latter are articulated well enough by themselves, without the help of the tongue.

6. One must take care to perform properly the notes which leap upwards following a dotted note, the dot being either written on the page or only assumed, according to the normal habit of not indicating the dots in a *passage*.³⁵⁰ Singers who ought to be experts in this domain, but are often ignorant, are left to guess the position of the dots. /230/ For these short notes are often neglected, especially when they are a third or fourth higher than the dotted note that precedes them. As a result of this nonchalance, they do not sound as they should, and give the impression of being seconds instead of thirds, or thirds instead of fourths. Here are some examples.

In the second book *in octavo*,³⁵¹ on page 78 [Ex. 87], in the *passage* on the *i* of the word *entreprises*, the ascending *sol*³⁵² [▼] must carefully be reached (after the *re*, where a dot must be assumed) before leading on to the ‘sharpened’ *fa*. This is rarely done properly and only the ‘sharpened’ *fa* is sounded instead of the *sol*.

³⁴⁸ The movements of the tongue here would make up for the lack of purely vocal articulation. For Mersenne, (1965), 2, Bk.6, p.355, using the middle of the tongue is necessary for pronouncing vowels in certain *passages* and is not a fault like using the tip of the tongue.

³⁴⁹ ‘du delié de la voix’.

³⁵⁰ Caccini (1601/2, preface) mentioned a similar practice: ‘molte sono quelle cose, che si usano nella buona maniera di cantare, che per trovarsi in esse maggior grazia, descritte in una maniera, fanno contrario effetto l’una dall’altra’ (‘there are many things used in good singing style that are written in one way but, to be more graceful, are effected in quite another’ (trans. Hitchcock, Caccini [1970], p.50). He gave the example of four equal quavers which, when performed, feature a dot on the second quaver, turning the third quaver into a semiquaver. Bacilly’s mention of the habitual dotting certain notes in a *passage* (he specifies that these are alternate notes on p. 232) calls to mind the practice of *notes inégales*, though the term is not used by Bacilly.

³⁵¹ Bacilly has confused his sources: the text reads ‘dans le 2. Livre in 4. Page 78’.

³⁵² Natural hexachord on C, i.e. *g*’.

Example 87 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.78]

[gue]rir mil - le en - tre - pri - ses

There is another example in the same *double*, on the next page on the word *de* [Ex.88], where the same care must be taken to perform the *mi*³⁵³ [▼] which is the fourth note. It must be sounded accurately after having assumed there is a dot on the *ut*,³⁵⁴ the third note of the *passage*.

Example 88 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.79]

[pas]ser de mon tourment

In the same book, on page 75, the same observation can be made on /231/ the third syllable of *augmentez*, by dotting the *re* before the *fa* [▼],³⁵⁵ articulating it carefully and accurately.³⁵⁶ [Ex. 89]

Example 89 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.75]

Aug - men - tez vos ri- gueurs

In the book *in quarto*, page 51, there is another example of this rule in the *passage* on the syllable *se*, where the *ut*, which was low, precedes the *fa* [▼], a fourth higher [Ex. 90].³⁵⁷ Instead of this, most people, through guilty negligence, are often content to articulate only the same *mi* on which the *fa* will fall.³⁵⁸

³⁵³ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *b'*.

³⁵⁴ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *g'*.

³⁵⁵ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. dotting the *a'* before the *c''*.

³⁵⁶ The dot would delay the semiquaver group and allow the *a'* to cross over to the next beat.

³⁵⁷ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. the *f'* precedes the *bb'*.

³⁵⁸ If one fails to reach far enough for the *fa*, (*bb'*) it is sung very flat and is closer in pitch to the following *mi* (*a'*).

Example 90 [Lambert 1666, p.51]

The image shows a musical score for Example 90. It consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: "moy se va ren dre" on the top staff and "moy mal - gré moy se va ren dre" on the bottom staff. There are fingerings indicated below the notes: "5" under the first note of the top staff, "3" under the second, "3" under the third, "4" under the fourth, and "3" under the fifth. There are also some performance markings like a plus sign and a square with a vertical line.

The same problem occurs when the note that follows the dotted note, being only a second higher, is then followed by a note that is a third or fourth above the dotted note. For example, in the *double* that I have just mentioned, on the word *me*, a dot must be assumed on the *fa*³⁵⁹ to draw the *sol* on to the next note, a third up from the *fa* and pitch it accurately. [Ex.91]

Example 91 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.75]

The image shows a musical score for Example 91. It consists of a single staff in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: "vous me des - ti - nez". There are some performance markings like a plus sign and a square with a vertical line.

To achieve this effect, the note which follows a dot, be it written or assumed, must first be studied, then practised with emphasis before an attempt is made to perform it. One must not at first be concerned with keeping time, for the great speed or brevity of these notes often overshadows the care which /232/ should be paid to singing them accurately, which is far more important than keeping time.³⁶⁰

7. Although I am saying that there are alternate dots and assumed ones in diminutions, that is to say that out of two notes one is usually dotted, it is thought preferable not to write them down. This is for fear that one should become accustomed to executing these dotted notes ‘jerkily’, by which I mean in a ‘skipping’ manner, in the style of what is called a ‘gigue’, according to the old method of singing that nowadays would seem most unpleasant. These dotted notes must therefore be sung so delicately

³⁵⁹ This is the only ‘me’ on a diminution in the recently quoted examples, but Bacilly’s *fa*, *sol* and *la* correspond to none of the hexachords: the only three consecutive notes, and therefore the notes in question, are *e*”, *f*” and *g*”, which have been bracketed. The problem is solved, however, if Bacilly confused his clefs, for these three notes would be *fa sol la* (hard hexachord) if the clef were a C¹ (soprano) clef rather than a G clef. Caswell does not supply an example at this point.

³⁶⁰ Bacilly’s recommendation must be for practice only and entails not an occasional distortion of the beat but a complete slowing down.

that this effect is avoided,³⁶¹ except when this execution is specifically required. They should even be entirely omitted in certain places, as can be seen in the *passage* that I have just quoted, from the book *in quarto*, page 51, on the word *se* [Ex.90]. After performing the dot that is expressly written, the singer must refrain from placing a dot on the *mi* to ascend to the *fa* and *sol*³⁶² and instead wait until the *la* to place one, if he so wishes. However, /233/ if he does one (which is entirely optional) it must be struck much more delicately than the one written on the page at the start of this *passage*.³⁶³

This manner of executing *passages* with alternating dots must also be avoided on the first syllable of the word *extrême*, on page 22 of the same book [Ex.92].

Example 92 [Lambert 1666, p.22]

The musical score for Example 92 consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a common time signature. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a dotted quarter note on G4 (labeled 'mal'), then a series of eighth notes: A4 (labeled 'ex'), B4 (labeled '-'), C5 (labeled 'tre'), and D5 (labeled '-'). The final note is a dotted quarter note on E5 (labeled 'me'). The bottom staff is a lute line in bass clef with a common time signature. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a dotted quarter note on G3 (labeled 'mal'), then a series of eighth notes: A3 (labeled 'ex'), B3 (labeled '-'), C4 (labeled 'tre'), and D4 (labeled '-'). The final note is a dotted quarter note on E4 (labeled 'me').

At the end of this *double*, however, the author has correctly written these dots on the word *soupirer* [Ex.93] to warn the singer not to avoid them. Otherwise, the execution would have no grace and would be ‘akin to the noise of a hurdy-gurdy’, as it is called.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ ‘il faut donc faire ces sortes de notes pointées si finement que cela ne paroisse pas’. There are two considerations regarding the second note of a dotted pair, namely its length and the weight with which it is performed. Neumann (1993), p.128, has interpreted Bacilly’s comment on avoiding a jerky style as evidence of a lightly lilting execution of *notes inégales*, performing dotted pairs so that the dot is ‘hardly noticeable’. Caswell has translated ‘plus finement’ as ‘delicately and subtly’ which does not address the question of length or weight, but suggests in his study that Bacilly recommends a triplet rhythm rather than a dotted-quaver semiquaver rhythm (Caswell [1964], p.112). In both of these translations, the phrase ‘que cela ne paroisse pas’ has been taken to refer to the dotting of the note (i.e. it must hardly seem dotted at all). In fact, Bacilly’s syntax suggests that it is the effect of a gigue which must be avoided and ‘must not appear’: as we have been told in the previous paragraph that the shorter note of a dotted pair is performed ‘with great speed and brevity’, it is therefore more likely that by ‘plus finement’, Bacilly meant that the shorter notes following a dot are much lighter than those in a gigue (in terms of weight) but still short.

³⁶² Hard hexachord on G, i.e. a dot must not be placed on the *a*’ before moving on to *b*’ and *c*’, but rather one should wait till the *d*’ that precedes the *e b*’ to place a dot.

³⁶³ Bacilly’s caution against abusing this practice of dotting and his reluctance to lay down any rules, reflects the flexibility in this practice.

³⁶⁴ Bacilly is not only comparing the sound of the hurdy-gurdy, which we can safely assume he finds unpleasant, to the voice: throughout the foreword, Bacilly states that instruments are mere imitators of the

Example 93 [Lambert 1666, p.23]

The image shows a musical score for Example 93, consisting of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with a slur over the first four notes, a plus sign above the fifth note, and another plus sign above the eighth note. The bass staff contains a lower melodic line with a slur over the first two notes and a plus sign above the eighth note. Below the treble staff, the lyrics are: [n'oser] soû - pi - rer. Below the bass staff, the lyrics are: [n'o]ser soû - pi - rer. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 3, 4, 6, #3, 5, and 6 under the notes in both staves.

8. The note that immediately follows the *cadence* or the *tremblement* on the same syllable and which acts as a liaison to land on to the next note, be it at the same pitch or a tone lower, should be struck as lightly as possible, as I have previously mentioned. This is the case even though this note is written on the page in the same way as the others. Current musical notation is the same both for notes that need to be emphasized and for those that need to be lighter, until the day when other symbols are invented to distinguish the two, which would be very fitting. I have given enough /233/ examples of this note in the article on *cadences* and their liaisons.³⁶⁵

9. One must take care, mainly when practising, to articulate properly with the throat the upper note that precedes a lower one; for it often seems to be disregarded and subordinate to those which follow it.³⁶⁶ Due to this malpractice it is deprived of its real sound. Great attention must therefore be paid to this upper note, whether the following note is a second or a third or another interval below it. For the lower notes are emphasized enough without needing the same care in making them sound properly as that given to the first note. I think that this observation is sufficiently clear not to need an example.

10. Although, generally speaking, one should articulate clearly with the throat, there are places that do not require that each note be struck as evenly with the throat. Often, one simply needs to relax the throat and let it act freely without constraint, particularly when there are three ascending notes. /235/ For example, at the end of the diminution on the word *voudrois*, on page 58 of the book *in quarto*, it is not necessary

voice; in view of these comments, the comparison drawn with the hurdy-gurdy implies that the voice is reduced to the level of a mechanical instrument. (See also p.136/ 246 and Pt.2, Ch.I, p.244/ 329).

³⁶⁵ See Ch.XII, art.2. Some exceptions are made, however, such as on p.182/ 285, when the liaison is tied to the next syllable, in which case it should be firmly articulated.

³⁶⁶ This recommendation is much the same as that concerning notes which follow a dotted note (illustrated in Exx.87-91).

to strike the last two notes³⁶⁷ firmly [Ex.94]. Rather, they should be glided over after the preceding dot, letting the throat act without too much control over these two notes in particular.

Example 94 [Lambert, 1666, p.58]

11. One must be careful not to fall into the opposite trap and make the mistake of loosening the throat in descending *passages*, for it prevents striking each note properly and giving it the necessary firmness so that the notes are blurred because they are incorrectly sung too lightly. This is particularly noticeable in singers whose throat is neither firm enough nor suitable to articulate *passages*. There are hundreds of examples in printed airs, so it would be pointless to mention them since this rule is clear enough as it is.

12. Apart from the alternating dots which I mentioned above, there are other dots which must be studied carefully which are an important ornament /236/ in singing. They take the ear by surprise for it does not expect this kind of dot that creates a pleasant delay.³⁶⁸ Moreover this dot is never written down: writing two dotted notes in a row is not common practice in music since a short note always follows a dotted note. They must therefore merely be assumed in the following examples.

³⁶⁷ The semiquavers *c*" and *d*".

³⁶⁸ 'une agréable suspension': the flexible interpretation of a dot has already been suggested above in the case of *notes inégales*. It is therefore plausible to think of two consecutive dotted notes, creating a rubato effect. Consecutive dotted notes of this kind are not printed in Lambert's book of airs. There are, however, a few occasions where they do figure in Bacilly's *in octavo* volumes, in spite of his comment that they are not normally written.

Ex.xxxi: [Bacilly I, 1668, p.20]

In the second book *in octavo*, page 78, on the fourth note of the word *la* [▼] a dot must be assumed in addition to that written on the fifth note, otherwise the execution of the entire *passage* would be quite unpleasant. [Ex.95]

Example 95 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.78]

The same applies to the ‘antepenultimate’ note (the third from the end)³⁶⁹ of the first syllable of the word *chaisnes*, on the following page [Ex.96]. A dot must be added on this antepenultimate note, as is more frequently the case on such notes than on others, and a dot must also be assumed on the preceding note,³⁷⁰ to make the *passage* a worthwhile performance and not put it in the category of those derisively named ‘hurdy-gurdy passages’.

Example 96 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.79]

/237/ 13. In the execution of *passages* it is a frequent mistake to perform a *doublement* on the last note of a diminution before going on to the next syllable. This mistake is all the more serious since it is unnoticed by those who do not have a sharp ear and seems pleasant to ignorant people who believe this *doublement* to be an additional vocal ornament, which indeed it is in certain instances.³⁷¹ The mistake concerns only its application, inasmuch as it holds up the diminution and stops it in its tracks, even to the detriment of the beat which is no longer precise nor flowing.³⁷² This can be seen in the following examples. In the book *in quarto*, page 34, ‘Malgré la rigueur de mon sort’, the last note of the *passage*, on the word *de*, must not be repeated with the throat [Ex.97].

³⁶⁹ i.e. *g*’.

³⁷⁰ i.e. *a*’.

³⁷¹ As Bacilly explained in Ch.XII, the *doublement* is performed at the end of the *port de voix* or by itself on long syllables, but is never applied indiscriminately.

³⁷² This situation is analogous to that described in Ch.XII, art.1, where the flow of the melody is hindered by the inappropriate addition of a *doublement* at the end of an *accent*.

Instead, it should be lightly struck, in the same way as *accens*, with which, as I have said above, these last notes have much in common.³⁷³

Example 97 [Lambert, 1666, p.34]

Musical score for Example 97. The top staff is in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: [Mal]gré la ri- gueur de mon sort je veux. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 and a '+' sign. A sharp sign is above the final note of the top staff.

There are a hundred other examples in printed books, on which it would be pointless to elaborate, such as on page 70 of the second book *in octavo*, on the third /238/ syllable of the word *renaisent* [▼] [Ex.98].

Example 98 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.70]

Musical score for Example 98. The top staff is in treble clef with a common time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a common time signature. The lyrics are: qui re - nais - sent tous les ans. A square symbol [▼] is placed above the word 'sent'.

There is another in the same book on page 60 on the last note of *ne*: ‘Ah! Je ne sçais que trop’, etc. [Ex.99].

Example 99 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.60]

Musical score for Example 99. The top staff is in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: Ah! je ne sçais que trop. A sharp sign is above the final note of the top staff.

It is all the more necessary to draw attention to this rule since most people who sing, teachers included, ignore it. By performing this superfluous *doublément* they

³⁷³ In his example in Ch.XII, art.1, Bacilly explained that the *accent* should be performed lightly and should be shorter than its notated value. This may suggest that when the last note of a *passage* ascends in the manner of an *accent* and is therefore to be sung lightly, it should also be shorter.

provide their pupils with a very poor basic technique, and it is extremely difficult to suppress it as the voice is naturally inclined to do this *doublement*. Then habit becomes second nature and makes this fault almost impossible to correct.

14. When faced with four very short notes in succession, one should take great care not to perform a *doublement* on the fourth one. Singers do this frequently, as in the following example. This fault is all the more difficult to correct since those who do it are almost unaware of it, while those who are consider it to be an ornament. In order to correct it, one must carefully perform each note quite slowly in order to demonstrate that there are four notes and not five.³⁷⁴ This must be done /239/ with emphasis, so that the pupil is aware of this *doublement* of the note done with the throat, for it only becomes apparent in this way. There is an example in the second verse of the first air in the book *in quarto*, page 6, on the word *et* [Ex.100]. Great care must be taken not to repeat imperceptibly the *la*,³⁷⁵ which is the fourth note, by singing two *las*³⁷⁶ instead of one. This example can be referred to in all similar circumstances.

Example 100 [Lambert, 1666, p.6]

The musical score for Example 100 is presented in three systems. The first system shows a vocal line in 3/2 time with lyrics: "[mari]re Et qu'au moins je". The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "[mari]re Et qu'au moins". The third system shows a vocal line with lyrics: "vous o - - - ze di - - re" and a bass line with lyrics: "je vous o - - ze di - - re". Performance markings include a '+' above the first note of the first system, a '4' below the first note of the second system, a '3' below the first note of the third system, and a '4' and '#3' below the notes 'di' and 're' respectively in the third system.

This is more or less all there is to say on the performance of *passages*. As for their implementation, it would be presumptuous of me to propose a definitive set of rules for the diminution of a long note into several short ones, according to the intervals of a second, third, fourth or fifth and so on. Nor can I say which diminution is suitable for a

³⁷⁴ This is further evidence that a *doublement* involves the immediate repetition of the same note, creating just one extra note.

³⁷⁵ Soft hexachord on F, i.e. *d''*.

³⁷⁶ i.e. *d'' d''*.

particular interval, since it would not apply to a similar one where word, syllable and even letter would be different, and therefore not suited to the same embellishment. For this /240/ depends entirely on the words that are being sung.

There is, however, one important thing to consider in diminution: it is that several embellishments are possible on a particular word or syllable that are equally good. Others will be barely tolerable, while others will be either perfect or totally unacceptable, according to their degree of inventiveness or their execution. As a result there are authors of varying standards as regards diminution, as in all things. Some think that they excel in the art simply because they are familiar with embellishments, yet they come adrift when applying them, through lack of knowledge of the language, its pronunciation, the length of its syllables, and even its meaning. Others know nothing at all about anything, while others know a great deal about language and pride themselves on being very good at writing what we call second verses, without ever reaching the perfection they claim to have. This would be noticeable /241/ if a more talented composer went ahead and wrote a second verse to the same words. However, since no one takes the trouble to do so (in addition to the fact that these average composers only venture to write diminutions on their own works) one is left to believe that they are very skilled. For acceptable works, even the unacceptable ones, are usually only revealed to be so when compared to excellent ones, as when lead is compared to silver. One can therefore say that although these composers do not make serious mistakes as to the formulation of *passages*, they do not achieve the degree of excellence that would do them credit.

End of Part One

PART TWO
ON THE APPLICATION OF SONG TO WORDS, AS REGARDS PRONUNCIATION
CHAPTER 1
On language in singing in general

/243/ Before discussing language in singing, I find it appropriate to mention briefly that there are three types of singing, namely that of birds, that of instruments and that of the human voice.

The singing of birds is really only a murmuring and warbling sound which is very pleasant to the ear, although no musical notes /244/ associated with vocal singing, are recognizable in this warbling.

The singing of instruments is a sound which Art has invented to imitate the natural voice.³⁷⁷ Amongst all the instruments, some imitate it more closely, such as the organ,³⁷⁸ the viol³⁷⁹ and the violin, whose sounds are not lost as quickly as those of other instruments, but can be sustained for as long as the player wishes.

³⁷⁷ And yet in his volumes of *airs spirituels*, Bacilly's 'préludes', which he also calls 'impromptus', were written for those who had witnessed Bacilly 'sing in imitation of instrumental improvisation', (Bacilly [1688], 'Avis de consequence', p.2. See Essay Ch.3.)

³⁷⁸ Although Bacilly is referring to the sustaining power of the organ, the 'voix humaine' was the name given to numerous kinds of stops in the 17th and 18th century which claimed to imitate the human voice (Williams 2001).

³⁷⁹ The relationship between the viol and the human voice was an important one for Mersenne: 'Certes si les instruments sont prizez à proportion qu'ils imitent mieux la voix, & si de tous les artifices on estime d'avantage celui qui represente mieux le naturel, il semble que l'on ne doit pas refuser le prix à la Viole, qui contrefait la voix en toutes ses modulations, & mesme en ses accents les plus significatifs de tristesse & de joye [...]' ('Certainly, if instruments are prized as a result of the extent to which they imitate the human voice, and if the most admired of all artifices is that which most closely represents Nature, then the prize must go to the viol, since it mimics the human voice in all its modulations, even in its profoundest accents of sadness and joy [...]'). He goes on to draw a more specific, technical similarity: 'l'archet qui rend l'effet dont nous avons parlé, a son trait aussi long à peu prez que l'haleine ordinaire d'une voix, dont il peut imiter la joye, la tristesse, l'agilité, la douceur, & et la force par la vivacité, par sa langueur, par sa vistesse, par son soulagement, & par son appuy [...]' (the bow, which produces the effect to which we have referred, is drawn across the strings in approximately the same length of time as the normal breath of the human voice, whose joy, sadness, agility, gentleness and strength it can imitate by means of its vivaciousness, languor, rapidity, ease and emphasis [...]' Mersenne [1636], vol.3, Bk.4, p.195). Rousseau had similar feelings concerning the expressive power of his instrument: in spite of opposition from certain other musicians (such as De Machy, in the 'Avertissement' to his 1685 *Pieces de Violle*), he maintained in his 1687 *Traité de la Violle* that the viol was principally a melodic instrument rather than an harmonic one: 'La Viole est un instrument où la Melodie doit dominer preferablement à l'Harmonie; parce que la delicatesse de Chant est son esprit, & que c'est par de seul endroit qu'elle est estimée, comme approchant plus près de la Voix, que tous les intruments doivent imiter' ('the viol is an instrument in which melody should predominate over harmony, because the delicacy of song is its very soul, and it is for its close resemblance to the human voice alone that it is prized, which all other instruments strive to imitate'), Rousseau (1687), dedicatory epistle. Marin Marais entitled the third suite in his second volume of viola da gamba music (1701) 'Les Voix humaines' in recognition of the power of the viol to imitate the voice.

But the singing of the human voice, in addition to being natural, also has the advantage of speech, whereas in this respect the others are mute. Thus, in order to sing well it is not enough to know the rules of singing in terms of theory and practice; one must also know how to apply them properly to the words that are being sung, which is the main stumbling block for singers, for they always have misgivings if they do not have a perfect knowledge of the language they are singing, that is to say, if they do not know the correct pronunciation and above all the quantity of long or short syllables.

/245/ I shall not mention foreign languages, nor the countries where the art of singing is practised,³⁸⁰ for this venture would be outside the goal which I have set myself.

I know that the singing with which we are most familiar is in Latin, Italian, Spanish and French. Formerly, singing in Latin used to be performed differently, when only lyric poetry was sung, in the form of ‘vers mesurés’,³⁸¹ and was subject to certain rhythms and a certain number of feet, while nowadays only prose is sung, as can be seen in all our motets, where sometimes one adds some rhyme as in French songs to make the modulation more pleasing.

The other singing, namely in Italian, Spanish and French, uses verse and not prose, unless it is rhymed prose, as is often the case when the words are written after the air, as I mentioned earlier.³⁸²

Neither shall I mention the prerogatives /246/ of these countries as regards singing; whether it is to the Italians that we owe the fine art of singing; whether their airs are more beautiful than ours; whether their expressions are stronger and whether it is true that Italian airs even when sung by a Frenchman are more pleasant and polished: this remains unresolved and everyone is entitled to his opinion. I think I discussed this matter sufficiently in Chapter XI of the first part of this treatise, where I said that by dint of repetitions, one could spin an Italian air (and the same goes for a Spanish air) out of a few lines of poetry. This is still done in Latin singing, and I would like to mention in passing that one should refrain from repeating incomplete and meaningless expressions that affect the construction in an awkward way, as can be seen in the compositions of those who, through lack of understanding Latin, think they can repeat with impunity

³⁸⁰ ‘des Nations parmy lesquelles le Chant est en usage’; as the purpose of the *Remarques* is to discuss singing in French, a discussion of singing practices in other countries is unnecessary.

³⁸¹ This is Bacilly’s only mention of ‘vers mesurés’, clearly in the context of older vocal works written in Latin. The suggestion that Bacilly has ‘vers mesurés’ in mind for his discussion on syllabic quantity in Pt.3 (see Essay, Ch.4) cannot be based on this passing comment.

Seculorum amen, seculorum amen, and again /247/ *seculorum amen* at the end of their *Gloria Patri*, until they tire of it.

I shall therefore limit myself to the French language, some rules of which will also be applicable to other languages.

³⁸² This was discussed in Pt.1, Ch.XI, p.119/ 231-2.

CHAPTER II

On pronunciation in general

/248/ Though pronunciation is the domain of grammarians, there are rules on pronunciation peculiar to singing which they have never mentioned, either because these rules are unknown to them, or because they are not their concern.³⁸³

I shall therefore say that two types of pronunciation are generally accepted which are the source of many misgivings and difficulties in singing. There is a simple pronunciation, which allows the words to be heard clearly, so that the listener may understand them distinctly without strain. But there is another pronunciation, stronger and more energetic, which involves giving due weight to the words being recited³⁸⁴ and is very similar to the type used on /249/ stage and for public speaking, which is usually called ‘declamation’. This latter type of pronunciation can be confused with *expression*, and yet I make the distinction for the reason that I only wish to discuss here the main letters of the alphabet which give weight to the words that are sung, and the manner in which they must be pronounced to achieve this end.³⁸⁵

These two types of pronunciation being thus established, it is obvious that it is not enough to pronounce words simply; they must also be given their due strength. It is quite wrong to think one is praising a singer when saying ‘we can catch every syllable he says’. Yet it is common talk amongst people, who are unaware of all the rules of pronunciation as regards singing.

I know that in the past, little attention was paid to words and pronunciation counted next to nothing. It was therefore a /250/ great improvement when pronunciation was taken into account in singing, if only for the purpose of clearly hearing the words.

³⁸³ For Bacilly, pronunciation in singing clearly requires its own rules and cannot rely on the normal rules of declamation alone (see Essay, Ch.4). Though Bacilly is never specific as to who these ‘Messieurs les Grammairiens’ might be, they would have been scholars such as those of the abbey of Port-Royal who published a *Grammaire* in 1660, or members of the Académie française: although Richelieu had charged them with producing a *Dictionnaire*, a *Grammaire*, a *Rhétorique* and a *Poétique*, only the *Dictionnaire* (1694) materialised by the end of the century, though the other three subjects were constantly being debated. Vaugelas (1585-1650), himself a member of the Académie, famously produced his own grammar manual, the *Remarques sur la langue française* (1647).

³⁸⁴ ‘au paroles que l’on récite’; the word ‘réciter’ is normally associated with the performance of recitative. However, as the examples Bacilly gives throughout this part and the next are drawn from airs rather than ‘récits’, we may take this to be the looser meaning of the word ‘réciter’.

³⁸⁵ Bacilly listed ‘expression’ (or ‘passionner’) in his list of ornaments in Ch.XII; it involves singing with feeling and the moving of the various passions through the manipulation of certain ornaments and pronunciations. Bacilly is only concerned here with pronunciation which, though part of the overall aim of affective singing, can be treated separately so as to establish its rules.

But now that singing seems to have reached the height of perfection, it is not enough to pronounce clearly: one must add the necessary power. It is a mistake to maintain that one should sing as one speaks, unless one adds as one speaks in public, and not how one speaks in everyday life, as I shall demonstrate further on.

To begin with, those who put forward this proposition must agree that the type of pronunciation used in everyday speech tends, due to a long-established bad habit which could even be considered an error, to cut off letters, and even whole syllables; for instance the elision linking the final *s* of a plural word to the next vowel is omitted, as if it was a singular word, which results in ‘*les Homm*’ *ont un avantage par dessus les Best*’ *en ce que*,³⁸⁶ etc., instead of saying /251/ ‘*les Hommes ont un avantage par dessus les Bestes en ce que*,’ etc. by pronouncing the *s*. The same occurs with the second person [singular] of verbs whose infinitive ends with *-er*, such as *donner*, *parler*, *manquer*, when saying ‘*tu donn*’ *à*, ‘*tu parl*’ *à*, ‘*tu manqu*’ *à faire*’, instead of ‘*tu donnes à*, ‘*tu parles à*, ‘*tu manques à faire*’, and I shall add in passing that most people omit this kind of *s* even in writing, not respecting the one and only spelling.³⁸⁷ The same is true for the second person plural of some other verbs which do not end in *-er*, when saying ‘*vous fait*’ *à*’ instead of ‘*vous faites à*’; ‘*vous dit*’ *à vos Amis*’ instead of ‘*vous dites à vos Amis*’; to which I shall also add the *-nt* plural ending of verbs, when saying ‘*Ceux qui pens*’ *avoir raison*’ instead of ‘*Ceux qui pensent avoir raison*’. The same goes for all the other plural endings of verbs. The danger for aspiring singers is that even the teachers they employ are the first to ignore these facts, as I have recently noticed in an eminent teacher: he thought he had done well by changing these words in an old air, which seemed awkward to him,

/252/ *Les belles fleurs qui naissent dans la plaine,*

³⁸⁶ It is interesting that Bacilly should choose this as an example; it calls to mind the contemporary debate in the salons on whether animals had a soul or were ‘machines’, centred on Descartes’ binary system in the *Discours de la Méthode*, explaining reason and the passions: the language of the passions, proper to both man and beast, is opposed to the language of reason and understanding, proper only to man (‘[la raison] est la seule chose qui nous rend hommes et nous distingue des bêtes’, Descartes [19992], p.126). This debate is reflected in many writings on the subject supporting and opposing this notion, such as La Fontaine’s *Discours à Mme de la Sablière (sur l’âme des animaux)*, 1672 (see La Fontaine [1967]).

³⁸⁷ It must be noted that professional singers were often verging on the illiterate, which may account for some of the grammatical errors in their singing. In spite of Bacilly’s reference to ‘the one and only spelling’, orthography was far from being established; the Port-Royal historian Sébastien le Nain de Tillemont (1637-1698) was particularly concerned with the *s* that is not pronounced and wrote a letter to Ruth d’Ans on 10th February 1689: ‘L’orthographe est une des choses qui m’embarrassent le plus, et je ne sçay à qui m’en rapporter. Je consentirois volontiers à ôter tous les *s* qui ne se prononcent point, s’il on en pouvoit faire une règle générale: mais on n’est pas encore accoutumé à *ét* et à quelques autres [...]’, (‘Spelling is what I find most troubling, and I do not know to whom to turn. I would willing agree to

Ouvrent le sein aux Zephirs amoureux.

into these:

Se laissent aller aux Zephirs amoureux.

without being aware that he made the line a foot too long, thinking that the *-nt* ending of *laissent* could be swallowed up and could suffer an elision.³⁸⁸ But trying to make him see his error, which he stubbornly defended to the end, was like talking to a brick wall.³⁸⁹

This, I say, is the ordinary pronunciation of everyday speech, even in its polite form. However, if it was to be used in all circumstances such as in poetry, it would truncate most verses, by removing a foot with these incorrect elisions; and almost all sung French is in verse. But there are other types of *s* which, though they do not upset the rhythm of the verse, /253/ can make singing dull if they are omitted as is usually done in familiar speech. Thus one should not say '*Mon ame faisons un effort, Je per aussi la vie*',³⁹⁰ as is said familiarly, but rather the *s* should be pronounced, saying '*faisons un effort, Je pers aussi la vie*'. Let no one persuade you otherwise, either by being over-obliging or by yielding to the crass ignorance of certain people who turn this pronunciation into ridicule (as can be done with all things, even the most perfect, when one finds credence with fools), by saying in a mocking way, separating each syllable, 'What? One should say *zon zun* and *zaussi*'. Credulous people immediately bow to their opinion and unanimously and irrevocably condemn these pronunciations as unacceptable and ridiculous.

I shall later discuss this type of final *s* which is pronounced before a vowel and not before a consonant, as do several people, particularly with the word '*helas*'; but I wanted to mention this in passing to show that familiar language and singing language are quite different, even as regards simple /254/ pronunciation. For as regards weighty pronunciation, I mean the one with the necessary strength to express the meaning of words, there is an even greater difference with everyday speech, where no distinction is made between the same letter. By this I mean a difference between one *r* and another, one *a* and another, and so on, while in singing, which is a kind of 'declamation', there is a great difference between one *m*, or one *r*, and another, to highlight the words and give

remove every *s* that is not pronounced if a general rule could be made for this: but we are not yet accustomed to writing *ét* [instead of *est*] and certain other words [...]) (in Neveu [1966], p.207).

³⁸⁸ This would have resulted in 'se laiss' aller'

³⁸⁹ 'vouloir blanchir un More', literally, 'wanting to whiten a Moor'.

³⁹⁰ This is from one of Lambert's airs (Lambert [1666], pp.4-5).

them firmness and vigour which bring diversity to singing and stop it from becoming tiresome. This would also happen on stage, if an actor were simply to recite his verses instead of declaiming them.³⁹¹

Yet there are musicians with such basic pronunciation that they often mistake one word for another, and due to a ridiculous misunderstanding confuse words which are entirely unrelated in meaning. Here is quite an incredible example, to which several people can bear witness: they heard /255/ a musician who, instead of these words from a *recit de ballet* about the *Coquettes*,

*Et l'embarras nous semble doux,
Quand il est causé par la presse
De ceux qui soupirent pour nous.*

sang, with incredible impudence:

Et les Barons nous semblent doux.

Judge for yourself this teacher's knowledge as regards language. He could be compared to another of the same calibre, who was surprised to see that the printer had forgotten to add the music to the first verses in a book. However much people tried to explain that these words that he thought should be set to music constituted the dedicatory epistle of the volume, he refused to give in, and proceeded to compose an air on them which he sang in such a way as to make his listeners swoon, in order to prove he was right.

³⁹¹ There was evidently a similarity between theatrical declamation and declamation in singing as regards expressive delivery; what is equally interesting are the anecdotes about the theatre which illustrate that actors employed pitch as an element of their delivery. In addition to the famous account by Le Cerf (II [1705], p.205) involving Racine and La Champmeslé's performances which are said to have inspired Lullian recitative, Du Bos, in *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (Mazouer [1990], p.264), recounts that Molière also referred to specific pitches to indicate how he wanted his actors to declaim.

CHAPTER III
On the pronunciation of vowels.

/256/ It is such a generally accepted idea amongst singing teachers that ‘To sing well, one must open one’s mouth’ that they apply it in all circumstances. They think it holds the key to all the refinements of pronunciation and that no other advice is necessary in order to achieve it. As a result, they are not content with applying this precept for a vowel or a diphthong (by which I mean a compound vowel) but even for correcting a fault in the pronunciation of a consonant, for they have no other solution, no other suggestion to make apart from ‘opening one’s mouth’.

It is true that not opening the mouth in certain places and on certain vowels is a serious shortcoming in singing. */257/* But it is as serious a shortcoming to open it in the wrong places, on vowels and diphthongs which require a rather closed mouth. Thus the rules of pronunciation are more often broken by opening the mouth when it should be closed than by not opening it enough. Apart from the fact that the mouth should be opened with some sense of moderation, there are also different ways of opening the mouth, not only on different vowels but even on the same vowel and moreover, it is often not so much a question of opening the mouth as the throat, or only the lips, to give the pronunciation its necessary charm. I shall give some examples when discussing the pronunciation of vowels in particular.

CHAPTER III

ARTICLE I

The vowel A

/258/ The vowel which most requires a proper opening of the mouth is the *a*, but this must be done with the utmost care which is far better demonstrated in practice than in theory.

Firstly, when there is a *port de voix* on an *a*, one should open the mouth much less on the first note than on the last, by which I mean the mouth should first only be moderately opened, and when the throat has articulated the required note to carry the first note on to the last, then the mouth must be opened wider, not suddenly, but gradually, so that the sound of the voice creeps more pleasantly into the ear of the listener.³⁹² Here is an example [Ex.101]

Il vaut mieux par un prompt trépas.

from page 45 of the book *in quarto* on the word [t]répas:

Example 101 [Lambert 1666, p.45]

Il vault mieux par un prompt tres - pas

6 3 5 7 3 7 6 3 3

/259/ 2. When an *a* occurs on a long note, such as in final cadences, the same rule of not opening the mouth suddenly but gradually applies. Here is an example from the same book, on page 44 [Ex.102].

Si l'Ingratte ne m'aime pas.

³⁹² It is difficult to know exactly what Bacilly has in mind by what he describes on the following page as a 'secret means of achieving a pleasant pronunciation'. A progressive opening of the mouth could possibly indicate the gradual brightening of the vowel sound from a posterior *a* to an anterior *a*: this would be created by working towards the left on the horizontal axis (see Bettens' diagram, Figure 10 in Essay) and bringing the arch of the tongue forwards. On the other hand, this variation in the timbre of the vowel may somehow be linked to the gradual crescendo involved in a *port de voix*.

Example 102 [Lambert 1666, p.44]

Si l'In - grat - te ne m'ay - me pas

6 5 6 5 4 #3 3

The mouth should be opened gradually on the last note of the word *pas*, and this is a secret means of achieving a pleasant pronunciation, which helps greatly to bring out a voice of otherwise average quality.

3. One must take into account whether there is some passion on the syllable on which there is a long *a*, which requires a more forceful rather than delightful pronunciation, which is achieved by more or less opening the lips and mouth. Here is an example, from page 5 of the first book *in octavo*: [Ex.103]

Ah! qu'il est malaisé!

Example 103 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.5]

pas Ah! qu'il est mal - ai - sé

6 6 5 4

pas Ah! qu'il est mal - ai - sé quand l'a-mour

and

Si l'Ingratte ne m'aime pas.

which I have just cited [See Ex.102]. /260/ On the *a* of *Ah!* and of *Ingratte*, the mouth must be wide open, but in a different way from the following examples,

Ha! Qu'il est doux d'aimer!

Ha! Que le plaisir est extrême!

and other similar exclamations of joy. In these examples, I mean on the *a* of *Ha*, one should open the mouth by smiling, broadly rather than narrowly. I shall mention in passing that the spelling is different from that of the first exclamation or 'interjection' of

lament and sorrow, where the *a* precedes the *h*, instead of which here the *h* precedes the *a*: thus they are different, both as regards meaning and spelling.³⁹³

4. One should take great care over the letter *a* when it is joined to the letter *n*, as in the words *quand*, *charmant*, *tourment* (for in this case the *e* is pronounced in the same way as the *a*) since out of all the syllables, that of *an* or *en* is without doubt the most frequent and the most important in French singing as regards pronunciation, and is /261/ very revealing of whether one learnt from a good teacher.

I say therefore that on the syllable *an* and *en* (when the *e* is pronounced like the *a*), one must take care to preserve their charm, which means that one should not open the mouth suddenly (all this in accordance to the rhythm) but little by little, and not even pronounce the *n* at first, but only when one is ready to end the long note.³⁹⁴ And if there are several notes (such as in *ports de voix*, *diminutions* and *tremblements* where more than one note must be sung), the *n* should only be pronounced when one is ready to end [the last note], for otherwise this would result in a nasal sound. And though the letter *n* is exempt from the rule that ‘One should not sing through the nose’, as I shall discuss in due course, this restriction must be observed. Here is an example from the book *in quarto*, page 54:

Que c'est un mal charmant.

³⁹³ The sound of the exclamation ‘Ah!’, used for expressions of pain, would be darker than ‘Ha!’, which is further forward and for which the lips are retracted. ‘Ah!’ is Bacilly’s only concession to a posterior *a*.

³⁹⁴ Though to modern performers this pronunciation may seem reminiscent of a meridional accent, it was standard practice until Dangeau presented his *Discours sur les voyelles* to the Académie in 1694; his important contribution was his treatment of nasal vowels as a single unit rather than a compound vowel such as Bacilly describes. Dangeau believed that these vowels were not compound, as they were commonly regarded, and that it was therefore perfectly possible to perform a *port de voix* on the nasal vowels *an*, *en*, *on*, and *un*. Rather than making it a grammatical point, however, Bacilly here is concerned with the unpleasant sound produced by prolonging a nasal vowel. (See Le Guern [1990], pp.95-6.) Interestingly, Bacilly writes in Ch.III art.4, p.276, that the same separation, or ‘denasalisation’, cannot be applied to the compound vowel ‘on’: one must simply avoid a diminution on it. No mention is made of this as applied to the nasal compound vowels ‘un’ and ‘in’ in the treatise. However, on p.32 of the ‘Réponse’, Bacilly mentions a common tendency to pronounce ‘in’ as if it were written ‘ain’; while this does not point to any denasalisation of the ‘in’ (particularly as Bacilly considers the pronunciation of ‘in’ as ‘ain’ to be undesirable unless the rhyme requires it), it does suggest that ‘ain’ was not pronounced as in modern French but was instead more open and not nasal (Bacilly mentions mixing ‘un peu de l’e ou de l’a to make ‘vin’ rhyme with ‘certain’).

Example 104 [Lambert 1666, p.54]

mal que c'est un mal char-mant
mal que c'est un mal char - mant et qu'il

Vous n'avez seulement.

Example 105 [Lambert 1666, p.54]

[Phi]lis vous n'a - vez seu - le-ment
[Phi]lis vous n'a - vez seu - le - ment qu'a m'ay-mer

/262/ The *n* of *charmant* must only be pronounced when one is ready to end the last note of the *cadence*, and that of *seulement* only when the note on *-ment* has been sustained for almost all of its value. This does not apply to the syllable *on* as I shall say in due course.

Note that when I say that 'the *n* must only be pronounced' at the end of the *cadence*, the *port de voix* and other similar instances, I do not mean that it should be struck, but only lightly touched, as I shall mention in my discussion of the *n* in the chapter on consonants.

This rule also applies to *passages*, where great care and caution must be taken, as for example in the *passage* on *changer*, on page 8 of the book *in quarto*.³⁹⁵ The *n* must not be sounded until the last note of *chan*, only the *a*. The same goes for the word

³⁹⁵ This is an incorrect reference; there is no such example in the book *in quarto*. The same point, however, can be illustrated with an example of a short *passage* on the word 'changé' from Bacilly I (1668), p.6:

Ex.xxxii

El - - le a chan - - gé

en on page 23 of the second book *in octavo*, on the *an* of the word *avantage* and on the second syllable of *contenter* [Ex.106] and a thousand other places which abound in airs.

Example 106 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.23]

Si j'a- vois en par- ta - ge Un si doux
a - van - ta - ge Je pour - rois con - ten -
- ter mon a - mou - reux trans - port

CHAPTER III

ARTICLE 2

The vowel E

/263/ In the preceding article, I said that generally speaking, one should open the mouth more on the vowel *a* than on any other vowel, with a few exceptions. Presently, one must establish as far as possible the necessary rules concerning the vowel *e*, which requires the mouth to be opened almost as much as the *a*; for as regards the other three vowels, opening the mouth too much is worse than not opening it enough.

I have sufficiently covered the *e* joined to the *n* when it is pronounced like an *a* in the words *tourment*, *absent*, *content*, but not in the words *bien*, *entretien*, *ancien*, *reviens*, etc.. As for the other types of *e*, namely the ‘open’, ‘masculine’ *e* or the ‘more open’, ‘feminine’ *e*, one should refer to the grammarians. All I have to say is that depending /264/ on the *e* being more or less open, the mouth must be opened accordingly. I shall therefore content myself with discussing the ‘feminine’ *e*, which others call the ‘mute’ *e*, which is often pronounced quite differently in singing than in everyday speech.³⁹⁶

The ‘feminine’ *e* is a certain *e* which is not pronounced like the others, and to which no more attention is paid than if it did not exist. Its only purpose is to form the syllable of which it is a compound, which in poetry is called ‘feminine syllable’, that enables to distinguish feminine lines from masculine ones. It has been called the ‘mute’ *e* because it has no pronunciation of its own. It would therefore seem futile to establish rules for it, either as regards pronunciation or quantity.

Before going any further, the reader should be informed that words are called ‘feminine’ when the last syllable (assuming there is more than one) contains a ‘mute’ *e* which bears no relation to the sound of the ordinary *e*, be it the last letter of the /265/ syllable, as in the words *j’aime*, *vie*, *rendre*, or not the last but only included in the last syllable, as in *ames*, *flames*, *faites*, *dites*, and the plural of verbs such as *donnent*, *disent*, where the spelling must not be taken into account as regards the pronunciation of the *n*, which is non-existent in this case. All these words are ‘feminine’, as are several monosyllables, like *de*, *ne*, *me*, *te*, *ce*, and others which similarly contain a ‘mute’ *e*. All

³⁹⁶ Bacilly has already mentioned the mute *e* in Pt.1, Ch.XI, p.96/ 216, when comparing French and Italian poetry.

other words which end with a syllable containing all other types of *e*, and all other vowels, are called masculine words.

It is true that in everyday speech the ‘mute’ *e* is of no importance as regards pronunciation and quantity, and only the natives of Normandy³⁹⁷ and of neighbouring regions incorrectly sound the ‘mute’ *e* and pronounce it like the syllable *en*, saying *tablen* instead of *table*. As for declamation (and consequently for singing, which has much in common with it), this *e* is no longer mute and often requires emphasis, as much to give power to the expression as /266/ to give the listeners a clear rendering. As regards singing, the ‘mute’ *e* is often far longer than the others and thus requires far more precision and steadiness in its pronunciation than other vowels. I know of nothing so constantly mispronounced and of nothing more difficult to correct, unless the remedy which I believe I have found is carefully followed: it is to pronounce it more or less like the compound vowel *eu*, that is to say, by positioning the lips together almost as much as for this diphthong, with which this type of *e* has much in common.

Therefore, the only way for the ‘mute’ *e* to be pronounced properly when it is on a long note is to pronounce it more or less like an *e* and a *u* together. In this way, it is possible to correct the fault of those who pronounce *extremen* instead of *extreme*, *inevitablen* instead of *inevitable*, be they Norman or not; or the fault of those who do not close their mouth enough and make it sound like another *e*, or even a bit like an *a*, a fault that can be heard /267/ even in teachers, who say *extremea* and *inevitablea* on long notes which must be sustained on the last syllable of both the words *extreme* and *inevitable* and others like them. One simply needs to order them to say *extremeu* and *inevitableu*, and as this will seem rather strange to them at first, they will not wish to pronounce so clearly the diphthong *eu* and, keeping to a certain middle ground, will pronounce the ‘mute’ *e* perfectly. But as most women are adverse to pronunciations which change the normal shape of their mouth when they are not speaking, thinking that in so doing they would be grimacing, they will probably dismiss this chapter, as well as the proper pronunciation of the *eu*, for which they are almost all beyond redress.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁷ Regional pronunciation varied widely. Bacilly was, according to Brossard, of Norman extraction and thus had first-hand experience of the Norman accent, which he nevertheless does not hesitate to criticise. Grimarest (*Traité du récitatif*, 1707, Ch.VII) gives an account of regional pronunciations used for comic purposes in the theatre: the Normans, Flemish and Swiss ‘la demandent lente, mais inégale sur de certaines syllables [...]. On donne de la pesanteur et du dérangement à sa prononciation pour représenter le paysan,’ (‘[They] require it to be slow, but unequal on certain syllables [...]. One should pronounce in a heavy and uncomfortable manner in order to represent a peasant,’) (see Mazouer [1990], p.268).

³⁹⁸ Bacilly evidently found this a considerable problem as he repeats this observation on p.281/ 351-2.

CHAPTER III

ARTICLE 3

The vowel *i*

/268/ Of all the vowels, the *i* is the most delicate and consequently the most difficult as regards pronunciation, because in order to pronounce it properly, one must take care to refine it as much as possible, without however making it too sharp; for otherwise it hisses, or it becomes easily nasal,³⁹⁹ if one has a tendency to sing with a nasal voice, which is something everybody finds abhorrent.

Therefore, the *i* should be pronounced neither too sharply nor too little, but somewhere in between to prevent it from hissing in the ear or becoming nasal, which distinguishes it entirely from the *e*, to which it bears no resemblance.

Let us therefore say that the greatest and most common fault in pronouncing the *i* is singing it through the nose, a fault known well enough /269/ not to require any example. One need only provide the remedy, which is to try to sing it from the throat⁴⁰⁰ as much as possible, being careful not to alter its pronunciation, but not like the *o*, which can go right back in the throat without any problem.

The second fault, which consists in singing the *i* too thinly and sharply,⁴⁰¹ is so noticeable that neither example nor rule is necessary to correct it, since it is obvious enough by itself.

The third fault, which consists in not singing it thinly nor sharply enough, so that the *i* somewhat resembles an *e*,⁴⁰² is a fault often heard amongst singers, who seem to say *Phelis* instead of *Philis* and likewise in similar instances. And it is not enough for the listener to be well aware that it is an *i* and not an *e*, either from the meaning of the sentence or because an *e* would make the word meaningless and unfamiliar. The point is that proper care must be taken in pronouncing the *i* correctly to make singing more pleasant, and even to make the voice more delicate. Pronunciation /270/ is not only

³⁹⁹ There is a danger of lowering the soft palate for this vowel, a problem comparable to that of singing the vowel *e* in English, in which case the sound becomes nasal.

⁴⁰⁰ Since this is Bacilly's remedy for nasal pronunciation, we may conclude that singing 'from the throat' ('l'entonner du gosier') involves lifting the soft palate to avoid any air being forced through the nasal cavity.

⁴⁰¹ 'trop délié & trop aigu'; Bacilly is referring to the pronunciation, or the intensity of the sound of the vowel *i*.

⁴⁰² This would be the masculine *e* (é), which is just below *i* on the aperture scale (see Essay, Bettens diagram, Ch.4, Fig.10). This results if the tongue is not raised enough.

necessary only to make the words be heard, as several people believe, who think (as I have already mentioned) that they have praised a singer by saying that ‘we did not miss a single syllable of what he said’; in addition, pronunciation is necessary to give expression, or refinement, which is achieved by the care and application taken particularly on the pronunciation of certain key letters of the alphabet, as I shall discuss further on.

I have also noticed another common fault in the pronunciation of the vowel *i* when it is followed by a ‘feminine’ *e*, which is to pronounce both vowels as one syllable when they are two separate syllables, as in the words *vie*, *ravie*, *envie*, *maladie*, etc.. This happens when not enough attention is paid in pronouncing the *i* so as to separate it from the *e*. This fault can only be explained properly in practice and remedied through the method I suggest, which is to pretend there is a *y* between the *i* and the *e*, and say *viye* for *vie* and *envuiye* for *envie*.

/271/ The opposite of this fault is observed, when the *i* and the *e*, or the diphthong *eu*, make one syllable, but are wrongly pronounced as two as for example in the words *bien*, *entretien*, *pitié*, *lieux*, *cieux*, *adieu*. This happens when they are not pronounced with enough speed, and one is left to wonder whether the *i* and the *e* are two syllables or form just one, as in the words *lien*, *prier* and *nier*. This fault is very frequent when the syllable made up of *i* and *e* joined together occurs on several short descending notes and one has to keep in time. If one is not careful to keep the two vowels close together, the first half of the syllable will be pronounced on the first note and the other half on the last note, and this is the truth of the matter, though it goes unnoticed by most people. Here is an example which will suffice to illustrate this truth, from the book of airs *in quarto*, on page 35. [Ex.107]

Sçaura bien qui m'a fait mourir.

Example 107 [Lambert 1666, p.35]

The musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef, 3/4 time, and the lower staff is in bass clef, 3/4 time. The vocal line (treble clef) has the lyrics: Sçau - ra bien qui ma fait mou - . The basso continuo line (bass clef) has the lyrics: qui ma fait mou - rir. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 6, 7, #3, #3, and 3 above the notes in the basso continuo line. A '+' sign is placed above the first note of the vocal line.

-rir qui m'a fait mou rire
 3 6 3 7 5 3

Sçau - ra bien qui m'a fait mou - rire

If, when pronouncing the word *bien*, the *i* and the *e* are not sung with the /272/ necessary speed, the result will be that only half the syllable (that is to say, *bi*) will be pronounced on the first of the three notes written, and the other half, *en*, on the last two notes.

The same thing happens with the *u* joined to the *i* in the words *bruit*, *nuit*, *suit*, when there is more than one note. If, due to a certain sluggishness, the entire syllable is not pronounced quickly enough, then the *u* alone is put on the first note and the *i* on the following notes. An example is the word *nuit*, on page 20 of the second book of airs *in octavo*. [Ex.108]

Example 108 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.20]

Vo - yez a quoy je suis re - duit
 4 4

au - prez de vous je crains la nuit

As for the consonant *j*, as in *jamais*, *j'auray*, etc., I shall discuss it in the chapters on consonants.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ Bacilly mentions the letter *j* here for it is sometimes used as a vowel and is considered to be equivalent to the vowel *i*.

CHAPTER III

ARTICLE 4

The vowel O

/273/ Since in singing the strength of pronunciation is as important as its delicacy, it is therefore unwise to assign too much daintiness to the pronunciation of certain letters to the detriment of strength when it is required.

However, it is very difficult to convince people of this truth, especially the feminine sex, who believe that singing can never be too delicate and who can only submit themselves to pronouncing all letters softly, without considering whether some require more strength or more softness.

Of all vowels, the *o* is the worst when it comes to faulty pronunciation by these creatures fond of makeup,⁴⁰⁴ who mistake ‘dullness’ for ‘delicacy’, for it is a completely ‘guttural’ vowel, that is to say, pronounced entirely from the throat.

These feminine creatures rob the *o* of all its strength by singing it softly and thinking /274/ they are doing it a favour, and although one can hear that it is an *o* all right, because it has little in common with the other vowels, it is not enough for every syllable to be heard clearly, as I have already said several times and cannot repeat enough. They must in addition be given their necessary weight, so that by this powerful expression, the listener may be drawn to the meaning of the words, and the voice of the singer may be enhanced. This advice is very useful to those who have a weak voice, who, provided they pronounce properly the letters which must be emphasized and above all do not soften the *o*, show themselves off to their best advantage, and get listened to with more attention than singers with strong voices whose pronunciation is poor.

The observations concerning the different pronunciations of the vowel *o*, in relation to singing, are the following:

Firstly, when the *o* is joined to an *n* or an *m* in the same syllable, one must take care to pronounce *on* and *om* as if there were a small *u* /275/ between the two, in the manner of the Greek υ , as if *boune* and *coume* were written instead of *bonne* and *comme*.⁴⁰⁵ This advice is all the more useful that this type of syllable is usually badly

⁴⁰⁴ Nicolas Faret took issue with the excessive makeup worn by women in his treatise on manners and civility (Faret [1925], p.21): he devotes a passage to denouncing the artifice of ‘l’affectation de la beauté’ and makes a specific attack ‘contre les femmes fardées’.

pronounced, by saying *bone* instead of *bonne* and *come* instead of *comme*, and, worse, *quement* instead of *comment* (which is very ridiculous and yet very common amongst women).

This observation is an exception to the rule which says that the throat must be fully opened for the *o* to be pronounced properly, for this rule does not apply when an *n* or an *m* follow the *o* to form one syllable with it. If they did not form one syllable, the *o* would keep its full pronunciation from the throat, as in the word *Cômedie*,⁴⁰⁶ which is not, as some ignorant people would have it, *comedie*.⁴⁰⁷

Secondly, one should observe that when an *o* is joined to an *n* in the same syllable, long diminutions are considered unsuitable.⁴⁰⁸ This has always been the case in singing and seems to be only based on conventional wisdom and yet it is not without foundation; namely /276/ it is to avoid singing through the nose, which would be very noticeable in a *passage* on the syllable *on*. One would be forced to pronounce it from the very first note of the diminution, without being able to separate the *o* and the *n* in any way, which is not the case for the syllable *an*, as I mentioned in the article on the letter *a*.⁴⁰⁹ And if I were to be asked why this is so, I would reply that common practice dictates it. However, one may also say to those who insist on having a reasonable explanation, that the syllable *an* is different from *on*, since nothing needs to be added to the first for it to be pronounced with its due strength and charm, while a sort of *u* must be inserted into the second, as I have just explained. It would be too rough to pronounce the *o* on the first note and the *n* on the others; and what would become of this presumed *u* in such a case?

⁴⁰⁵ This is what appears printed in the text of the *Remarques*. In classical Greek there are two types of *o*, Omicron (Ο, ο) and Omega (Ω, ω). It is most likely Omicron (Ο) with the common symbol for a short vowel added above it (Ό), which would be pronounced as in the English word 'got'. This corresponds to the fact that omicron is a short *o* while omega is long. We may therefore assume that Bacilly means the *o* in these syllables to be very open. His explanation involving a 'small *u*' can appear rather misleading in this respect.

⁴⁰⁶ The *o* here is pronounced approximately as in the English word 'for', or 'pause'.

⁴⁰⁷ Bacilly's spelling implies that some people pronounce the *o* in the word 'cômedie' as an open *o*, (such as in the English 'got') rather than a closed, more guttural *o*.

⁴⁰⁸ The issue of how exactly to pronounce the *o* when joined to an *n* or *m* becomes a little blurred here: the rule outlined by Bacilly above, namely that a type of *u* should be inserted into words such as 'comme', seemed to be only applicable to words with this type of double *n* or *m*, in which case the double consonant is split and shared between the first and second syllable (e.g. 'com-me', 'bon-ne'). However, at this point, Bacilly is speaking of the nasal consonants produced by following an *o* with an *m* or *n*, as in 'non', 'bon' or 'ombre': in spoken French, the *o* in 'comme' and that in 'non' would be pronounced entirely differently, the first open, the second nasal. Yet Bacilly appears not to distinguish between the two: we must therefore assume that the *o* of 'non' and 'ombre' must be pronounced as open as that of 'comme' and 'bonne'.

⁴⁰⁹ See Pt.2, Ch.III, art.1, p.261-2/ 339-40, where the *n* should not be pronounced until the very end of the note or diminution.

As for the observations concerning the *o* joined to *i* and to *u*, I shall write a separate chapter on them, after I have dealt with the last vowel, the *u*.

CHAPTER III

ARTICLE 5

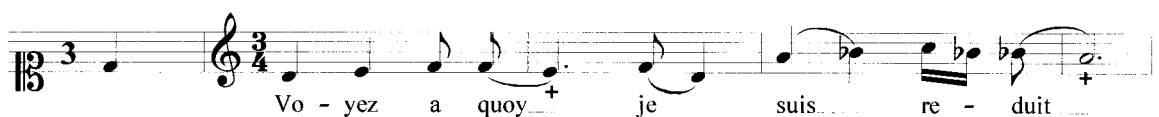
The vowel U

/277/ I am not speaking here of the consonant *v*,⁴¹⁰ on which there are no particular points to make other than those on consonants in general, which is that they should be emphasized when required. I am only speaking of the vowel *u*, which is the only vowel that contradicts completely this general and universal advice, which most teachers dispense inconsiderately saying that in singing one can never open the mouth too wide, since to pronounce the *u* correctly it is necessary to hold the mouth almost shut, to make this vowel more delicate and more refined, otherwise it would sound like the diphthong *eu*. Therefore one should not say, as several people do, *eune* instead of *une*, *commeune* instead of *commune*, *meurmurer* instead of *murmurer*, if not quite as crudely, at least partly; for this is always an incorrect pronunciation of the *u*, which otherwise brings much /278/ delicacy to French singing.

When I speak of the letter *u*, I mean only the *u* on its own, and not when it follows an *o* or an *e*,⁴¹¹ for then it loses its pronunciation and becomes a ‘compound’, like a kind of diphthong, as I shall discuss in the next chapter.

There is another type of *u*, which when linked to an *i* or a *y*, still only makes one syllable, as in *luy* and *nuire*, which is similar to the *i* and the *e* in *bien* and *lieu*. There is nothing particularly noteworthy about this *u* other than what I have already said about the *i* and the *e* and what I am about to say on the syllable *oi*. That is, one should take care not to separate the *u* and the *i* when, for example, one note is followed by a descending one, such as on page 20 of the second book *in octavo* on the word *reduit* [Ex.109]. One must, as I say, be careful not to sing sluggishly *du* on the first note and *it* on the second, as if *duit* was not one syllable but two.

Example 109 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.20]



⁴¹⁰ The letters *u* and *v* were frequently interchangeable in print.

⁴¹¹ Bacilly's text reads '& non pas lors qu'il est joint avec un *o*, ou un *e* qui le suivent;' but it is clear that he means the contrary, as he discusses in the following chapter the diphthongs 'eu' and 'ou'.

CHAPTER IV

On the pronunciation of some compound vowels.

/279/ My aim is to establish the correct pronunciation of the ‘compound vowels’ *ai*, *au*, *eu*, *oi*, *ou*, which can be called ‘diphthongs’. As for the compound vowel *ie*, when joined together into one syllable, I have discussed it sufficiently in the preceding chapter.

There are very few observations to make on the diphthongs *ai* and *au* as regards pronunciation, since the first of these is pronounced like an *e*⁴¹² and the second like an *o*. As it is up to the grammarians to explain in what way *ai* differs from the ‘open, masculine *e*, since they are pronounced the same, I shall not elaborate on this subject so as not to go beyond the limits I have set myself. I shall only give the following example in passing, to which the reader will be able to /280/ refer in similar circumstances: in *aimer* and *faire*, the *ai* in *aimer* is pronounced like an *e* that is half open, and the *ai* of *faire* like an *e* that is completely open. One must therefore be quite aware of the differences of pronunciation, for otherwise they could easily be mixed up, resulting in a very unpleasant sound.

Another observation must be made when a *y* follows an *a*, which is also a matter for grammarians, about which I shall say only a few words: in certain places, the *a* is pronounced like an *e*,⁴¹³ saying *peyer* instead of *payer*, though in the word *ayez*, this application is more doubtful and there are arguments for and against as regards common usage, so in this case, one can settle for something between an *a* and an *e*.

The vowel *eu* is worthy of attention in French song, for it is often mispronounced.

Firstly, pronouncing *eu* like a *u* without the *e* is only the privilege of certain provincial people, who say *cur* /281/ instead of *cœur*, *mes fux* instead of *mes feux*, *hurux* instead of *heureux*, and, if only in the first syllable of the latter word, not only these provincial people but hundreds of others incorrectly say *malhureux* instead of *malheureux*.

2. By failing correctly to bring the lips together to pronounce *eu*, the *u* is often dropped and only the *e* is heard. This fault is very common amongst women, for they

⁴¹² That is, the open *e*, or ‘è’.

⁴¹³ The open *e*.

are unwilling to shape their mouths in any other way than the shape it has when they are not speaking; they would like the number of vowels and diphthongs to be reduced to *e* and *i*, for they can hardly bear the *a* and constantly rebel against their singing teacher when they are asked to open their mouth to form the *a* correctly. Shaping the mouth properly to pronounce *eu*, by bringing the lips together into the required position, therefore has nothing to do with ‘grimacing’, as ignorant people seem to think. For if it is incorrectly formed, all the strength that this ‘diphthong’ brings to singing on many occasions /282/ is lost, as when expressing the following words: *rigueur*, *malheur*, *cœur*, *pleurer*, which are encountered in French song.

3. A quite common mistake when pronouncing the *eu* results from the fact that most people will at first correctly shape the mouth; but since the length of the note also requires the syllable to be held on for the same length of time, they fail to maintain the correct shape of the mouth till the end of the note. This results in two different pronunciations instead of one, by adding a type of *a* or *e* at the end of the diphthong, which is most unpleasant. The same mistake is made regarding the ‘feminine’ or ‘mute’ *e*, whose pronunciation is very similar to *eu*, as I mentioned in the previous chapter. One must therefore be careful not to alter the shape of the lips for the duration of the note or diminution and to maintain them together in the same position until the end.

The *ou* is another diphthong which brings forceful expression to singing and must be pronounced from the palate and not from the front of the mouth, as for *eu*; but as /283/ this also requires a shape which seems ungainly to those who fear that it may ruin the beauty of their mouth, they only half pronounce the *o* in the words *pourquoy*, *courroux*, etc., and thus remove all the weight this diphthong should carry, which plays a great part in enhancing the song and expressing its strength. I have come across some who display a complete ignorance when they believe they are expressing the meaning of the word *douceur* but refuse to shape the mouth properly (for the position of the lips to shape the *ou* and then the *eu* seems conflicting to them). So they end up half suppressing the *o* and the *e* in these two diphthongs, so as not to be forced to ‘pout’, to use their term.

The last ‘compound vowel’, or diphthong, and the most delicate in French singing, is *oi* or *oy*, which is almost pronounced like an *o*, or even *ou* followed by a very open *e*, or rather, *ai*, so that it appears to have two separate pronunciations, one

produced from the throat, which is the *o*, and the other from the front of the mouth.⁴¹⁴ This /284/ means that since it is a single syllable, or so to speak, a single ‘compound vowel’, if the *o* is not quickly thrown onto the *i* (which is pronounced like an ‘open *e*’) then two syllables are produced instead of one, resulting in *loü aix* instead of *loix* and *doü ais* instead of *dois*.

An exception must be made, however, for words where *oi* is followed by an *n*, for in this case it should be pronounced as if it were the vowel *ou*, followed by an *e* and an *i* before falling on the *eint*,⁴¹⁵ as if it were written *croit pouëint* instead of *point*, *soüein* instead of *soin*, avoiding in this way the ‘Norman’ pronunciation which results from not pronouncing the *i* enough; one must then fall lightly on the *n*, without striking it.⁴¹⁶

The mistake resulting from this incorrect division of the vowel is noticeable in places where there are several descending notes on this type of diphthong, on which most singers never fail to pronounce the first half of the vowel on the first note, the *o*, which is pronounced *ou*, and the second half, the *i*, pronounced *ai*, on the following notes.

The truth of this matter is even more obvious if one compares it /285/ with what I have said regarding the vowel *i* and *e*, or *eu*, when these two letters form one syllable, as in *bien* and *lieu*. Here are some specific examples. In the second book *in octavo*, on page 20, on the word *loin* [Ex.110], one should take care to avoid pronouncing the *oi* in two halves, by which I mean, singing only *ou* on the *ré* and the rest of the vowel, *ain*, on the *ut*, resulting in *loü ain*, rather than placing the whole diphthong on the *ré*, accenting the *ut* with the throat and falling on the *n*, which must only be struck at the end.

Example 110 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.20]



⁴¹⁴ ‘*Oy*’ or ‘*oi*’ was normally pronounced ‘*ouai*’, the modern ‘*wa*’ pronunciation was not in use.

⁴¹⁵ This is an erratum corrected by Bacilly; the original read ‘*n*’ rather than ‘*eint*’; in fact the original text is more helpful in this case.

⁴¹⁶ Bacilly means ‘*point*’ to be pronounced ‘*pou-è-i-n*’; the Normans would have said ‘*pou-è-n*’.

The same can be said for the word *quoy* on page 60 of the same book [Ex.111]; this monosyllable must be pronounced entirely on the *fa*,⁴¹⁷ instead of singing it like two syllables, which would result in *quouï* on the *fa* and *ay* on the *mi*.⁴¹⁸

Example 111 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.60]



This is about all there is to say regarding the pronunciation of *oi* when it is pronounced according to its spelling and is not changed to *ai*,⁴¹⁹ which is another problem for singers.

One must bear in mind that often /286/ one has to pronounce *e* or *ai* instead of *oi*, and say *crairer* instead of *croiroit*, *reconnais* instead of *reconnois*; but when the rhyme allows it, words must be pronounced as written,⁴²⁰ to avoid this unpleasantness to the ear, which would feel cheated of a proper rhyme, which is of primary importance in French poetry.

I also find it quite wrong to make two words rhyme in French poetry when they are pronounced differently, due to the changes brought to pronunciation, although they have the same spelling. It would be better to avoid this misuse, until this strange type of rhyme has been done away with.

But to deal with things as they are at present, I am of the opinion that the *oi* of the word *reconnois* be pronounced as written, if not completely, at least partially, when it has to rhyme with *fois*,⁴²¹ as, for example, in the double of *Pourquoy faut-il*, etc., on page 42 of the book *in quarto* [Ex.112].

/287/ *C'est estre foible, & je le reconnois.*⁴²²

⁴¹⁷ Hard hexachord on G, i.e. *c''*.

⁴¹⁸ i.e. *quouï* on *c''* and *ay* on *b'*.

⁴¹⁹ The spelling of certain words containing 'oi' was beginning to be replaced by 'ai', which many words have retained in their modern spelling. The sound of these two compound vowels, however, was different, as Bacilly explains below.

⁴²⁰ 'oi', pronounced 'ouai'.

⁴²¹ Thus the ending of 'reconnois' must be pronounced 'ouai' (i.e. 'as written') rather than 'ais'.

⁴²² The rhyme scheme in this air is as follows: AABCBC. Lambert has placed the first three lines (AAB) in the first half of his binary air, and the last three (CBC), in the second. Thus 'C'est estre foible et je le

Example 111 [Lambert 1666, p.42]⁴²³

C'est es - tre foi - ble et je le re - cog -
 es - tre foi - ble et je le re - cog -
 - nois - gnois, Aus - sy de vous quit - ter tout au - tre au - roit
 - nois - gnois Aus - sy de vous quit - ter tout au - tre au -
 roit en - vi - e Mais pour moy Mais pour moy quand
 j'ay - me u - ne fois J'ay - me J'ay - me
 J'ay - me tou - te ma vi - e [Aus] - e

The same applies for the word *croire*, when it rhymes with *memoire*, and for other similar words.

One must also take into account whether the performance is private or public, as are the *récits* in a *ballet* or a *comédie*; whether the air is *sérieux* or *galant*, or whether it is a mere trifle as regards the words or the music; for according to these different

recognois' (a B rhyme), which comes before the double bar, must rhyme with 'Mais pour moy quand j'ayme une fois', which comes in the second half of the air. Example 112 contains the B CBC rhyme.

⁴²³ The vertical lines on either side of the minim in the second bar of the penultimate system in this example, which appear in the source, indicate an instrumental note.

circumstances, the *oi* or *oy* in the words *croyez* and *soyez* must be pronounced with more or less accuracy. This is even the case for the word *soit*, though it seems to shock the ear when it is pronounced *ay*,⁴²⁴ (as is tolerated in *sayez* instead of *soyez*) perhaps because it then resembles the word *sçait* from the verb *sçavoir* too closely.

Another observation must be made as regards the word *éloigner*, which is that although in the word *loin* the *i* is pronounced, it is omitted in *éloigné* and it is pronounced as *élogné*; this is not the case, however, for *témoigner*. If anyone wishes to disagree with me, he will be convinced of the fact when asked /288/ to perform a diminution or a *tremblement* on the second syllable of *éloignement*. This observation is all the more noteworthy that many people are completely unaware of it.

⁴²⁴ Thus 'soit' would normally be pronounced 'souai'.

CHAPTER V
On the pronunciation of consonants.

/289/ I am not about to discuss how to pronounce each consonant individually, because this would be tackling the problem from afar. I shall only single out their qualities as regards French song. That is to say, I shall point out the ones which have more power or softness in singing and the ones which require more emphasis and more weight in pronunciation than others. I shall also discuss consonants that are joined to others in the same syllable and which are commonly called ‘liquid’ when they appear after the other consonants and not in front of them; and I shall mention final consonants that need to be pronounced firmly, lightly, or not at all, and consonants which briefly delay the sounding of the /290/ following vowel, which is ordinarily called ‘rumbling’.⁴²⁵ It is on these various attributes and special circumstances that I have based my selection of these consonants from the ones which have nothing special about them and need no further comment apart from taking care to make them sound properly. For one should always bear in mind that the listener will not be able to distinguish the words you sing unless great care and precision is taken over pronunciation; for words are often obscured by melodic embellishments and syllables unavoidably separated from each other by notes and by the way they are sung.

In short, the singer must never fear to overdo the pronunciation of syllables, so as not to diminish the listeners’ appreciation of singing, and that their pleasure is not spoilt by the frustration of not hearing the words properly, or rather, by having to guess what they are. Let us therefore move on to the consonants requiring particular attention, firstly the *r*, which is the most important in French singing.

⁴²⁵ Bacilly has mentioned that this device is particularly suited to expressions of sadness and grief (p.201).

CHAPTER V
ARTICLE 1
The letter R.⁴²⁶

/291/ The letter *r* can be considered in various ways, either as a ‘liquid’ consonant (that is the grammatical term for it), that is to say, when it follows another consonant in the same syllable, as in the words *grace*, *crainte*, *feindre*, *prendre*, etc.; or as a capital letter, that is to say, when it is the first letter of a word, as in *Rien*, *Regner*, *Raison*; or as the final letter of a word, as in *aimer*, *soûpir*; or when it precedes another consonant, as in *parfait*, *pourquoy*; or when it is placed between two vowels, as in *colere*, *miserable*, *pareil*, etc.. Here are the observations that can be made on all these different positions, which are of some importance as they are a common occurrence in singing.

Firstly, the general rule is that any *r* found between two vowels must be pronounced simply and without affectation. Conversely, any *r* which is not placed between /292/ two vowels but immediately follows or precedes a consonant must be pronounced more forcefully, as if there were two or even several *rs*, depending on whether the word requires a more or less forceful expression; so that the *r* in *mortel* must be pronounced with sufficient weight, whereas the *r* in *mourir* (the first one as opposed to the last one, which I shall discuss in the chapter on final letters), which would seem to require a similarly forceful expression since the meaning is much the same, should only be pronounced very lightly. This is because the *r* in *mortel* precedes a consonant whereas the *r* in *mourir* is placed between two vowels.

2. Although this is a general rule applicable to any *r* joined to other consonants, is it even more relevant to the *r* placed before a consonant than to the *r* which follows one and is therefore a ‘liquid’ consonant. Thus the *r* in the words *pourquoy*, *pardon*, *charmant*, should be even more strongly emphasized than those in *prendre*, *crainte*, *agreable*, etc., unless the meaning requires the singer to sing them forcefully, as in the word *cruelle*.

/293/ 3. One should carefully observe whether words containing this type of *r* really require forceful expression or only seem to require it; for according to the

⁴²⁶ As is still often the case today, the letter *r* is trilled, or rolled in sung French. In the seventeenth-century, it was trilled in both spoken and sung French (see Bettens [2000], ‘Les niveaux du discours’, p.3).

meaning, the *r* must be sung with more or less emphasis. By the word ‘expression’, I mean either a pressing questioning as in *Pourquoy faut-il, Belle Inhumaine?*, an insult, an invective or a reproach, as in

Si l'ingrate ne m'aime pas. [Ex.113]

on page 44 of the book *in quarto*,

Une ingrate qu'on aime. [Ex.114]

on page 5 of the first book *in octavo*, and

Mais, quoy? la Cruelle qu'elle est. [Ex.115]

on page 66 of the book *in quarto*.

Example 113 [Lambert 1666, p.44]

si l'in - grat - te ne m'ay - me pas

6 5 6 5 4 #3

Example 114 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.5]

cœur u - ne in gra - te qu'on ai - me

4 4 6 4 3

Example 115 [Lambert 1666, p.66]⁴²⁷

Mais quoy la

3 5 6

Mais quoy la

⁴²⁷ The slur over the notes of the ‘el’ syllable in ‘cruelle’ extends to cover the notes of the last syllable; however, as these slurs normally indicate underlay, this is likely to be an error.

cru - el - le - - - - - le - - - - - qu'el - le est - - -
 8 5 6 3 4 #3 8
 cru - el - le qu'el - le est qu'el - le est

One may also include the basic meaning of certain words, as in

Parlons, il n'est plus temps de feindre. [Ex.116]

on page 4 of the same book.

Example 116 [Lambert 1666. p.4]

[plain]dre Par - lons il n'est
 #3 7 6
 plus temps de feindre
 3 3 5 4 #3 6

In this example, even greater care must be taken over the pronunciation of the letter *r* in the word *parlons*, because it precedes an *l*; this can make it difficult for some singers to pronounce the *r* correctly. As I say, one must /294/ be careful to put the emphasis only when required by the meaning of the whole sentence, as in the preceding examples, and not just individual words; in this case the *r* in the following words, *cruelle*, *ingrate*, *tourment*, may not require so much emphasis. Here are some examples:

Mon cœur ne sent plus de tourment.

Philis n'est plus ingrate à mes desirs.

Elle a banny la cruauté.

In these examples, the negation decreases the emphasis of the *r* (for although there is no negation in the third example, it is implied by the meaning, and is equivalent to these: *Elle n'a plus de cruauté* [)].

4. The *r* must also be pronounced with some emphasis when it is a capital *r*, by which I mean, at the beginning of a word, as in *Rien*, *Respect*, *Rendons*, with the same

reservations as for *r* joined to other consonants, that is, they must be pronounced with more or less forcefulness, /295/ according to the meaning, as in the words *rigueur*, *revolte* and others which require more weight than the following: *reciter*, *ranger*, *raison*, *rappeller*, *redire*, *raconter*, etc. (provided the meaning of the sentence does not reverse this, as I have already said).

5. As for the *r* at the end of a word, there is much disagreement among singers mainly as regards the *r* at the end of infinitives, ending either in *-er* or *-ir*, such as *aimer*, *dormir*, *donner*, *souffrir*, etc.. Many people who mistake strength for roughness and softness for weakness, are bent on eliminating this type of *r*, on the basis that in spoken French it is never pronounced, except in popular Parisian where the *r* of *-ir* infinitives such as *sortir* and *mourir* is pronounced, and in Normandy where the *r* of *-er* infinitives such as *manger* and *quitter* is pronounced. Others are bent on pronouncing them in all circumstances, and yet others only on some occasions.

I am of the opinion of the latter and I believe that it is a mistake to want to eliminate this *r* entirely, for without it, not only is declamation dull /296/ and lifeless, but its meaning can be made ambiguous, as on page 40 of the first book of airs *in octavo*, [Ex.117] where if the *r* of *celer* is not pronounced, one could be mistaken into hearing *un bien de celé* instead of *un bien de celer*.

Example 117 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.40]

The musical score for Example 117 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are "C'est un bien de celer ce-luy". The notes are: C'est (quarter), un (quarter), bien (quarter), de (quarter), ce (quarter), -ler (quarter), ce-luy (quarter). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 6, 7, and 3 above the notes for "un", "bien", and "ce" respectively. The time signature is 3/2.

On page 68 of the same book of the second edition, if one neglects to pronounce *sçavez* correctly, as is easily done, and if one fails to pronounce the *r* of *donner*, the listener will hear *vous avez donné de l'amour* instead of *vous sçavez donner de l'amour* [Ex.118].

Example 118 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.68]

Vous sça - vez don - ner de la - mour

Vous sça - vez don - ner de l'a - mour

But it is also incorrect to pronounce the *r* of an infinitive with emphasis when the song does not require it, as can be the case in ‘vaudevilles’,⁴²⁸ and one should remain cautious in this case and pronounce it with moderation so that it is neither too rough nor too weak.

However, I maintain that there are instances where the final *r* of verbs should be pronounced as forcefully as the other *rs* which I have already discussed, provided this *r* is not followed by a word beginning with /297/ a vowel; for in this case the *r* is pronounced like the *r* mentioned above which is found between two vowels. This is not the case in spoken French, where the final *r* of verbs is not pronounced even if it follows a vowel. Here are some examples of the final *r* of verbs which need to be strongly emphasized: that of the word *forcer* on page 78 of the second book in octavo [Ex.119]; that of *toucher* in the line *à toucher vos Lyons* from the air *Antres affreux*, etc.,⁴²⁹ and others which follow the same rule.

Example 119 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.78]⁴³⁰

[rai]son tas - chent de for - cer ma pri - son

To conclude, it is always safer to pronounce the final *r* in infinitives than to omit it. As for nouns, however, such as *Berger*, *soûpir*, *leger*, although in spoken French the *r* of *Berger* is omitted and the *r* of *soûpir* is always pronounced, the rule is that they are all three pronounced equally in singing, which is a general rule for all nouns ending

⁴²⁸ See pp.219-220, fn.138.

⁴²⁹ Lachèvre (1967), vol.3, p.584 lists the air *Antres affreux, dont les sombres horreurs* by la Sablière, but this air has not been located. The Ballard *Recueil* (1699), p.10 contains the first verse of an air ‘de Monsieur Bouteiller L’Aisé’ (Pierre Bouteiller, c.1655-1717) which begins with the words ‘Antres affreux, rochers inaccessibles’, but the words ‘à toucher vos Lyons’ are not present, at least in this verse.

⁴³⁰ The extra crotchet beat in the second bar of this example is possibly due to the fact that the four-quaver group on the word ‘de’ is meant to be four semiquavers.

with the letter *r*, such as *cœur*, *langueur*, *amour*, etc.; this can be observed in the following verses, where one /298/ must pronounce the *r* in the same manner, if only for the sake of the rhyme:

*O l'excuse legere, d'un esprit trop leger,
Pardonne ma Bergere, pardonne à ton Berger.*⁴³¹

As for the liquid *r*, I shall discuss it in the following article.

⁴³¹ This is from the dialogue in Lambert (1666), p.81: (Phylis) 'O l'excuse legere d'un esprit bien leger / (Tircis) Pardonne ma bergere, pardonne à ton berger. /' The omission of the second 'pardonne' in Bacilly's text was noted in the *errata* and has been inserted here.

CHAPTER V

ARTICLE 2

The letter L.

/298/ The observations I have just made for the letter *r* also apply to the letter *l*, in that any *l* between two vowels, even a double *l*, must only be lightly pronounced, as in *celer*, *cruelle*, *belle*, whereas most people place too much emphasis on the two *ls* in *belle*. Conversely, an *l* preceding a consonant must be pronounced as if there were two *ls*, all the more if it requires expression, which does not often occur, so that the *l* in *malgré* and *revolter* can never be too heavily emphasized, and even that in the name *Silvie* and other similar ones.

/299/ As regards the pronunciation of a final *l*, only the monosyllable *il* poses a problem, namely, whether the *l* should be sounded in singing when a consonant follows it, for this is not common practice in spoken French. There is no doubt, however, that other final *ls* must be pronounced. My opinion is that even the *l* of the monosyllable *il* must be pronounced in singing to give it some sturdiness, except when there is no need for it, like light-hearted songs, ‘vaudevilles’ and other similar bagatelles which require a more simple interpretation.

The *l* can therefore safely be omitted from these words on page 57 of the first book of airs *in octavo*, *En faut-il davantage* [Ex.120]⁴³², because they are part of a *Gavotte*, but not in the following:

Pourquoy faut-il, Belle inhumaine. [Ex.121]

Que me sert-il d'estre fidelle. [Ex.122]

Puis que je brusle, il se faut plaindre. [Ex.123]

/300/ for these are more serious airs which require a more powerful expression.

Example 120 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.57]

The image shows a musical score for the song 'En faut-il davantage'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the voice and a bass clef staff for the basso continuo. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody in the treble staff starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4. The bass line in the bass staff starts with a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note G2. The lyrics are written below the notes: [l'a]mour en faut il da - van - ta - ge. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

⁴³² The complete gavotte is given in Ch.3 of the Essay, Ex.H.

Example 121 [Lambert 1666, p.40]

Pour- quoy faut il bel - le in - hu - mai - ne

6 3 3 3 3 5

Example 122 [Lambert 1666, p.44]

Que me sert il d'es - tre fi - del - le

5 3 6 5 5 6

Example 123 [Lambert 1666, p.4]⁴³³

[e]ffort Puis que je brusle il se faut plain - dre

3 4 #6 3 5 6 #3

There are some instances where even in worthless bagatelles one must make sure to pronounce the *l* in the monosyllable *il* when it precedes a consonant so as to avoid any misunderstanding. Otherwise one would often mistake *y* for *il* and *qui* for *qu'il* if the *l* were omitted, saying *qui seroit doux* instead of *qu'il seroit doux*. However, one has to be cautious enough and moderate enough in the use of this pronunciation, that can be said to be a little 'punctilious' and 'eccentric' as regards singing.

As for the liquid *l* and *r*, that is to say, when they follow another consonant in the same syllable, one must be careful to avoid a very common mistake. Due to

⁴³³ Although the change from ϕ to $\frac{3}{2}$ is only indicated in the last bar of this example, the metre tacitly changes to three semibreve beats in the third full bar of the air (the first bar of this example) before reaching the new metre indication.

carelessness and an absurd sluggishness, people often subtly divide the syllable in two, as if an *e* had been inserted, saying *pelaisir* instead of *plaisir*, *peressé* instead of *pressé*, *berusler* instead of *brusler*. This mistake is very noticeable in places where there are two or more descending notes, for without paying attention, people place /301/ half the syllable (which should be indivisible) on the first note and the second half on the following notes. Examples of both these situations can be seen on page 74 of the second book of airs engraved *in octavo*, on the word *plaindray* [Ex.124],⁴³⁴ where people sing *pe-lain* because they do not pronounce the *l* and the *p* in sufficiently close succession, and place *pe* on the *sol* and *lain* on the *fa*⁴³⁵ (although it is a single syllable); they do the same on *dray*, saying *de-ray* and placing *de* on the *re* and *ray* on the *ut*,⁴³⁶ as a result of a careless and sluggish pronunciation.

Example 124 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.74]

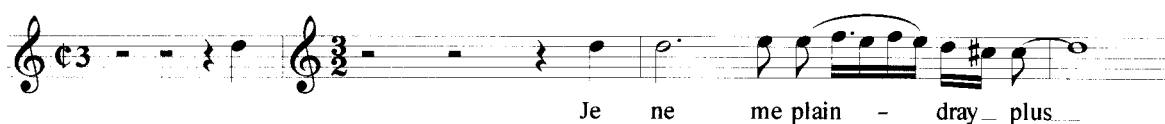


This example is sufficient in illustrating many similar cases found in airs. One should therefore be very careful not to separate the *r* or the *l* from the consonant which precedes it, to avoid the impression that the syllable has been cut in two.

This mistake is also noticeable in syllables where the *r* or *l*, and other letters of the alphabet as well, are followed by a consonant, and an *e* is subtly inserted between the two consonants, due to the same type of carelessness I have just mentioned; thus one says without further thought *parefaitement* instead of *parfaitement*, *Perintemps* instead of *Printemps*, /302/ *malegré* instead of *malgré*, *ressepect* instead of *respect*, *insepire* instead of *inspire*, *ademirer* instead of *admirer*. This fault is all the more obvious when

⁴³⁴ This is in fact a slightly modified alternative beginning to the *double* on the following page, fitted in immediately after the end of the *simple* on p.74. The first two notes are very probably misprints, for the *double* on p.75 begins on *d*" as follows, which corresponds to the first verse of this air, 'Après mille rigueurs', which is given as Ex.48.

Ex.xxxiii (Bacilly II, 1668, p.75):



⁴³⁵ i.e. *pe* on *g*" and *lain* on *f*".

⁴³⁶ i.e. *de* on *d*" and *ray* on *c*#".

there are, as I have already said, two or more descending notes and the syllable seems to be cut in two, with one half placed on the first note and the other on the following ones.

CHAPTER V

ARTICLE 3

The letter N.

/302/ Of all the consonants, none makes singing more attractive than the letter *n*, particularly when it follows *u* or *e*. However, this should not be the case, since nasal singing is the most offending of all and this consonant can only be pronounced through the nose. It is the only letter of the alphabet to have this drawback, if indeed it is one, for as far as the *n* is concerned it is rather /303/ an attraction. If anyone should doubt this to be true, he can put it to the test by holding his nose while reciting all the letters of the alphabet; he will observe that the *n* is the only one to be truly nasal. Before moving on, I would like to say that it is a serious mistake to insert subtly what sounds like an *n* before other consonants, which is hardly noticeable unless one is listening out for it; this often happens before a *d* and can truly be called singing through the nose. This error is particularly obvious when an *accent* or *plainte* is performed on the vowel preceding the *d*, such as on the last syllable of the word *partez* on page 73 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.125], where unawares, a type of *n* is inserted, or rather, a nasal sound following the *accent*, before pronouncing the *d* of the following word, *donc*.

Example 125 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.73]

The musical score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a common time signature (C) and a half note, then changes to a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: [ri]gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli-me - ne. Above the word 'par - tez', there is a bracketed 'b' symbol. Above the word 'donc', there is a '6' symbol. Above the word 'ne', there is a '+' symbol. The bass staff begins with a common time signature (C) and a half note, then changes to a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are: [ri]gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli- me - ne. Below the word 'par - tez', there is a '6' symbol. Below the word 'donc', there is a '6' symbol. Below the word 'me', there is a 'b' symbol.

Another example can be found on page 64 of the first book *in octavo* on all three repeats of the words *est de n'avoir*, where this type of *n* is also inserted between *est* and the following *d* [Ex.126]. There are many more examples /304/ of this and it is rare to find an air in which singers manage to avoid this pronunciation, something to which few teachers pay attention.

Example 126 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.64]⁴³⁷

The musical score consists of four systems of vocal staves. Each system has a treble clef staff for the voice and a bass clef staff for the figured bass. The lyrics are written below the staves. The first system includes figured bass notation: '4' and '6' under 'Car le plus'. The second system includes figured bass notation: '6', '5', and '6' under 'Est de n'a - voir plai - sir'. The third system includes figured bass notation: 'b6' under 'Est de n'a -'. The lyrics are: 'Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne Car le plus grand de tous les maux Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne.' The final system ends with a double bar line.

Singers commit a similar mistake when an air begins with certain capital consonants such as a *p*, *b* or *f*. They make a bad start with the other deplorable habit of singing *on* before the consonant. Thus instead of *Pourquoy*, or *Beaux yeux*, or *Faut-il*, they sing *on Pourquoy*, *on Faut-il* and *on Beaux yeux*, which creates a most unpleasant beginning and this is what is quite rightly called singing through the nose. But when there really is an *n*, one cannot find fault with it, and this is where this letter has the advantage.

This consonant has another important advantage, which is that of making the syllable long when it follows a vowel and not when it precedes it, as in the words

⁴³⁷ The penultimate bar of the lower part obviously has a beat missing: one of the two minims must be a misprinted semibreve; the editorial alignment has been so done to reflect the suggestion of a 4-3 suspension.

languir, encor, bonté, but not in these: *n'avoir, punir, donner* (the double *n* notwithstanding). I shall discuss this further /305/ in the third part of this treatise.

The letter *n* also adds a lot of charm to singing when it is followed by a vowel, especially an *e*, as I have already said when commenting on vowels, provided it is not sung with too much emphasis (as some provincial people do) and is only lightly touched, as if one only wanted to caress it; for this consonant needs to be pampered and cajoled, whereas the letter *r* needs more strength and power and has to be 'brutalised', so to speak, unless it is placed between two vowels.

There are other particular circumstances concerning the pronunciation of this letter that do not correspond to the spelling; but I shall leave these to the grammarians. All I shall say about them is that one must be careful not to say, as many people do, *enuy* and *enuyeux* instead of *ennuy* and *ennuyeux*, which should be pronounced almost as if there were an *a* instead of an *e*. However, the same cannot be said of the word *ennemis*, which is pronounced as if there /306/ were a single *n* after the *e* which retains its normal pronunciation and is not changed into an *a*. As for the final *n* in the words *bien* and *rien*, it is another matter best left to the grammarians, though the final *n* ought to be heavily emphasized when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel, as in *bien avant*, though normally it is not struck. But here, instead of changing the *e* into an *a* (as is mostly the case when the *e* is joined to an *n*), an *i* needs to be inserted between the *e* and the *n*, so that one sings *biein* and *riein*, particularly when one pauses on it and the word is not necessarily linked to another.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁸ This is a precautionary comment against pronouncing these words 'rian' and 'bian' in view of Bacilly's previous comments. Instead, the vowel must be more open and the *n* sounded at the end, resulting approximately in 'bi-è-ï-n' and 'ri-è-ï-n'.

CHAPTER VI

On the suspension of consonants before sounding the following vowel.

/307/ There is a pronunciation which is quite peculiar to singing and to declamation. It consists in accentuating certain consonants before forming the following vowel to achieve a more powerful expression; it is commonly called ‘rumbling’.

Of all the consonants that are rumbled (if one uses this word), the *m* is the most important and the consonant in which this type of suspended pronunciation is most obvious. This comes from the fact that it is entirely pronounced with the lips, which are held together for a while before sounding the following vowel, such as in the words *mourir*, *malheureux*, *miserable*, /308/ which are a common occurrence in French songs.

However, one must be aware that this type of pronunciation may not be suitable in certain cases when the meaning of the words is negative. Here is an example from the book *in quarto*, page 67 [Ex.127]:

Je ne veux mourir, ny changer.

Example 127 [Lambert 1666, p.67]

The musical score consists of three systems of vocal lines. Each system has a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are written below the notes. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 and 1-3. Some notes have a '+' sign above them, indicating a specific articulation. The lyrics are: [vanger] Je ne veux mourir ny chan - - ger je ne veux mourir ny chan - ger. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, the second system covers the third and fourth lines, and the third system covers the fifth and sixth lines.

It is a fact that the *m* of *mourir* in this case must not be accentuated, because of the negative meaning of the sentence, in accordance with what I have already said concerning the *r* (and also when discussing incorrect expressions).⁴³⁹ But it must be done in the following examples:

⁴³⁹ See Pt.2, Ch.V, art.1, pp.293-4/ 358-9.

J'aime mieux mourir que changer.

*J'ay bien dû songer à mourir.*⁴⁴⁰ [Ex.128]

Example 128 [Lambert 1666, p.33]

J'ay bien dû son - ger a mou -
- rir a mou - rit.

Je meurs, vous le voyez. [Ex.129]

Example 129 [Ballard IV, 1661, fol.9v]

Je meurs, vous le voyez
Je meurs, vous le voyez, et quel - que vi - o[ence]

and in the following ones:

Ah! qu'il est malaisé. [Ex.130]

from page 5 in the first book *in octavo*,

Example 130 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.94]

pas Ah! qu'il est mal - ai - sé
pas Ah! qu'il est mal - ai - sé quand l'a - mour

⁴⁴⁰ Bacilly gives no reference for the music of these three examples, only for some of the subsequent ones. However, those that have been located are included here further to illustrate the point.

/309/ *Après mille rigueurs.* [Ex.131]

on page 73 of the second book *in octavo*,

Example 131 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.73]

Musical score for Example 131, 'Après mille rigueurs.' The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and bass line with lyrics: 'A - prez mil - le ri -' and 'A - prez mil - le ri -'. The second system continues with lyrics: '-gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli - me - ne' and '-gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli - me - ne'. There are fingerings (6) and a breath mark (b) indicated in the bass line.

Venez heureux moment. [Ex.132]

from the air *Ah! qui peut*, etc.; this applies to the first *m* of *moment*, and not the second, which is between two vowels,

Example 132 [Ballard XI, 1668, fol.17v-19r]

Musical score for Example 132, 'Venez heureux moment.' The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and bass line with lyrics: '[len]te? Has - tez vous, ve - nez heu - reux mo -' and '[len]te? Has - tez vous, ve - nez heu - reux mo -'. The second system continues with lyrics: '- ment, ve - nez heu - reux mo - ment,' and '- ment, ve - nez heu - reux mo - ment,'. There are fingerings (6) and a breath mark (b) indicated in the bass line.

Un cœur amoureux & tendre. [Ex.133]

on page 28 of the second book *in octavo*,

Example 133 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.28]

Un cœur a - mou - reux et ten - dre

Un cœur a - mou - reux et ten - dre

Les mortelles atteintes d'un malheureux Amant. [Ex.134]

on page 39 of the second book *in octavo*, on both the *m* of *mortelles* and of *malheureux*,

Example 134 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.39]

[incessam]ment les mor - tel - les at - tein - tes

[incessam]ment les mor - tel - les at - tein -

- tes d'un mal - heu - reux a - mant

-tes d'un mal - heu - reux a - mant [d'un mal - heu - reux a - mant]

Faut-il que malgré ma raison. [Ex.135]

Example 135 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.46]

Faut il que mal - gré ma rai - son

Faut il que mal - gré ma rai - son

Je n'ay qu'un mot à dire.

This is the rule for the *m*, which must be applied according to *bon goust*; this type of suspension must only be done when appropriate.

/310/ There are yet other consonants that can be accentuated in this fashion, such as the *f* in the words *infidelle* and *enfin*, and the *n* in the word *non* in the following examples:

Puis que Philis est infidelle. [Ex.136]

Example 136 [Bacilly I. 1668, p.4]

Puis que Phi - lis est in - fi - del - le

Puis que Phi - lis est in - fi - del - le e - vi[tons]

*Enfin vostre rigueur, etc.*⁴⁴¹

Non, je ne pretens pas. [Ex.137]

Example 137 [(Lambert) 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.50]⁴⁴²

Non je ne pre - tend pas

Non, vous ne m'aimez pas, Climene. [Ex.138]

Example 138 [Foucault ms., fol.74v-5]

Non vous ne m'ai - mez pas Cli - me - ne

This even sometimes applies to the *s*, such as in the word *severe*.

Plus je vous aime, hélas! Plus vous m'estes severe.

And this is also the case with the consonants *j* and *v* in the words *jamais*, *vous*, *volage*.

Ne m'en parle jamais.

Quoy, me quitter? Vous que j'adore?

⁴⁴¹ Lachèvre (1967), vol.2, p.268, lists this as a sonnet by P. du Pelletier. The music has not been located.

⁴⁴² This air has been identified as Lambert's in Massip (1999), p.319.

Un perfide, un volage.

/311/ *A toucher vos Lions, vos Tigres, & vos Ours.*

These consonants can be accentuated. However, one must always keep in mind that the expression must be genuine and not only imaginary. For there would be nothing so ridiculous as always accentuating the *v* of *vous*, *vos* and *volage*, in the same way as the word *severe* and also (as I have said above) the words *mourir* and *malheureux*, if the meaning was opposed to it, as in the following examples.

Je ne veux point mourir.

Je ne suis pas trop malheureux.

CHAPTER VII

On the pronunciation of final consonants.

/312/ I have already discussed the final *r*; I have even said a few words in passing about the final *n* and *l*. As for the other consonants, namely *s*, *t* and *z*, I shall say as much as is useful to know as regards singing, by pointing out, with the use of examples, mistakes which are often made in the pronunciation of these final consonants; and I shall let the grammarians deal with the rest. Let us begin with the final *s* and let us observe, within limits, the errors made in its pronunciation, while always relying on the discernment of people who possess *bon goust*.

The final *s* must not be pronounced without a good reason (when I say *s*, I /313/ also mean *x* and *z* when they are pronounced similarly). Such reasons are: when the singular and plural of words need to be distinguished in certain cases; when one wishes to avoid a cacophony; when the meaning of the words needs to be clarified in order to avoid ambiguity, which is the most important reason; or when the *s* precedes a word which begins with a vowel, and other similar reasons of which *bon goust* must be the arbiter. Here are some examples that will be useful for other similar instances, in which one can observe that the pronunciation of the final *s* in singing and declamation is very different from spoken French, where it is often not sounded at all.⁴⁴³

Mon ame faisons un effort. [Ex.139]

Example 139 [Lambert 1666, p.4]

Mon a - me fai - sons un ef - fort

3 6 3 3 6 3

Parlons, il n'est plus temps de feindre [Ex.140]

⁴⁴³ Bacilly has already addressed this problem in Pt.2, Ch.II, p.253/ 334.

Example 140 [Lambert 1666, p.4]

Example 140 is a musical score in 3/2 time, featuring a vocal line and two bass lines. The lyrics are: [plain]dre Par - lons il n'est plus temps de fei - - dre. The score includes fingerings: #3, 7, 6 for the first system and 3, 3, 5, 4, #3, 6 for the second system.

The final *s* of *faisons* is pronounced like a *z*, though its pronunciation is omitted in spoken French, as is that of *parlons*, whereas that of *temps* is not pronounced at all because it precedes a /314/ consonant and there is no point in sounding it.

Si je pers le respect, je pers aussi la vie. [Ex.141]

Example 141 [Lambert 1666, p.5]

Example 141 is a musical score in 3/2 time, featuring a vocal line and two bass lines. The lyrics are: Si je pers le res - pect je pers aus - si la vi - - e. The score includes fingerings: 6, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 3 for the first system and #3, #3, 3, 4, 3 for the second system.

The *s* of the first *pers* in this example is not pronounced at all, and in the second, it is pronounced more or less like a *z*, because it precedes a vowel. And yet in spoken French the *s* is completely omitted in both cases. This procedure is common in singing as regards the word *toujours*, of which most people omit the *s* when it precedes a vowel and say *toijour avec elle*; but although in the previous example both the *r* and the *s* of *pers* are pronounced, one must omit the *r* of *toijours*, resulting in *toijouz avec elle*, due to an oddity of the French language which is often only based on common usage. However, one must be aware that although both the *r* and the *s* of *toijours* are omitted

in singing when they do not precede a vowel, an exception must be made for instances when *toûjours* rhymes with other words where the *r* and *s* have to be pronounced, as /315/ in *amours* and *courts*. To avoid this awkward situation, one should refrain from writing such rhymes in French poetry. Here are more examples from the engraved volumes.⁴⁴⁴

Sans crainte des rigueurs découvrir leur martyre. [Ex.142]

*Inutiles pensers*⁴⁴⁵ *d'abandonner Silvie.* [Ex.143]

Après mille tourmens soufferts. [Ex.144]

Lors que pour me contenter. [Ex.145]

Example 142 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.8]⁴⁴⁶

Example 142 is a musical score for a vocal line and a bass line. The first system covers the lyrics "jour sans crainte des ri-gueurs" and "jour sans crain-te des ri-gueurs". The second system covers "dé-cou-vrir leur mar-ti-re" and "dé-cou-vrir leur mar-ti-re". Fingerings are indicated by numbers 6, 6#, and #. There are also some symbols like a cross and a sharp sign above notes.

Example 143 [Lambert 1666, p.8]

Example 143 is a musical score for a vocal line and a bass line. The first system covers the lyrics "I-nu-ti-les pen-" and "I-nu-ti-les pen-". The second system covers "-sers d'A-ban-don-ner Sil-vi-e" and "-sers d'A-ban-don-ner Sil-vi-e". Fingerings are indicated by numbers 5, 4, 3, 4, 3, 6, 3. There are also some symbols like a cross and a sharp sign above notes.

⁴⁴⁴ As Bacilly refers to the sources for the following examples, the music has been provided.

⁴⁴⁵ The word 'pensers' (masculine plural) also had a feminine form, 'pensée(s)'; they have the same meaning. Only the feminine form has survived in modern French.

Example 144 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.8]

A - pres mil - le tour - mens souf - fers

- mens [mil - le tour - mens] souf - fers

Example 145 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.54]⁴⁴⁷

Lors que pour me con - ten - ter

Lors que pour me con - ten - ter

The *s* in these examples must be pronounced,⁴⁴⁸ which is a common practice in singing when it is joined to an *r*, although not in spoken French. However, there are cases in which the *s* ought not to be sounded, as in *vos rigueurs m'ont banny*, for which there is no rational explanation. One can only say that in the other examples, one respects the caesura of the line, which surely provides a good enough reason to sound the *s*, as in the following example.

/316/ *Que vivre en d'autres lieux le plus content du monde.* [Ex.146]

Example 146 [Lambert 1666, p.69]⁴⁴⁹

que vi - vr'en d'au - tres lieux le plus con -

4 6 7 6 6 5 6

⁴⁴⁶ Example 141 is from Bacilly's air 'Je voy des amans chaque jour', (I [1668], pp.8-11).

⁴⁴⁷ Of these four examples, only this one is supplied by Caswell (Bacilly [1668]), but with no reference.

⁴⁴⁸ That is, the *s* at the end of 'rigueurs', 'pensers', 'soufferts' and 'lors'.

⁴⁴⁹ Example 146 is from the air 'Loin de vos yeux belle Silvie', pp.68-71.

-tent le plus con - tent du mon - de.

3 6 3 5 3 3 3 4 3

The *x* in this example is pronounced like an *s* and must be struck, but it would be best to refer to the *bon goust* of the experts for these matters. Another difficulty arises regarding the plural article *ils*,⁴⁵⁰ for people omit the *l* and the *s* in spoken French, and yet they may be pronounced in certain instances in singing, when they precede a vowel.

What I have just said about the word *toûjours* can also be applied to the word *Bergers* when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel. One must omit the *r* and say *Que les Bergêz avecque les Bergeres*. However, when it precedes a consonant, one should usually omit not only the *r* but also the *s*. This also applies to the word *Rochers* in the following examples.

Que ces Bergers vivent contens.

Tous Rochers que vous estes

The words *Rochers* and *Bergers* /ʒ17/ should be pronounced as if they were spelt with a double *e*, *Rochée* and *Bergée*, mostly in light-hearted airs, gavottes, sarabandes, etc. and conversely, the *r* should rarely be omitted in the singular form of these two words,⁴⁵¹ whether it precedes a consonant or a vowel, which may seem strange as regards pronunciation. Therefore it is always better to sound the *r* in the following examples than to omit it:

Pardonne à ton Berger. [Ex.147]

Example 147 [Lambert 1666, p.81]⁴⁵²

Tirsis

Par - don - ne ma ber - ge - re

3 2 3 3 3 4 3 5

⁴⁵⁰ 'Ils' is a personal pronoun.

⁴⁵¹ This rule has been put forward in Pt.II, Ch.V, art.2, pp.297-8/ 362.

⁴⁵² This is from Lambert's dialogue 'Philis j'arreste enfin', (1666), pp.80-82, between the shepherd Tirsis and the shepherdess Philis.

par - don - ne a ton ber - ger

3 5 6 5 4 3

*Un Berger de ce Village.*⁴⁵³

Rocher, témoin fidelle.

If the *r* were not sounded, it would be unclear whether the word *Rocher* was singular or plural, particularly when the length of the note requires the last syllable of this word to be long.

I must also mention an example which illustrates that one should pronounce the *r* and the *s* in the word *pensers* so as to avoid any ambiguity and not to mistake one word for another, otherwise /318/ one could mistake it for its feminine form, saying

Inutiles pensées

instead of

Inutiles pensers.

This would result in a dreadful effect, not only as regards pronunciation but also with respect to the verse, which would be made a foot too long if three syllables were created instead of two.

There is another type of *s* which one should be careful not to omit, as a great Master in singing used to do, who was but a learner as far as the French language is concerned: it occurs in the word *crus*, which is the 'aorist' of *croit*.⁴⁵⁴ This Master would always wrongly confuse it with *crû*, saying *j'ay crû en vous quittant* instead of *je crus en vous quittant*, because he did not pronounce the *s*; he would thus make the verse faulty with this cacophonous pronunciation.

One of the main reasons for pronouncing the final *s* is to distinguish between the plural and /319/ singular forms of a word, provided the *mesure* allows it, so as to avoid confusion between the two, as can easily be seen in the following examples.⁴⁵⁵

Fleurs qui naissez sous les pas de Silvie. [Ex.148]⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Caswell (Bacilly [1668]) located this in *Airs a voix seule*, p.40. As he provides no details of this source save its title (no date, no publisher, no library reference), it has not been possible to verify it.

⁴⁵⁴ *crus* is the aorist (or the past historic, an unqualified past tense with no reference to completion) of the verb *croire* (to believe).

⁴⁵⁵ Bacilly does not give the reference for the following examples, but they have been inserted where possible as they involve the question of breathing, which Bacilly addressed in the following paragraph.

⁴⁵⁶ This air is for two *dessus* and bass voice.

Example 148 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.69]

Fleurs qui nais - sez sous les pas de Sil - vi - e

Fleurs qui nais - sez sous les pas de Sil - vi - e

Arbres, Rochers, doux & charmans Zephirs. [Ex.149]

Example 149 [(Cambefort) 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.109]⁴⁵⁷

Ar - bres Ro - chers doux et char - mans ze - phirs

For if, for example, the *mesure* was too fast, as can happen in certain short *airs de mouvement*, one should omit the *s* of *Arbres* rather than upset the *mesure* as in this example of a *sarabande*:

*Arbres, Rochers, aimable solitude.*⁴⁵⁸

One should therefore be careful to pronounce the *s* in the first two examples above, whether one stops to take a breath or not. I mention this because pronunciation often depends on this factor, and certain final consonants can rightly be omitted if the singer does not stop for a breath, but not so if a breath is taken. This can be observed in the following examples.

/320/ *Au secours ma raison.* [Ex.150]

Example 150 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.28]

Au se - cours Au se - cours ma rai - son

luth

Au se - cours ma rai - son

⁴⁵⁷ Caswell located this air in 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.109. It is also in Cambefort (1655), fol.11v-12 (vol.2-3) and fol.8 (vol.4); however, the B.N.F. only has the *taille*, *basse-contre* and *basse-continue* part books and not that of the *dessus*. The *basse-continue* part corresponds to the instrumental bass part included in 'Airs' ms. c.1661 used for this example.

⁴⁵⁸ This air has not been located.

Quel bruit sous ce Tombeau. [Ex.151]

Example 151 [Michel 1641, fol.42v-43]⁴⁵⁹

Musical score for Example 151. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Quel bruit sous ce tom - beau?"

Si je pers le respect. [Ex.152]⁴⁶⁰

Example 152 [Lambert 1666, p.7]

Musical score for Example 152. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/2. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "si je pers le res - pect" (top staff) and "pers Si je pers le res - pect" (bottom staff).

Et l'on n'a droit de me charmer. [Ex.153]

[The last of these is] from page 17 of the second book *in octavo*.

Example 153 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.17]⁴⁶¹

Musical score for Example 153. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "et l'on n'a droit de me char - mer qu'au - tant" (top staff) and "et l'on n'a droit de me char - mer qu'au - tant" (bottom staff).

The final consonant of the words *pers*, *secours*, *bruit*, *droit* must be pronounced if they are not joined in the same breath to what follows, which is often left to the singer. To these examples I shall add the following, taken from page 76 of the second book of airs *in octavo* [Ex.154]:

⁴⁵⁹ This is described in the publication as a 'dialogue pour boire'.

⁴⁶⁰ These words appear in Lambert 1666, pp.4-7, in both the *simple* and the *double*; the *simple* has been given as Ex.141 and the *double*, to which the point of pronunciation is equally applicable, is provided here as Ex.152.

⁴⁶¹ The first note of the second bar in the *dessus* part is likely meant to be a dotted quaver; the alignment with the lower part to suggest this is editorial.

Je veux briser mes fers, je veux, etc.

Example 154 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.76]

Je veux bri - ser mes fers je veux fi -
 [bri]ser mes fers bri - ser mes fers je veux fi -

- nir mes pei - - - nes
 - nir mes pei - - - nes

Two things are noteworthy in this example. Firstly, if there is a pause after the word *fers*, the *s* must be pronounced; but if one goes on to the next word without a pause, the *s* should be omitted. Secondly, the pronoun *mes* provides a reason for this omission, since through it /321/ the plural is obvious enough, and there is no need to repeat the fact by pronouncing the *s* of *fers*. This is not the case in the example that I have already given above:

Fleurs qui naissez, etc.,⁴⁶²

In this example, the word *fleurs* stands on its own and one could therefore wonder whether it is a plural or singular word if the *s* is not pronounced, even without taking a pause for a breath. The article *les* in the following example eliminates any doubt.

Les fleurs qui naissent dans la plaine.

One does not need to pronounce the *s* here as long as one does not take a breath. Conversely, some final consonants can and must be pronounced when they are joined to the following words in the same breath, but must be omitted when one does take a breath. Here is an example from page 67 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.155]:

Je parois si content, Iris, quand je vous voy.

⁴⁶² 'Fleurs qui naissez sous les pas de Silvie', which Bacilly gives on p.319/ 383; see Ex.148.

Example 155 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.67]

moy je pa-rois si con - tent I - ris quand je vous voy

moy je pa-rois si con - tent I - ris quand je vous voy

/322/ Here is one from page 50 in the same book [Ex.156]:

Il faut endurer constamment un long tourment.

Example 156 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.50]

S'il faut en - du - rer

con - stam - ment un long tou - ment

The *t* of *content* and of *constamment* must be struck if the following vowels are pronounced in the same breath; whereas if one pauses, one does not have to pronounce it. This rule is more specific to the letter *t* than to the other consonants.

As for the final *l*, it is always pronounced in singing; one should even sound the *l* in the words *il faut*, which is not the case in spoken French. The power of language should not be diminished in singing by omitting certain letters which are of great benefit to it.

There is nothing much to say about the letter *t* and one should apply the accepted pronunciation of ordinary spoken French, unless it comes after an *r*, as in the words *sort*, *mort*, *tard* (where the *d* is pronounced like a *t*) and the following word begins with a vowel; in this case, the *t* must be sounded, and one should say

/323/ *Que vostre sort est doux.*⁴⁶³

*Que le sort est rigoureux.*⁴⁶⁴

La mort a finy son martire.

instead of

Que vostre sor est doux.

⁴⁶³ Caswell located this air in Ballard XXXI (1688), p.76.

⁴⁶⁴ Caswell located this air in Boesset IX (1642), fol.27v. It is also in 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.93.

Que le sor est rigoureux.

La mor a finy son martire.

as many people do, believing incorrectly that the latter manner of pronouncing these lines is much softer than the first, as if only softness was worth considering in singing, or in declamation, and that strength did not matter.

Another observation has to be made regarding the letter *c* in the word *avec*. Many people are mistaken in its pronunciation by wanting to omit it, as in popular Parisian French. This error is quite similar to the /324/ preceding one. Therefore, as regards pronunciation in singing, one should not say *avê vous*, nor *avê luy*; instead, the *c* must be sounded, in spite of these delicate people who, as I have already mentioned several times, confuse the qualities of strength with roughness, softness with weakness and playfulness with childishness.

These are more or less all the observations that can be made as regards pronunciation in French singing. If there are others, they depend on *bon goust* and no definitive rules can be established for them. I am aware that errors of pronunciation are commonly made other than those which I have discussed, but they are such gross errors that they are not worth mentioning. Yet there is one which I do not wish to pass over, since even teachers are guilty of it: it is that of taking a breath after a final syllable which is joined by an elision to the next word beginning with a vowel, and saying

Il a de sa Berger' attiré le couroux.

/325/ on page 77 of the first book *in octavo* [Ex.157].

Example 157 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.77]

The musical notation consists of two staves. The first staff is in 3/4 time and the second is in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'il a de sa ber - ge - re at - ti - ré le cou - roux'. The melody is written in a single treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff continues the melody and also ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

They pause after the word *Bergere* instead of joining it in the same breath to the word *attiré*, since both words, as a result of the elision, are made into one. Here is another example from the second book *in octavo*, page 56 [Ex.158]:

Vostre cœur s'en offence, injuste comme il est.

Example 158 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.56]

[extre]me vos - tre cœur s'en of- fen - ce in - jus - te com - me il est

[extre]me vos - tre cœur s'en of- fen - ce in - jus - te com - me il est

If the word *offence* is not joined to *injuste* and that *Vostre cœur s'en offenc'* is sung in one breath and the rest of the line in another breath, the mistake is as gross as if one paused in the middle of a word of several syllables, since, as I have just said, the 'elision' means that both words are linked into one.

Singers who find that they often need to take short breaths are subject to making the mistake of joining unwittingly the final consonant of a word to the vowel of the following word, and it sounds as if they had two attempts at pronouncing the word. Here is an example, on page 68 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.159]:

/326/ *Que vous estes aimable.*

Example 159 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.68]

que vous es - tes aim - a - ble

que vous es - tes aim - a - ble

They join the *s* to the following word in the next breath, that is to say, pronouncing it as if it was

Que vous este-zaimable.

This error is so gross that it is hard to believe that teachers can fall into this trap. All I can say is that through lack of attention, they frequently fail to correct it in their pupils, and let it pass without comment.

PART THREE

ON THE APPLICATION OF SONG TO FRENCH WORDS, AS REGARDS QUANTITY

CHAPTER I

On syllabic quantity in general

/327/ I cannot but marvel at the blindness of many people, including clever and worthy people, who believe that there is no such thing as quantity in French and that establishing long and short syllables is pure fantasy. They say that this only pertains to Latin and that in French, only /328/ the rhyme and the number of syllables matter, without taking into account whether these syllables are long or short. One has to agree that syllabic quantity does not play a part in the composition of French poetry, as long as the rhyme is respected. But when it comes to reciting, singing or declaiming poetry pleasantly, there are definitely long and short syllables to observe, not only in verse but also in prose, for the same rules apply to both of them.

I have to point out that in establishing long and short syllables, I am not speaking of the composition of works, be they in prose or in verse, but only of declamation, when it is a question of emphasizing these works with due forcefulness in view of a public performance. And as singing is a type of declamation, as I have said previously, there is no doubt that one must pay great attention to the quantity of syllables, without which singing would lack perfection.⁴⁶⁵

/329/ There are therefore two kinds of quantity, one which is only relevant to the composition of Greek or Latin verses but not to French (where only the rhyme needs to be respected, as I said above)⁴⁶⁶ and the other which is only relevant to pronunciation, and which is so far removed from the first that one syllable may be short in a French poetic composition, and even in a Latin one, and yet be long when it comes to reciting it with the necessary elegance. (Note that when I say there are short and long syllables in French poetry, this only applies to the rhyme, whose strictness delays the penultimate syllable of feminine words which would otherwise be of equal length as regards

⁴⁶⁵ Bacilly makes it very clear that the type of quantity with which he is concerned is not an issue when writing poetry but only when declaiming it; in addition, it is clear throughout this third part of the treatise that quantity should also be taken into account in the composition of airs and not solely as regards their performance. (See below, p.331/ 390.)

⁴⁶⁶ Here Bacilly makes the distinction between classical metres and the syllabic versification system and rhyme of French poetry.

quantity in singing, as I shall mention later, on the subject of certain words such as *cruelle* and *mesle*, *merite* and *viste*.)

To appreciate this fact, I only need to point out that in all Latin words of two syllables, the first syllable is long if they are to be declaimed properly; and yet there are thousands of words whose first syllable is short /330/ as regards the composition of the poetic line, such as

*Arma virumque cano.*⁴⁶⁷

The first syllable of *cano* is short, with respect to the line, and yet one should accentuate this very syllable and make it long in order to declaim it correctly.

To appreciate this fact fully, I shall compare the Latin word *fiat*, which comes from the verb *feri*, with the word *via*. Can anything be shorter than the first syllable of *fiat* as regards pronunciation? And does not even that of *via* seem a little longer? Yet, as regards poetry only the first syllable of *fiat* is long, but as regards declamation, that of both words is long.

It is therefore obvious that in French there are long and short syllables, regardless of whether or not they are set to music. As well as the general rules regarding quantity, there are particular ones for singing, of which a great many people are totally unaware, not only musicians but even, as I have said, experts in /331/ poetry or in prose, who often do not want to comply with the rules which govern quantity, either through arrogance or stubbornness. As for musicians, it is due to sheer ignorance which is almost incurable, since it derives from a lack of knowledge or common sense, and from the fact that they are often unable to tell a consonant from a vowel.

It should also be noted that since these rules must be observed when performing, they should be observed all the more in a musical composition on French words. One is not always accurate enough when it comes to writing long and short notes to correspond to the text. One sometimes writes a short note on a long syllable for the sake of rhythm, hoping that the singer will be able to cope with this problem and to correct, with his skill and proficiency, what appears as incorrect on paper, thanks to his thorough knowledge of quantity. This occurs particularly in airs which /332/ have a set rhythm, such as *sarabandes*, *gavottes*, *bourées*, etc., for which one is forced to write some long or short notes to arrive at cadences, even though the syllables do not always fit the

⁴⁶⁷ Bernard Lamy [1699], p.211, uses this very verse from Virgil's *Aeneid*, 'Arma, virumque cano, Trojae qui primus ab oris' (quoted from St. Augustine) in his treatise on rhetoric, when discussing quantity in declamation.

notes, which mainly happens when the words are written after the music. It is up to the singer to know how to correct this discrepancy, in a way that does not, however, affect the character of the piece. In order to do this, one must have a thorough knowledge of the quantity of syllables.

I know that some people will say that, without knowing the rules of quantity, one is quite capable of applying them thanks to a special gift and much practice. But this feeling is the fruit of pure vanity, and if such a person was to be found, he will allow me to say that he would be better taking advice and to avoid pitfalls. For whatever gift nature might have provided him with, along with great experience, he would be even more confident if he knew the rules.

CHAPTER II

On the quantity of monosyllables.

/333/ Before examining the quantity of words of several syllables, it would be well to discuss those that have only one, and to say first of all that some of them are always long, or at least, so to speak, semi-long, and can never be short. But none are so short that they may never become long, and indeed must become so, depending on their position and their relation to the following words, be they of one syllable or more.

The monosyllables which are always long and can never be short are, for example, interjections such as *ah!* and *ô!*, as well as exclamations *ô Dieux!* and *ô Cieux!*; none of these monosyllables can ever be short, neither can the interrogative *Quoy?* and monosyllables /334/ followed by a full-stop or comma, which separates them from what follows, such as *moy*, *vous*, *fy*, *va*, which could otherwise be short if they were joined to other words, as in

Moy mesme.

Vous autres.

Fy delle.

Va dire.

When I say that they are long when followed by a full-stop or a comma, it goes without saying that this is because they are not joined to what follows and therefore cannot be treated as short syllables,⁴⁶⁸ and yet one is not forced to hold them for the entire beat. On the contrary, they are often more graceful when they are cut short, though a *tacet* must always be inserted to compensate for their length.

There are many others for which, however, no definite rules can be established for they would include too many exceptions; the best thing to do is to provide a few lists for the benefit of those who aspire to the proper method of singing.

/335/ The monosyllables most commonly found in singing are articles, pronouns and other particles of the French language, such as *les*, *des*, *tes*, *mes*, *ses*, *ces*, *aux*, *vos*. All these monosyllables are so long that they can sustain long *tremblemens* or *cadences*,

⁴⁶⁸ The explanation can be confusing: in the four examples given here, the monosyllable, the 'moy' of 'moy mesme', for instance, is short because the first syllable of the following word, 'mesme', a feminine word, is long; for reasons of symmetry which he begins to explain on pp.339-40/ 394, the 'moy' is therefore short. But when they are not immediately followed by another word, these monosyllables are long.

be they at final or secondary cadences. Only Frenchmen of a certain temperament will disagree with this proposition and consider it to be a stubborn delusion.

It is therefore appropriate to consider these monosyllables as long and perform as many long ornaments as possible on them (as well as on those which I shall briefly mention in the following chapter), by which I mean *tremblemens*, *accens* and *douplemens* which are performed with a light touch of the throat,⁴⁶⁹ as I have mentioned already, and which are never performed on short syllables. When I said that these monosyllables can sometimes be short, this is only true when they precede a two-syllable feminine word (whose last syllable is basically /336/ long) which begins with a vowel, such as *les autres*, *les armes*, *vos ombres*. However, one can take the liberty of making them slightly longer without offending the ear in any way.

There is another general rule that is very important: all monosyllables in which an *n* follows a vowel are nearly always long, such as the following words: *un*, *on*, *mon*, *ton*, *son*, *rien*, *bien*, *tien*, *sien*, *long*, *donc*, *sans*, *dans*, *grand*, *tant*, etc.; all these monosyllables are long, unless they precede another long monosyllable which begins with a vowel, or a two-syllable feminine word which similarly begins with a vowel, such as in *on est*, *un autre*, *mon ame*, etc.. These monosyllables are short in this instance, even though there is an *n*, but are long in all other cases, because the letter *n* is so superior in length to all the other letters of the alphabet, as I shall discuss in more detail later.

Yet one should be aware, to understand these observations properly, that /337/ when saying that all these monosyllables are long, it means that they are not naturally short as the others; and if they are not long enough to be able to sustain a final or secondary *cadence*⁴⁷⁰ in an air, or any other long *tremblement*, they can at least take an *accent* or a *doublement du gosier*, which are performed on long syllables, or rather on semi-long, as it were. They cannot either be sung as lightly as syllables such as *de*, *me*, *te*, *le*, *ce*, *que*, and other monosyllables which are naturally short.

One must also be aware that when saying that monosyllables containing an *n* are short when they precede a word beginning with a vowel, this is only true if the *n* is at the end. For if the *n* is followed by another letter, the fact that the next word begins with a vowel will not affect its length. Here are some examples:

⁴⁶⁹ ‘en glissant du gosier’: ‘glisser’ has the meaning of sliding, as well as lightly touching, as in ‘effleurer’.

⁴⁷⁰ That is, a *cadence* at the final cadence or a secondary cadence in the course of an air.

Dans une.

Cent autres.

Sans elle.

/338/ All these monosyllables are long, regardless of the vowel at the beginning of the following feminine word of two syllables, for in front of masculine words of two syllables⁴⁷¹ (of which the first syllable is always short, bar a few exceptions), all the monosyllables which contain an *n* are always long. This rule also applies to words of four syllables which receive the same treatment as those of two syllables, be they masculine or feminine, as I shall establish in the following chapters on the subject of words of several syllables.

It is a fact, therefore, that there are many naturally long monosyllables which can never, or rarely, be short. These will be listed in the following chapter, and, to simplify matters, they will be limited to those most commonly found in French songs.

There is no monosyllable so short that it cannot be made long depending on its position in the sentence, and one can have several consecutive long monosyllables. When there are /339/ several consecutive short ones, it is always possible to make one out of two long, if the composer or the singer sees it fit to do so. When I say that one can be long, I mean one or the other and not both, depending on their position and, so to speak, on ‘symmetry’.

However, in order to know about this ‘symmetry’ which can make naturally short syllables long, one should first know that the first syllable of all two-syllable feminine words is long, as I shall say in due course, without any exception. And contrary to this, the first syllable of two-syllable masculine words is always short, with the exception of a few words which I shall list later.

Secondly, one should be aware of monosyllables which are basically long or semi-long, and which can never be short.

Having established this basis, there is no doubt that all short monosyllables remain short when they precede a feminine word of two syllables, such as *de mesme, la flame, se rendre*. These /340/ monosyllables, *de, la, se*, are short in relation to the following feminine word and can never be long. On the contrary, if these same monosyllables precede a masculine word of two syllables, which do not belong to the

⁴⁷¹ The text reads ‘car dans les masculins de deux syllabes’, i.e. ‘for in masculine words of two syllables’; however, this sentence only makes sense if we understand Bacilly to have meant ‘in front of masculine words of two syllables’.

exceptions I shall mention, they can be long, as can be seen in the following words: *de l'aimer, la rigueur, se flatter*.

Thus by counting backwards one can decide the length of monosyllables which come before the monosyllables I have just mentioned; and one can say that short monosyllables which immediately precede those which come before a feminine word of two syllables can be long, for the reason I have given, namely that there are no two consecutive short monosyllables of which one cannot be made long, according to their position. And contrary to this, short monosyllables which immediately precede other ones which come before a masculine word of two syllables remain short. Here are some examples:

Ny de l'aimer.

A la rigueur.

De se flatter.

/341/ The first monosyllables in these three examples are naturally short in relation to the second monosyllable. And even if one does not rush to sing the second monosyllable, as one is free to do, it does not stop the first monosyllable from being short and the second from being long, and this is left to the singer. Here are some examples of the rule for monosyllables which precede a monosyllable which in turn comes before a feminine word of two syllables.

Ny de mesme.

A ma flame.

De se rendre.

All three first monosyllables can be made long in relation to the three second monosyllables; but the latter can never be long in relation to the following feminine words of two syllables.

In order to determine this symmetry more easily, one only needs to insert a monosyllable into the examples which I have just given. It is easy to see how a monosyllable becomes short, however long it may usually be, as in these examples:

/342/ *De se trop flatter.*

Because the word *trop* has been inserted, the *se*, which could have been long in relation to *flatter*, becomes short in relation to *trop*.⁴⁷² The same occurs in these words:

Ny de moy-mesme.

⁴⁷² I.e. *de se flatter* becomes *de se trop flatter*.

The monosyllable *moy* having been inserted between *de* and *mesme* makes the monosyllable *de* long in relation to *moy*.⁴⁷³ That is to say it is no longer short, which is all that is needed, and it does not have to be fully long.⁴⁷⁴

It is necessary to make a rule for short monosyllables which precede others that can never be short: these short monosyllables can never be long and are always subordinate to the following monosyllable, such as in:

Se rend.

Bel art.

A vos.

Le mien.

/343/ The first monosyllable in each of these four examples can never be long in relation to those that follow, which are always long, either because these second monosyllables contain an *n*, as I have already mentioned, or because they end with an *s*, or because they appear in the list of long syllables; while others cannot be categorised and one must rely on the judgement of the performer. For even the rule for monosyllables ending in an *s* is not without exceptions, such as in the case of the words *vous* and *tous*, which can sometimes be made short as in the following examples.

Vous autres.

Tous lieux.

Vous mesme.

These observations are even better illustrated in the following line, which consists of monosyllables and is known to almost everyone who sings French airs.

/344/ *Mon cœur qui se rend à vos coups.*

The first two monosyllables are naturally long, because one contains an *n* and the other appears in the list, and because neither precede a vowel; for if they did, they could have been short. The third monosyllable is again long, (though not naturally so) if the singer finds it fitting, because it precedes one that must on all accounts be short, since it is followed by one that is very long and can never be short. A short monosyllable can never be made long unless it precedes a monosyllable which is also short, and not when it precedes a monosyllable which can never be short whatever its position. The sixth

⁴⁷³ I.e. *ny de mesme* becomes *ny de moy-mesme*.

⁴⁷⁴ The monosyllable would therefore be 'semi-long', though the exact length of such 'semi-long' syllables is clearly in the hands of the performer.

monosyllable is short for the same reason, because it precedes the word *vos*, which is always long as it ends with an *s*.⁴⁷⁵

One should also take great notice of masculine words of two syllables /345/ which are exempt from the rule stating that their penultimate syllable should be short, contrary to those of feminine words which, without exception, must always have a long penultimate syllable. For if a monosyllable should immediately precede this type of masculine word of two syllables which begin with a long syllable, the monosyllable becomes short, and cannot be long. This occurs in the following examples.

Se plaindra.

Le danger.

Se fascher.

De n'oser.

All four of these monosyllables are quite short and cannot be long because they precede a masculine word of two syllables which, either because it contains an *n* (as I shall explain in my discussion on words of several syllables) or because they appear in the list of long syllables which will be given later, begins with a long syllable. And yet these same monosyllables may be long if they precede others /346/ which are not exceptions to the general rule regarding masculine words of two syllables. Here are some examples.

Se flatter.

Le devoir.

Se fera.

De bannir.

⁴⁷⁵ Similarly, the last monosyllable, *coups*, is long as it contains an *s* (this rule, explained in Pt.3, Ch.III, rule 1, pp.356-8/ 403-4, also applies to plurals). The final pattern is as follows: *Mon cœur qui se rend à vos coups*. These words are from an air by Lambert, of which the first four bars are given below (Ex.xxxiv). In order to perform this according to Bacilly's rules for quantity, the singer could, for instance, perform a *port de voix* from 'se' to 'rend'; this would result in a shortened 'se' as the syllable 'rend' would be anticipated, in accordance to Bacilly's advice that 'se' should indeed be short. This air appeared in Berthod's parodies of airs to devotional texts as 'Jesus les tourmens et les coups' in Ballard (1656), pp.9-110.

Ex.xxxiv: [Lambert 1666, p.32]

The musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a lute line in bass clef. Both are in 3/2 time. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The lute line includes figured bass notation: 3, 3, 3, 3 #6, 4, 7/5, 3, 6/3, 3.

For although in the fourth example the masculine word contains an *n*, even two *ns*, these two *ns* only count as one as regards pronunciation. And when I said that the first syllable is long when it contains an *n*,⁴⁷⁶ this only applies when it is actually pronounced, and not according to the spelling. Now, in the pronunciation of the word *bannir*, the *n* is not heard in the first syllable.⁴⁷⁷ It must also be pointed out that for the rule of the *n* to apply, the *n* must not precede the main vowel of the syllable,⁴⁷⁸ for if it does, the rule has no effect, as I said in my discussion on monosyllables containing the letter *n*,⁴⁷⁹ such as here:

De n'avoir

Regnera.

/347/ In these examples, both penultimate syllables contain an *n*, but it is disregarded and does not have the power to make them long syllables. They have to remain short, regardless of the *n* they contain.

Having sorted out the classification of monosyllables on their own, and when they precede words of two syllables, be they masculine or feminine, it is now necessary to discuss words of three or four syllables, and to say that the same balance occurs here as in the other words. That is to say that one should first take into account whether the word is feminine or masculine; if it is feminine, the penultimate syllable is necessarily long and consequently, the preceding syllable, which we shall call the 'antepenultimate' syllable, is short, unless for some reason it is an exception to the rule and is long. Thus the monosyllable which precedes this one will in turn be long, if the composer wishes it to be so, though it may be short in other circumstances. Here are some examples:

Se defendre.

Je reclame.

/348/ Both monosyllables in these examples are long, because in this case they precede a feminine word of three syllables, whose penultimate is long, so the antepenultimate must necessarily be short, unless there is an exception. And yet these same two

⁴⁷⁶ This rule is established in Pt.3, Ch.III, rule 2, pp.364-7/ 408-9.

⁴⁷⁷ All the examples given for the rule that the presence of an *n* after the vowel makes a syllable long involve the *n* as part of a compound vowel which we would regard as nasal: although double consonants are usually split, i.e. 'ban-nir', the word is pronounced 'ba-*nnir*' and contains no nasal vowel.

⁴⁷⁸ As the *n* (or two *ns*) in *bannir* are pronounced in the second syllable, their placing is therefore only relevant to that syllable and must be considered in relation to the vowel *i* rather than the *a* in the first syllable.

⁴⁷⁹ See Pt.3, Ch.III, rule 2, p.364/ 408: 'All monosyllables containing an *n* after the vowel and not before it are always long, provided the *n* is followed by another consonant.'

This objection is raised by people who are either completely ignorant, or knowledgeable as regards verses but ignorant as regards singing. I have even heard this misconception from a learned person, who said that as regards quantity, one could do anything with monosyllables, due to the simple fact that they are monosyllables.

It is true that in a first verse one finds monosyllables that are long and short according to the rules, which I have discussed above. And so, if /351/ other monosyllables in the second verse can never be short, it is up to the performer to overcome this problem through his skill while trying to preserve the *mesure* and the *mouvement* of the air as much as possible. This is much easier to do (and therefore should be done) in airs which do not have a regular metre than in others which are subject to a fixed metre. Here is an example that will be very useful in pointing out the difference between monosyllables in the first and second verse. It occurs on page 71 of the second book *in octavo*. [Ex.160]

Je ne vous dis pas de l'apprendre.

Example 160 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.71]

The musical score for Example 160 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in 3/4 time. The lyrics are 'je ne vous dis pas de l'apprendre'. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. There are rhythmic markings above the notes: a '+' above 'je', a '+' above 'dis', and a '+' above 'ap'. There are also rhythmic markings below the notes: a '6' above 'pas', a '6' above 'de', a '6' above 'ap', and a '6' above 'dre'. The score shows the first three monosyllables 'je ne vous' in the first staff, and 'dis pas de l'apprendre' in the second staff.

In the second verse this becomes:

Il n'est pas moins doux de l'apprendre. [Ex.161]

Example 161 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.72]

The musical score for Example 161 consists of a single staff in treble clef, in 3/4 time. The lyrics are 'Il n'est pas moins doux de l'apprendre'. There are rhythmic markings above the notes: a '+' above 'est', a '+' above 'pas', and a '+' above 'doux'. The score shows the first three monosyllables 'Il n'est' in the first staff, and 'pas moins doux de l'apprendre' in the second staff.

The first three monosyllables are short and yet, as there are never two consecutive short syllables of which one cannot be made long for the sake of symmetry, the /352/ composer has rightly made the syllable *ne* long. This is because *dis* is naturally long, and *vous*, although it contains an *s*, is not always long, as I have already mentioned and as I shall repeat further on, so it can be preceded by a long syllable, the syllable *ne*,

which would otherwise be short. In the second verse, however, none of the four monosyllables *n'est, pas, moins, and doux* can be made short. And yet this problem has had to be remedied, as can be seen in the diminution of the air.

But how can one preserve a pleasant *mesure* and *mouvement* in an air in which all the monosyllables are long without exception, as can be seen in the following example which I have written specially:

Mon sort n'est pas un bien, mais las! C'est un grand mal.

All twelve of these monosyllables are always long, yet one cannot compose a pleasant melody /353/ unless it is interspersed with a few short notes.

To this I reply that it is true that all these monosyllables are naturally long, and yet some of them can sustain a short note which will have to follow a long note in relation to the composition of the air. But it is up to the singer to pay attention to this, and he should not make these monosyllables so short that they are unable to retain any of their original length, so that the elegance of the *mesure* may remain in harmony with that of the syllabic quantity.

Of these twelve monosyllables, those that can be made short, or rather, semi-short, are *mon, n'est, un, mais, c'est, grand*. One can perform the *cadence* on *un* instead of on *grand*, for this can be done provided that a certain amount of length is preserved on the word *grand*, which can be achieved by performing something like a *doublement*. And yet one must be careful not to make these monosyllables so short that they can no longer sustain any long ornament, such as a *tremblement, accent, or doublement*; /354/ if they were to be replaced with short monosyllables, one would not only deny them the above ornaments, but one would also have to sing them much more lightly and quickly. Here is an example.

Le sort n'a pas de bien, que las! Il a de mal!

This example can be set to the same melody as the previous one, and, for the sake of the *mesure*, one can write the same 'quavers' on the page preceded by dots.⁴⁸² But when it comes to performing it, one should not beat about the bush, I mean that one must sing these short notes as lightly as possible,⁴⁸³ while in the first example, the short notes must be sung with more weight. They should be sung as much as possible in the manner

⁴⁸² 'pour la grace de la mesure [on peut] marquer sur le papier les mesmes *croches*, qui seront precedées de points'; Bacilly must have in mind a dotted-crotchet / quaver rhythm to illustrate the length of the syllables which fall in the following pattern: *Le sort n'a pas de bien, que las! Il a de mal!*

⁴⁸³ 'avec autant de legereté que l'on voudra'; it is interesting to refer back to Bacilly's discussion of such dotted notes, or 'nottes pointées' in Pt.1, Ch.XIII, art.3, p.232/ 321-2 (see also fn.361) where it is the weigh of these dotted notes which is in question in performance rather than their length.

reserved for long syllables, as I have said already. Otherwise, it would upset the rule governing quantity, which is more important than the *mouvement*, especially in *airs sérieux*; in airs with a regular metre, it is more difficult to apply the rules of quantity /355/ precisely, and one is tempted to give more importance to the *mouvement* than to quantity, but never to the extent of not respecting it.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸⁴ This highlights the conflict between respecting both quantity and rhythm, which Bacilly leaves to the performer to resolve.

CHAPTER III
How to recognise long monosyllables

RULE I

/356/ All monosyllables which contain an *s*, either when it is the last letter of the word or is followed by another letter, are long. When I say *s*, I also mean *x*, and even *z*, when they are pronounced as an *s*. Here is an alphabetical list of those monosyllables which are most frequent in French song.

<i>Airs.</i>	<i>Blancs.</i>
<i>Ans.</i>	<i>Bois.</i>
<i>As</i> , from <i>avoir</i> .	<i>Bras.</i>
<i>Aux.</i>	<i>Cas.</i>
<i>Bas.</i>	<i>Ces.</i>
<i>Beaux.</i>	<i>Ceux.</i>
<i>Biens.</i>	<i>Champs.</i>

/357/	<i>Chants.</i>	<i>Joins.</i>
	<i>Choix.</i>	<i>Jours.</i>
	<i>Cieux.</i>	<i>Las</i> , from <i>lasser</i> .
	<i>Cœurs.</i>	<i>Las!</i>
	<i>Corps.</i>	<i>Les.</i>
	<i>Courts.</i>	<i>Lieux.</i>
	<i>Cris.</i>	<i>Lors.</i>
	<i>Crains.</i>	<i>Loix.</i>
	<i>Dans.</i>	<i>Longs.</i>
	<i>Des.</i>	<i>Lys.</i>
	<i>Deux.</i>	<i>Mais.</i>
	<i>Dieux.</i>	<i>Maux.</i>
	<i>Dois</i> , from <i>devoir</i> .	<i>Mes.</i>
	<i>Doux.</i>	<i>Meurs.</i>
	<i>Eaux.</i>	<i>Mieux.</i>
	<i>Es</i> , from <i>estre</i> .	<i>Mis</i> , from <i>mettre</i> .
	<i>Est.</i>	<i>Moins.</i>
	<i>Eux.</i>	<i>Mois.</i>
	<i>Fais</i> , from <i>faire</i> .	<i>Nœuds.</i>
	<i>Faux.</i>	<i>Noirs.</i>
	<i>Feux.</i>	<i>Nos.</i>
	<i>Fins.</i>	<i>Nuits.</i>

	<i>Fois.</i>	<i>Paix.</i>
	<i>Fonds.</i>	<i>Pars, from partir.</i>
	<i>Forts.</i>	<i>Parts.</i>
	<i>Gens.</i>	<i>Pas.</i>
	<i>Grands.</i>	<i>Pas, [meaning] point.</i>
	<i>Jeux.</i>	<i>Pers.</i>

/358/	<i>Peux.</i>	<i>Sors.</i>
	<i>Pieds.</i>	<i>Suis, from the verb estre.</i>
	<i>Plais, from plaire.</i>	<i>Temps.</i>
	<i>Plains.</i>	<i>Tes.</i>
	<i>Plus, amplius.</i>	<i>Tiens.</i>
	<i>Prest.</i>	<i>Tiens, from tenir.</i>
	<i>Prez.</i>	<i>Traits.</i>
	<i>Prix.</i>	<i>Trois.</i>
	<i>Pris, from prendre.</i>	<i>Vains.</i>
	<i>Puis, from pouvoir.</i>	<i>Vais, from aller.</i>
	<i>Quels.</i>	<i>Vers.</i>
	<i>Romps, from rompre.</i>	<i>Viens.</i>
	<i>Roys.</i>	<i>Vis, from voir and</i>
	<i>Sans.</i>	<i>from vivre</i>
	<i>Sens.</i>	<i>Voix.</i>
	<i>Sers.</i>	<i>Vos.</i>
	<i>Ses.</i>	<i>Væux.</i>
	<i>Siens.</i>	<i>Vrais.</i>
	<i>Sois.</i>	<i>Yeux.</i>

If there are other monosyllables which contain an *s* after the vowel that are not included in this table, it is either because they are not much used in French singing or because they are plurals that can be related to other similar monosyllables such as /359/ *biens, loix, beaux*, and other such words which in the singular have neither *s* nor *x*. Others have also been omitted because they are exceptions to the rule governing the *s* and are not as long as those on the above list, namely:

<i>Dis, from dire.</i>	<i>Sçais.</i>
<i>Dix.</i>	<i>Six.</i>
<i>Fis, from faire.</i>	<i>Sous.</i>
<i>Fuis, from fuir.</i>	<i>Suis, from suivre.</i>
<i>Ils.</i>	<i>Tous.</i>
<i>Leurs.</i>	<i>Tres.</i>

Nous.

Vois, from *voir*.

*Plus.*⁴⁸⁵

Vous.

Ris, from *rire*.

These monosyllables are, so to speak, only semi-long, that is to say, they are not as long as the first ones listed, but are long enough to be distinct from those syllables which are naturally short.

I know that critics will find this differentiation a product of the imagination and without foundation. But if they are willing to be reasonable and if they are versed in the art of singing, they will have to admit that /360/ I am right, when I give examples which illustrate that these latter monosyllables cannot sustain long ornaments in all circumstances, as can the former.

To prove that *dis*, *ris*, *sçais*, *suis* (from *suivre*), *vois* and other monosyllables which are verbs are not very long, one need only try to perform long *tremblements* on them, or even *accens* or *plaintes*, and one can see at once that they can only sustain at the most *doublemens de gosier*, which I mentioned in the first part of this treatise, and small *tremblemens*. Here are some examples.

Tu n'en dis rien.

Tu ne sçais pas.

Je n'en ris point.

Je ne m'y vois pas.

Tu ne me suis pas.

All these monosyllables in such cases /361/ are short rather than long, and can sustain neither a *tremblement* nor any other ornament for long syllables, and this is sufficient to distinguish them from those in the first list, which can at least sustain an *accent* or *plainte*, as can be seen in the word *suis*, from the verb *estre*, which is the same as *suis* from *suivre* in saying *je ne suis pas*. Some can even sustain long *tremblemens* or *cadences*. For example:

Et non pas à mes yeux.

Mais je n'en suis pas mieux.

On entend dans nos Bois.

Cloris a les yeux doux.

Je vous cherche en ces lieux.

The same could not be done in this example, though it seems at first of a similar nature:

⁴⁸⁵ The meaning of 'plus' here must be different from the 'plus', equated with the Latin word 'amplius', in the first list of long monosyllables. Bacilly explains below that 'plus' can also have the meaning of the Latin 'magis': though 'magis' means the same thing as 'amplius', Bacilly probably wants to make the distinction between 'more' and 'most'.

Je vous cherche en tous lieux.

/362/ This is because the monosyllable *tous* belongs to the second group, as does *vous*, *nous*, *sous*, *plus*, and even the monosyllable *leurs* (which seems rather strange). Here are some examples.

Le mal que vous nous faites.

Je m'en rapporte à vous-mesme.

Ah! je meurs sous vos Loix.

Joüons aux Jeux les plus doux.

In these examples, one should note that on the words *sous* and *plus*, a *tremblement* and even an *accent* can be done. But the fact that it can also be omitted is sufficient to distinguish these monosyllables from the others with an *s* on which one has to perform a long ornament without being able to omit it, unless one wishes to downgrade singing by this omission. In addition it is quite clear that the last monosyllable is subordinate to the preceding one,⁴⁸⁶ so it is more appropriate to hold *les* longer than *plus* /363/, with the result that they are not of equal length. Besides, the word *plus*, which is the opposite of *moins*, is treated differently in terms of quantity according to its meaning. When it means *amplius*⁴⁸⁷ in Latin, it is included in the first table because it is always long, but when it means *magis*⁴⁸⁸ in Latin, its quantity is less certain, as I have just explained.⁴⁸⁹ So in the following, *plus* would be long without a doubt:⁴⁹⁰

Vos yeux ne me seront plus doux.

As for the monosyllable *leurs*, it must also be exempt from monosyllables which are quite long, even though it contains not only an *s* but even an *r*, which seems all the more reason to hold this syllable for longer than, for example, *les*; and yet as proof that *leurs* is far shorter, a final *cadence* can be performed on *les*, saying *sous les Loix*, that could not be performed if it were written *sous leurs Loix*. One could vainly say that this is because the *s* counts for nothing in this instance [since it is not sounded],

⁴⁸⁶ Bacilly is actually dealing with the penultimate and antepenultimate syllables in these examples; it is the last of these two to which he refers as 'the last monosyllable'.

⁴⁸⁷ 'more'

⁴⁸⁸ 'most'

⁴⁸⁹ This sentence has required considerable interpretation in order for it to make sense. The original text reads: 'Au reste le mot de *plus*, qui est le contraire de *moins*, est different pour la quantité de celui de *plus*, qui veut dire *amplius* en Latin, lequel est contenu dans la premiere Table, parce qu'il est toujours long, au lieu que celui de *magis* (en Latin) est douteux'. Translated literally, the beginning of the sentence would be illogical since the meaning of 'plus' as opposed to 'moins' and of 'plus' meaning 'amplius' in Latin is the same.

⁴⁹⁰ Bacilly slightly confuses the issue by giving an example of 'plus' with a negation. The quantity of 'plus' is therefore unaffected by the negation and is the same for 'no more' as it is for 'more'.

yet it /364/ is just as hard to perform a *cadence* on *leurs* when the *s* is sounded, as in *de leurs ans*, as when it is not.

CHAPTER III

RULE 2

/364/ All monosyllables containing an *n* after the vowel and not before it are always long, provided the *n* is followed by another consonant. When I say *n*, I also mean *m*, when it sounds the same, as in *temps* and *noms*.

Although this rule has no exceptions, I find it useful to provide a list to make it more obvious, in which I repeat a few monosyllables already contained in the list of monosyllables with an *s*, like *sans*, *dans*, and other words which contain both these consonants.

<i>Ans.</i>	<i>Bons.</i>
<i>Biens.</i>	<i>Bruns.</i>
<i>Blancs.</i>	<i>Champ.</i>
<i>Blanc.</i>	<i>Chant.</i>

/365/	<i>Chants.</i>	<i>Point.</i>
	<i>Craint.</i>	<i>Prend.</i>
	<i>Crains.</i>	<i>Prens.</i>
	<i>Donc.</i>	<i>Quand.</i>
	<i>Dont.</i>	<i>Rend.</i>
	<i>Feins.</i>	<i>Rens, from rendre.</i>
	<i>Feint.</i>	<i>Sang.</i>
	<i>Fins.</i>	<i>Sans.</i>
	<i>Fonds.</i>	<i>Sens.</i>
	<i>Font, from faire.</i>	<i>Sens, from sentir.</i>
	<i>Front.</i>	<i>Siens.</i>
	<i>Grand.</i>	<i>Sont.</i>
	<i>Grands.</i>	<i>Tant.</i>
	<i>Long.</i>	<i>Teint.</i>
	<i>Mens.</i>	<i>Temps.</i>
	<i>Miens.</i>	<i>Tiens.</i>
	<i>Moins.</i>	<i>Tient.</i>
	<i>Monts.</i>	<i>Tiens, from tenir.</i>
	<i>Noms.</i>	<i>Vains.</i>
	<i>Ont.</i>	<i>Viens.</i>
	<i>Plains.</i>	<i>Vient.</i>

All these monosyllables are long, even when they precede a word which begins with a vowel and whose first syllable is long, such as *Vivre sans elle; ils sont aux /366/ champs*, etc.. The words *sans* and *sont* must be long, as must be all those in the above list, that is to say, they must be given (as far as the *mesure* will allow) ornaments indicating long syllables, either a *tremblement*, or an *accent*, or a *doublement de gosier*, and they must not be passed over lightly. So in the last example,⁴⁹¹ all four monosyllables must have a long ornament, for not one of them is naturally short.

Here are other monosyllables which are naturally long like the first ones, for the reason that they contain an *n* after the vowel. However, they may become short if they precede a word, of either one or more syllables in length, whose first syllable is long and begins with a vowel. In all other instances, they must be given a long ornament, and one can even perform long *tremblemens* or *cadences*, even final *cadences*, which shows that the *n* has an advantage over all the other letters of the alphabet. Here is a list of the most frequent ones found in airs.

/367/	<i>Bien.</i>	<i>Non.</i>
	<i>Bon.</i>	<i>on.</i>
	<i>C'en.</i>	<i>Plein.</i>
	<i>Don.</i>	<i>Rien.</i>
	<i>D'un.</i>	<i>Sein.</i>
	<i>En.</i>	<i>Sien.</i>
	<i>Fin.</i>	<i>Son.</i>
	<i>L'on.</i>	<i>Tien.</i>
	<i>Main.</i>	<i>Ton.</i>
	<i>Mien.</i>	<i>Vain.</i>
	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Vien.</i>
	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Un.</i>

⁴⁹¹ 'ils sont aux champs'.

CHAPTER III

RULE 3

/367/ Monosyllables containing an *r* or an *l* with another consonant, such as *perd*, *sert*, *sort*, or which precede a word beginning with a consonant, have an advantage over naturally short monosyllables. This is because one may, even must on certain occasions, perform a long ornament on them, but not all long ornaments are suitable; some *demi-tremblemens*, even /368/ sometimes an *accent* may be done, but not a long *tremblement* (for which monosyllables containing an *n* are more suitable, for they can sustain any long ornament), or if done, a long *tremblement* should be performed slowly, so as to give the *r* its necessary weight, as I mentioned when discussing pronunciation. I shall deem it sufficient to give a few examples rather than drawing up a list, which I do not find necessary.

Tirsis perd ses Troupeaux. [Ex.162]

Example 162 [Ballard V, 1662, fol.20v-21]

The image shows a musical score for Example 162. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has two staves: a bass staff on the left and a treble staff on the right. The lyrics are: "Tir - cis perd ses trou -" on the top staff and "Tir - cis perd ses trou -" on the bottom staff. The second system also has two staves: a treble staff on the left and a bass staff on the right. The lyrics are: "- peaux, Sa mois - son, sa ven - dan - ge," on the top staff and "- peaux, Sa mois - son, sa ven - dan - ge," on the bottom staff. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

Que me sert il d'estre fidelle? [Ex.163]

Example 163 [Lambert 1666, p.44]

The image shows a musical score for Example 163. It consists of a single system of music with two staves: a bass staff on the left and a treble staff on the right. The lyrics are: "Que me sert il d'es - tre fi - del - le..." on the top staff. The bottom staff has fingerings: 5, 3, 6, 5, 5, 6. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature.

Que mon sort est étrange! [Ex.164]

Example 164 [(Boesset) 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.6] ⁴⁹²

Que mon sort est es - tran - ge

These three monosyllables *perd*, *sert*, *sort*, and other similar ones, cannot be considered as short. But neither are they long enough to sustain all the ornaments which denote a long syllable, as can clearly be seen in the second example [Ex.165], taken from the book *in quarto*, on page 44, on the word *sert*, which cannot sustain an *accent* or *plainte*, as many seem to think, but /369/ only a *doublement de gosier*.

Example 165 [Lambert 1666, p.44]

Que me sert il d'es - tre fi - del - le

5 3 6 5 5 6

Here are other monosyllables which receive the same treatment when they precede a word which begins with a consonant: *par*, *pour*, *car*, *jour*, *leur*, and others which are neither as long as the monosyllables with an *n*, nor as short as all the others (which are naturally short, and are only long by accident due to their position in the verse); they can therefore be called 'semi-long'. But when they precede a word which begins with a vowel, and whose first syllable is long, these monosyllables become short and are not able to sustain any long ornament, such as in these examples: *pour elle*, *un jour entier*, *car enfin*. These three monosyllables, *pour*, *jour*, *car*, and other similar ones, are very short in this context, unless they are affected by the meaning of the words, or a rest in the verse, or by a full-stop or a comma; in these cases they can be made long, or rather, it would be appropriate to pause on them and not throw them immediately onto what follows. This can be seen in these examples: *car il ne faut*, *un jour*, /370/ *va malheureux Amant*. This will be explained in more detail in the fifth rule.

Monosyllables which end with an *l* can also be considered as semi-long when they precede a word beginning with a consonant and whose first syllable is long. For as I said, if the syllable were short, any preceding monosyllable could be treated as long, however short it may naturally be. There is only a small number of these particular monosyllables, such as *mal*, *tel*, *quel*, *Ciel*, which appear to have some advantage over the others because an *accent* or *plainte* can occasionally be performed on them without too much problem. Only the monosyllable *il* can never be that long, whether the *l* is pronounced (which is not always the case as for the others) or whether it is omitted.

⁴⁹² Bacilly identifies this as an air by A. Boesset in his 1661 *Recueil* (Lachèvre [1967], vol.2, p.620).

CHAPTER III

RULE 4

/371/ The ‘diphthong’, or compound vowel *au*, is long even in its simplest form, which is to say that it can always sustain an *accent*, and sometimes a long *cadence* or *tremblement*, for which it has an advantage over other ‘diphthongs’. This can be seen in the following examples:

Il vaut mieux,

on page 45 of the book *in quarto* [Ex.166]; here the composer quite rightly wants a *tremblement* to be performed on the word *vaut*, where only the *au* should be taken into account and not the *t* which does not count in this case.⁴⁹³

Example 166 [Lambert 1666, p.45]

Il vault mieux par un prompt tres - pas

Au moins, Cruelle, revenez,

on page 75 [Ex.167], and

Mais permettez au moins,

on page 57 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.168] are two more examples: the word *Au* must not be thrown onto the /372/ *moins* without performing an *accent* or *plainte* (which means a light *mi* added to the *ré*) which is an important indication of a long syllable.

Example 167 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.75]

au... moins. cru- el - le re - - ve- nez

⁴⁹³ This is due to the fact that the *t* is not sounded.

Example 168 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.57]

[dé]plaist mais per - met - tez au moins que je vous ai - me

[dé]plaist mais per - met - tez au moins que je vous ai - me

The same can be said of the monosyllables *beau*, *haut*, *faut*, which must always be treated as long, even when joined to other very long syllables, such as in *le beau temps*, *il ne faut pas*.

However, an exception must be made for the word *eau*, which is often short when it precedes a long syllable, such as in *eau claire*, *eau d'ange*, etc..

So much for the diphthong *au*. As for the others, namely *oi*, or *oy*, as in *loy*, *moy*, *roy*, *toy*, *soy*, *quoy*, and other similar words, they do not always have the same advantage of length as those I have just mentioned: *au*, *beau*, *faut*, *haut*, which can sustain an *accent*, even when they are linked to others words, as *le beau temps*, *au mal*, *il ne faut pas*. The same could not be done on *moy*, *quoy*, *soy* in these examples: *moy mesme*, *à soy mesme*, *de quoy dire*, *à quoy sert?*

The same can be said about monosyllables /373/ that contain other compound vowels, such as *ou*, *tout*, *peu*, *lieu*, *luy*, *fuit*, *vray*, *ay*; all of these monosyllables can be short, and give way to other long syllables, as in the following examples: *ou bien*, *tout parle*, *un peu trop*, *luy dire*, *je vous ay veus*, *il fuit tout*.

Yet one must make an exception for certain nouns like *vœu*, *nœud*, and others which can sustain an *accent*, even when they precede long syllables, as in *le nœud dangereux*, *le vœu solemnel*.

CHAPTER III

RULE 5

/373/ Any monosyllable used as a rhyme or at the caesura in a verse, or which immediately precedes a question mark, or an exclamation mark or other, or on which one pauses due to the meaning of the words or a rest in the verse, can be long, however short it may naturally be. This rule applies only to masculine monosyllables, such as *dit*, *fait*, *peu*, etc.. Thus the monosyllable *dit* /374/ which is naturally short when there is no reason to stop on it, as in this example,

On n'en dit rien,

can be long, or rather, it is more appropriate not to rush immediately on to what follows it, as is usually the case with short syllables, such as in the following example:

Lors que l'on dit que l'amour est un mal.

In this case, lightly passing over the word *dit* in order to pause on *que*, which is long in relation to the symmetry as it precedes a penultimate syllable, would mean breaking the rules of quantity. One should therefore pause after the word *dit* since the meaning of the words allows it in this case, more so than in the previous example. Even if there were only the words *Lors qu'on dit que l'amour* in the whole line, it would be more suitable to pause after the word *dit* than to go on to the *que*, unless the *mesure* prevents this, such as in a gavotte or a /375/ *chanson* which have a regular metre. *Bon goust* should be the judge of these things and should decide whether it is appropriate to make certain monosyllables long when they are not normally so; for in some cases they will be flexible, as are all those which are neither as short as the feminine monosyllable *de*, *le*, *que*, *me*, *se*, *te* (on which one must never pause and which are meant to be joined on to other words) nor as long as the others I have mentioned, which are always long.

Here are some more examples of monosyllables which, although they precede other monosyllables which are always basically long and to which it seems they must yield, nevertheless preserve some length, though they are naturally short rather than long. This one is from the book *in quarto*, page 17 [Ex.169].

Mais sur tout quand on est aimable.

Example 169 [Lambert 1666, p.17]

Mais sur tout Mais sur tout

quand on est ay - ma - - - ble

The word *tout* which in itself is short, as in *tout languit*, *tout l'Univers* and *vous soupirez tout haut*, is /376/ long in this example because of the rest in the verse.

For the same reason, the word *luy* in the following example is long:

Dites-luy qu'enfin je me meurs,

Yet it is naturally short in this other example:

J'ay tâché de luy plaire.

This rule also applies to the interjections *Ah!* and *Ha!*, *O!*, *Eh!* and *Hé!*, although the last two monosyllables are almost always joined to *Quoy?* by saying *Eh! quoy?* or *Hé! quoy?* in which case they yield to the *quoy?*

One must therefore take care not to say, as many people do, *Odieux* and *Aquand* as if these were just one word, instead of *O Dieux!* and *Ah! quand*, etc.. This is what frequently happens when one fails to make out the words which are misunderstood as a result. And this is another reason for not passing quickly over certain short monosyllables on to what follows; this also /377/ avoids a cacophony which the poet himself was sometimes not careful enough to avoid. This can be observed on page 66 of the book *in quarto* in this verse [Ex.170]:

Et si je change, je l'oblige.

Example 170 [Lambert 1666, p.66]

The image shows a musical score for two voices, likely soprano and bass, in a common time signature. The first system contains the lyrics: [plaist] Et si je chan - ge je. The second system contains: [plaist] Et si je chan - ge. The third system contains: l'o - bli - ge. The fourth system contains: je l'o - bli - ge. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 3, 5, 6, 8, 5, 6 in the first system; 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 in the second system; and 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 in the third system. There are also some '+' signs above notes in the first and third systems.

Though the last syllable of *change* is naturally short, one should not rush over it to the monosyllable *je*, which sounds the same, so as to avoid, as I say, a cacophony. Yet, one could rush over the same final syllable if the following word was a different one, such as in

Et si je change, c'est pour elle.

It remains for me to answer the objections raised against the rules of quantity concerning monosyllables.

Firstly, I am asked why I insist on monosyllables containing an *s* or an *n* being long, and is it not true that they often occur on short notes, even between two long ones, by which I /378/ mean on a quaver between two crotchets, or on a crotchet between two minims, or other notes which are short in relation to those which precede them. For example, is it not possible to write a short *fa* between two long *mi* notes, resulting in *mi fa mi*, on the second word of *de mon cœur*? And is it not possible to do the same on the words *sous vos Loix* and other similar examples, and not only on these notes but in many other instances?

To this I reply that for the sake of a graceful line one may write, as I have already said, a short note on these long monosyllables, but one must always be careful not to pass lightly over them as must be done over other monosyllables that are naturally short, and they must be given some ornament to indicate as much as possible that they are long and not short. One can therefore even perform a *cadence* on the word *sous* and consequently make *vos* short in order to fall upon *Loix*, singing *mi re re*, mainly in /379/ *airs de mouvement* which have a regular metre, especially dancing

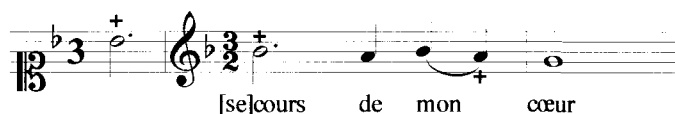
songs. But one should do this reluctantly, one could say in a procrastinating manner. Besides, it is always proof of their length when the composer has the freedom to write very long notes on these words. And if he fails to do so, it befalls the singer to perform the necessary ornament, either an *accent* or a *tremblement* or a *doublement*, and, if there is no possibility of performing an ornament, he should at least not pass over them lightly.⁴⁹⁴

Secondly, people wish to know whether it is true that a very long diminution with several short notes, taking up the time of the longest note available in musical notation,⁴⁹⁵ can be performed on a monosyllable, however short it may be as regards quantity.

It is true that a very long *passage* can be performed on a short monosyllable, or any other monosyllable, but not without careful consideration since it is more hazardous than on a long syllable. /380/ But if all the notes of the *passage* were reduced to a single note, it is obvious that the short syllable would not be able to sustain it. So one may say that eight quavers do not always equal one minim in all circumstances and one minim is not always equal to eight quavers when it comes to setting them to words. And as it is not always possible to place them on one syllable, be it very long, neither can a minim always be written on a short syllable.

⁴⁹⁴ While acknowledging here the possibility of writing a short note on 'mon', which could be lengthened in performance, Bacilly remains true to his ideas in his own music. There are three instances of the words 'de mon cœur' in Bacilly's two volumes, in which 'mon' is suitably long and is lengthened still further by the ornament in the first two examples.

Ex. xxxv a [Bacilly I, 1668, p.28]



Ex. xxxv b [Bacilly I, 1668, p.63]



Ex. xxxv c [Bacilly II, 1668, p.16]



⁴⁹⁵ The largest value used is that of a dotted semibreve. Breves are frequently notated in both the Lambert book and in the Bacilly volumes, but these are used solely to indicate the final note of an air and can represent a minim, semibreve or dotted semibreve.

3. People are under the impression that short monosyllables such as *si*, *il*, *que*, which are often made long although they precede a naturally long syllable, present a difficulty, as in these examples:

Si mes soupirs.

Que faut-il que je fasse?

*Que servent tes conseils?*⁴⁹⁶

The answer is that it is always safer to keep them short, because /381/ it may be that in other instances which may seem similar, it would be wrong to make them long. And my advice concerning the third example is that it is better to study it than to copy it; as for the first example, it should be noted that there is a difference between *si*, which is the same in Latin,⁴⁹⁷ and *si* which is *tam* in Latin.⁴⁹⁸ The latter is short without exception, as in these examples: *si constant*, *si content*, *si doux*. On the former, however, one can pause for a short while.⁴⁹⁹ This is all the more fortunate as it would seem to reinforce in some way the impression of ‘hypothesis’, which means that one hesitates somewhat instead of rushing on.⁵⁰⁰ This is even more obvious in instances which in grammatical terms are called ‘optative’.⁵⁰¹

Si je pouvois vous plaire.

Si vous vouliez m’aimer.

Concerning the second example [*Que faut-il que je fasse?*], the /382/ word *il* requires a pause due to the meaning of the words. Thus it is not joined to what follows, as it would have been had it preceded the verb *faut*, and would in that case have remained short.

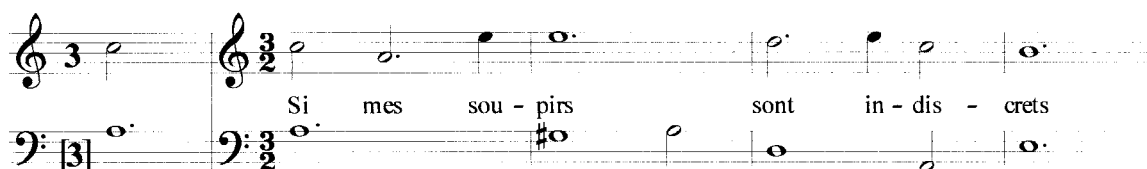
⁴⁹⁶ These words are from an air for which Caswell provided the wrong reference; it is in Ballard (1628), fol.14v-15. Bacilly (*Recueil* 1661) lists this as an air by A. Boesset.

⁴⁹⁷ *Si* meaning ‘if’.

⁴⁹⁸ *Si* meaning ‘so’.

⁴⁹⁹ These words are from ‘Si mes soupirs sont indiscrets’ that Caswell located in ‘Airs’ ms. c.1661, p.69. Bacilly (*Recueil* 1661) credits it to Moulinié, with words by de Bouillon (Lachèvre [1967], vol.21, p.168). The rhythm to which the composer has set the first phrase reflects the quantity of ‘mes’ as a long syllable and that of ‘si’ as shorter than ‘mes’, yet long enough to differentiate between the shorter and longer ‘si’.

Ex.xxxvi [(Moulinié) ‘Airs’ ms. c.1661, p.69]



⁵⁰⁰ This is a specific example of the practical illustration of a rhetorical device in singing: the hesitation reflects the element of conjecture or supposition inherent in an hypothesis.

⁵⁰¹ The optative mood expresses a wish or a desire.

4. People ask whether naturally short monosyllables, as are all feminine ones, must yield to all following syllables, be they either long or semi-long; or if they can be long when preceding a penultimate masculine syllable, which is not quite long, such as *Berger*, *Respect* and others whose penultimate syllable is not always long depending on circumstances and which cannot sustain an *accent* nor a long *tremblement*, which I shall discuss further in the following chapter.

One must notice that if the short monosyllables precede the penultimate syllable of the above type of masculine word at the end of an air, or even at other descending *cadences*; then they may be long. This is because these penultimate syllables cannot sustain a long *tremblement*, and therefore it must be performed on the monosyllable, which serves as an antepenultimate syllable.⁵⁰² But in all other circumstances, it is appropriate to make them /383/ short, so as to move on to a *doublement de gosier*, or to emphasize the consonant, as is done on this type of penultimate syllable which precedes another consonant in the following syllable. Thus it is more suitable to make *le* and *du* short in the following air,

Le Verger du Berger Tirsis. [Ex.171]

so as to emphasize the two *rs* in the following syllables, perhaps even with a *doublement de gosier*, than to make them long, for then the two syllables *Ver* and *Ber* would be passed over too hastily and all the strength of their pronunciation would be missed.

Example 171 [Ballard 1658, fol.33v]⁵⁰³

The musical score consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/2. The lyrics are as follows:

System 1:
 Vocal: Le ver - ger Du ber - ger Tir -
 Bass: Le ver - ger Du ber - -

System 2:
 Vocal: - cis Est tout plein de sou - cis:
 Bass: - ger Tir - cis Est tout plein Est tout plein de sou - cis:

⁵⁰² For example, 'le Berger'.

⁵⁰³ Caswell (Bacilly [1668]) supplied this example but failed to provide a reference. It has been located in Ballard (1658), fol.33v. The two parts are printed on facing pages and the text of the second verse is provided at the foot of fol.33v.

Moreover, since what is right is often best revealed when contrasted to what is wrong than when it is on its own, I find it appropriate, before finishing this chapter on monosyllables, to mention in addition to the observations I have just made a frequent error found here and there in French song. It is that of failing to give the monosyllables *des, ses, mes, tes, ces, vos, les, est*, and other similar monosyllables their true quantity, by pronouncing them as if there was no *s*. For although the *s* is not /384/ sounded, especially when it precedes a consonant, it makes these monosyllables long, distinguishing them from others for which some people may mistake them, saying *cê lieux* instead of *ces lieux*, *qu'il ê doux* instead of *qu'il est doux*; so that it seems in the second example that one is saying *et*, and in the first, *sept*. This is also illustrated in this example, on page 56 of the first book *in octavo* [Ex.172]:

L'Amour fait aimer ses coups.

Example 172 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.56]

The image shows a musical score for two staves, treble and bass clef, in a common time signature. The lyrics are: "L'a - mour fait ai - mer ses coups ils n'ont rien de ter - ri - ble". The word "ses" is marked with a long ornament (a horizontal line with a vertical stem) in both staves, indicating its true quantity. The melody is simple, with the bass line providing a steady accompaniment.

If some long ornament is not performed on the word *ses*, it will sound as if one is saying *sept*.

This failure means that the word *ses* can be mistaken for the word *seize*, saying *seize ans* instead of *ses ans* (if one omits to perform a long ornament on *ses*, which *seize* does not require, although it seems as long as the other word), and the same applies to *des* and *de*. On page 73 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.173], one could mistake *des maux* for *de maux* if an *accent* or a small *tremblement* is not performed on *des* so as to distinguish it from /385/ *de*;

Example 173 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.73]

[au]cun soin des maux ou vous m'a-ban - don - nez
soin des maux des maux ou vous m'a-ban - don - nez

and the same applies to *les* and *le*, mistaking *les coups* for *le coups* on page 65 of the same book [Ex.174], that is to say, if one omits the *accent* or *plainte* which must be performed in this instance on the word *les*:⁵⁰⁴

Example 174 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.65]

Ah! bel - le I - ris crai - gnez en moins les coups
Ah! bel - le I - ris crai - gnez en moins les coups ai - mez

One can also confuse *parmy les champs* with *par mille champs* on page 59 [of the first book *in octavo*]. [Ex.175]

Example 175 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.59]

Cher - cher des fleurs par - my les champs

As there is hardly an air to which this observation is not relevant, it is all the more important to draw attention to it, since there are very few teachers who do so.

This fault is also very noticeable on page 64 of the first book *in octavo* [Ex.176], by saying *et de n'avoir* instead of *est de n'avoir*,⁵⁰⁵ that is to say, if one fails to make the word *est* long; but enough about monosyllables.

⁵⁰⁴ It is interesting that Bacilly should advocate an *accent* on 'les' as this is an ascending phrase, whereas Bacilly explained that the *accent* is normally performed between two notes at the same pitch or when the second note is a step lower than the first.

⁵⁰⁵ The same words are repeated eight bars later; they are set to the same rhythm, i.e. minim, dotted minim, crotchet.

Example 176 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.64]

Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne

Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne

Car le plus grand de tous les maux Est de n'a -

Car le plus grand de tous les maux Est de n'a -

- voir plai - sir ny pei - ne Est de n'a -

- voir plai - sir ny pei - - ne Est de n'a -

- voir plai - sir ny pei - - ne.

- voir plai - sir ny pei - - ne.

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Example 176 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.64]'. It consists of five systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a figured bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are in French. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with the lyrics 'Est de n'a - voir plai - sir ny pei - ne'. The second system continues with the same lyrics. The third system introduces a new line of lyrics: 'Car le plus grand de tous les maux Est de n'a -'. The fourth system continues with '- voir plai - sir ny pei - ne Est de n'a -'. The fifth system concludes with '- voir plai - sir ny pei - - ne.' and '- voir plai - sir ny pei - - ne.'. The figured bass line includes numbers (4, 6, 6, 5, 6) and symbols (+, ♭6) indicating fingerings and accidentals. The music is written in a 3/2 time signature.

CHAPTER IV

The quantity of words of two syllables, firstly feminine words.

/386/ In the second part of this treatise, in Chapter III, I spoke of the difference between masculine and feminine words of one, two or more syllables. I must now discuss their quantity and establish some definite rules as far as possible. For it is true that frequently, only *bon goust* can be the judge in these matters because of our multifarious language.

To begin with feminine words, I shall say that the penultimate syllable of every feminine word, be it of two or more syllables, is always long. This rule is so universal that it has no exceptions.

/387/ I know that experts in Latin find it hard to accept this proposition for they cannot imagine why words such as *inutile* and *unique* and others like them should be given more importance in French than in Latin.⁵⁰⁶ But if these scholars were somewhat enlightened in matters of singing, they would easily understand that the penultimate syllable of these words is so long that not only can it sustain a final *cadence* but it positively must have one for there is no alternative. And this is enough to prove that it is a long syllable, since this is the main ornament to which all others are subordinate.

So if a song ends with these words:

La mort est le remede unique

Que de repentirs inutiles!

the *cadence* must necessarily be placed on the penultimate syllables *ni* and *ti* and not on the antepenultimate. And if this proves inelegant in certain situations, as is the case in the first /388/ example, it is up to the poet to remedy this situation by replacing this word with another, and not up to the musician, who is bound by the rule of quantity which has no exceptions.

One encounters a difficulty concerning feminine words when the final syllable is followed by a word beginning with a vowel, for there is then an elision. That is to say, the final syllable is suppressed and joined to the following one, thereby forming only one syllable. Here is an example:

Je veux taire en mourant.

⁵⁰⁶ In Latin, the second syllable of *inutile* would be long, contrary to the French word 'inutile' where the penultimate is long; similarly, the first syllable of the Latin *unicus* is long rather than the penultimate, as in its French equivalent 'unique'.

The last syllable of *taire* becomes one with *en*, as if there were *tair' en*, because the vowel *e* at the end of *taire* is suppressed by the following *e* of the word *en*.

One may ask whether in this case the penultimate syllable of *taire* retains its length, as if there was no elision. This question arises because, for example, the word *taire* appears to cease to be a feminine word to become masculine due to the word *en*, and usually the penultimate syllable /389/ of a masculine word is short. One must therefore make a distinction in this case and say firstly that there are some examples in which one is compelled to make the penultimate syllable of a feminine word short, however long it may naturally be, when there is an elision with a following word of one syllable. For example, this would apply if an air was to end with these words.

La Cruelle qu'elle est.

Il en aime un.

The penultimate of *aime* and of *quelle* should become short. However, as these cases are rare and hardly ever occur, it is better to say that regardless of the elision it is correct, and even often necessary (to help with proper pronunciation and clarify the meaning of the words) to maintain the penultimate syllable of a feminine word long; particularly when it has two reasons to be so, that is to say, firstly because it is the penultimate syllable of a feminine word, and secondly because it has some /390/ particular ornament which makes it long without question, even when it is the penultimate syllable of the masculine form⁵⁰⁷ of the same word. This can be observed in the following words:

Je vous laisse en repos.

Je vous vange⁵⁰⁸ en mourant.

The penultimate syllable of the words *vange* and *laisse* has a good reason to be long, notwithstanding the elision, because the masculine form of these two words, which is *laisser* and *vanger*, or *laissé* and *vangé*, is naturally long due to the letter *n* in *vanger* and the double *s* in *laisser*, as I shall discuss in the following chapter.

This is not to say that penultimate syllables of feminine words (which are not naturally long and are only so because these words happen to end with a mute *e*) cannot sometimes be short due to the elision, provided this does not affect the pronunciation. One is even forced to make it short when it is followed by a very long /391/ monosyllable, as can be seen in the following example which I have already cited:

La Cruelle qu'elle est.

⁵⁰⁷ 'Masculine' here refers to quantity rather than gender.

⁵⁰⁸ 'venge' in modern spelling.

from page 66 in the book *in quarto*. [Ex.177]

Example 177 [Lambert 1666, p.66]

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a vocal piece. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system has lyrics: 'Mais quoy la' with fingerings 3, 5, and 6. The second system has lyrics: 'cru - el - le qu'el - le est' with fingerings 8, 5, 6, 3, 4, #3, and 8. The notes are connected by slurs, and there are some accidentals like a sharp sign.

This is also the case in the following example from the second book *in octavo*, on page 62 [Ex.178]:

Quand vous nous dites que vostre ame.

Example 177 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.62]

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a vocal piece. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system has lyrics: 'Quand vous nous di - tes que vos - tre a - me' with fingerings 6 and 6. The second system has lyrics: 'Quand vous nous di - tes que vos - tre a - me' with fingerings 6 and 6. The notes are connected by slurs, and there are some accidentals like a flat sign.

In this example, two things are of note, namely that the penultimate syllable of *vostre* is positively short, and also that the *s* does not prevent it from being short, even though an *s* nearly always makes a syllable long, as I shall discuss in the following chapter.

One cannot avoid making the penultimate syllable of *quelle* short, because of the word *est* which follows it. But as these examples are rare, one should seek the advice of people with *bon goust*.

I mentioned earlier that one should take care to retain as graceful a pronunciation as possible in the cases where the penultimate /392/ syllable can be shortened because of an elision, as in the following example, from page 34 of the book *in quarto*. [Ex.179]

Je veux taire en mourant.

Example 179 [Lambert 1666, p.34]

Here the author has judiciously noticed that had he made the penultimate syllable of *taire* short, as he certainly could have, the word would not have been heard as distinctly as by making it long. The secret of the Art is to distinguish as clearly as possible the syllables in a second verse, which are often cluttered with *passages* and diminutions which are the beauty of it and, whatever the critics may say, are quite necessary if the following verses are to be as pleasurable as the first.

I must now return to the proposition I have put forward, namely, that the penultimate syllable of feminine words is always long. This seems opposed to the rules applied in poetry where long /393/ and short penultimate syllables are used to distinguish between good and bad rhymes, as in the words *batre, quatre, aime, parole, place*, whose penultimate syllable is not as long as that of *idolatre, albatre, mesme, controlle, grace*. I maintain that as regards singing, all these penultimate syllables are of the same length since, according to circumstances, one can perform as long a *tremblement* as one wishes.

Having established the rule for penultimate syllables of words of two syllables, which is applicable to all other feminine words, be they of three, four or more syllables, one must now examine the quantity of the last syllable of this type of feminine word, a task which is not without difficulty. I do not wish to repeat at this point what I have already said in the second part of this treatise, in Chapter III.1,⁵⁰⁹ concerning the hallmark of a feminine word, which is the mute *e*. I only wish to establish its quantity, a matter not without some contradiction in terms, if one considers the quality ‘mute’ which has been given to these syllables and would therefore seem to exclude any question of quantity. But as I mentioned in the said chapter, even though the *e* of this /394/ type of syllable is ‘mute’ as regards everyday pronunciation, it is often so long in

⁵⁰⁹ Chapter III article 1, on the pronunciation of the vowel *a* (pp. 260-1/ 338-9).

singing that it could not be made any longer. If this was not the case, all the airs with a feminine ending would have to be cut short and this would be a terrible offence against singing, which positively requires the final syllable of an air to be sustained.

Let us first say, therefore, that at cadences, be they secondary or final, or at other main cadences in an air, the final syllable of a feminine word can be as long as the air will permit. I say this because in gavottes, sarabandes, courantes and other songs with a regular metre, the last syllable of feminine verses are nearly always short, but only in feminine words which make up the rhyme and not at other places in the air.

To make my point clearer, I shall say that the final syllable of all feminine words which end a verse can be long, and is nearly always so in *airs sérieux*, but not so in airs which have a regular metre.

/395/ The difficulty therefore does not lie with the last syllable of a feminine word which makes up the rhyme, for this depends entirely on the type of air and not on the word, whose last syllable can be either short or long as regards quantity, as the case may be. The difficulty arises for words that are found in the middle or elsewhere in a verse.

The rule that I established in the chapter on monosyllables can be used for other words, when saying that the symmetry and the order of words should always be respected. This applies to words whose penultimate syllable is always long, such as all feminine words; to those whose penultimate syllable is always short, such as most masculine words; to words whose last syllable is long due to an exception to the rule, such as the masculine words listed in the table of exceptions; and finally to monosyllables which are always long.

This being so, it must be said that the last syllable of every feminine word of two or more syllables which is followed by another feminine word of two syllables must be short without exception. Here is an example.

/396/ *Par une belle flame.*

2. The last syllable of every feminine word which is followed by a masculine word of two syllables that appears in the list of exceptions must be short. Here is an example.

*Une langueur.*⁵¹⁰

⁵¹⁰ Caswell supplied here the incipit of the air 'Une langueur extreme' with a reference to C. Ballard's *III^e Livre d'airs sérieux et à boire* (1695), p.16; this is in fact the 1695 *III^e Livre d'airs sérieux et à boire par M.BR.[...]* by Sébastien de Brossard (1655-1730), published by C. Ballard (Brossard [1695]); see Eastwood [1987], 'Catalogue' volume, p.94; it is therefore highly unlikely that this incipit is the example

The syllable *-ne* is short and cannot be long with respect to the [first] syllable of the word *langueur*.

3. The final syllable of every feminine word which is followed by a masculine word which does not appear in the list of exceptions can be either long or short, as the composer wishes. Here is an example.

Une rigueur.

Nevertheless, if these occur at a final cadence or any other important cadence, the last syllable of the feminine word must be long. This can easily be seen in the above example, where the final *cadence*, whether one likes it or not, must be done on the last syllable of the word *une*, for this is the only syllable that can sustain one.

/397/ 4. The final syllable of every feminine word which is followed by a monosyllable that is naturally long must be short. Here is an example.

Une moins cruelle.

In a word, the final syllable of every feminine word which precedes a long syllable, be it of a monosyllable, of a word of two syllables or one of three and so on, is always short. But the final syllable of a feminine word which precedes a short syllable is not always long (unless the singer has to perform a *cadence* []) but can be short, and is frequently more graceful if it remains short.

Besides, one must note that although I am establishing as a general rule that the final syllable of every feminine word is short if it is followed by a long syllable, it is not always necessary to make it so short that in some cases it cannot be separated from what follows it; and one should avoid passing immediately on to the next syllable to which it seems subordinate. This reveals the skill of the singer, as when a feminine word is cut short by a full stop or a comma. Here is an example.

/398/ *J'aime: c'est un grand mal.*

Example 180 [Boesset IX, 1642, fol.19v-20 (*dessus*)]⁵¹¹

Comme elle, je voudrais moy-mesme.

that Bacilly had in mind. Caswell does not provide musical illustrations for the other fragments of text Bacilly gives below.

⁵¹¹ This air is also in 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.154.

The same is true when a feminine word stands out because of its meaning. Here is an example.

J'aime toute ma vie.

In both these examples, the final syllable of the word *j'aime* must not be so short as to pass hurriedly on to the next word, even though the next word begins with a long syllable. On the other hand, this final syllable must not be treated as long as if it were at the end of a verse, as many people think. For although it can be made long, it is even better to make it short, and moreover, the singer must pause slightly between this feminine word and the word which follows it. For otherwise, the meaning and the construction of the verse would be affected, as in the following example.

J'aime toute ma vie.

/399/ Unless a slight pause is made in this example between the word *j'aime* and what follows, one would not be able to tell whether the words *toute ma vie* are in the accusative or in the ablative case, to speak in grammatical terms.

CHAPTER V

The quantity of masculine words of two syllables.

/400/ If determining the quantity of feminine words correctly (particularly their last syllable) is a difficult task, that of masculine words is ten times more difficult. The general rule I have established for feminine words, that their penultimate syllable is always long without exception, cannot simply be inverted for masculine words. That is to say that if there were a general rule which would make, by reversal, the penultimate syllable of masculine words short, it would have so many exceptions that the term 'general rule' would be ill-founded and meaningless. As for the last syllable of masculine words, it is yet another labyrinth out of which it is quite difficult to extricate oneself honourably. However, it is always worthwhile /401/ to enlighten a little those who are completely ignorant of these matters, even if some dark areas remain.

Before going on, it must be noted that the same word can be both long and short, depending on whether it is masculine or feminine, as in the feminine words *aime*, *donne*, *flute*, whose penultimate syllable is long, but which is short in the masculine form: *aimer*, *donner*.

I know that some people claim to have found wonderful ways of establishing the length of the penultimate syllable of masculine words, by means of the vowels; that is to say, the *a* and the open *e*, diphthongs, acute accents⁵¹² which are written down and which have been created with the reform of the spelling system, to replace the letter *s*, as for instance *lâcher* instead of *lascher*, *soûtien* instead of *soustien*, etc.. But what is even more incredible is that other people, mainly Latin scholars, think that the length of a syllable must be determined by the number of consonants it contains. /402/ Therefore they consider a syllable to be long if it is followed by two consonants, in other words, if the penultimate syllable of a masculine word ends with a consonant and the last syllable begins with one.

In order to refute all these false allegations, I must say first of all that for a syllable to be long in the first degree, it is not enough for it to end with a consonant and to precede another, or even two others in the next syllable. This can be seen in the

⁵¹² For Bacilly, the 'acute' accent is the modern circumflex accent.

following examples, where the penultimate syllable is short rather than long, or, as it were, is 'semi-long'.

Esprit,
Espoir,
Respect,
Partir,
Pourtant,

The first syllable of these words is not as long as that of other masculine words which only contain a single consonant and a vowel, such as *oser, reposer, appaiser*.

2. A written accent is not enough to make a syllable long /403/ (although if people took the trouble to write the accent, this would often help to identify long syllables). Here are examples of syllables which, notwithstanding the accent, remain short.

Détruit instead of *destruit*,
Epris instead of *espris*,
Dépit instead of *despit*,
Soutien instead of *soustien*,
Soupir instead of *souspir*.

All these penultimate syllables are short.

3. A diphthong is not enough to make a syllable long. Here are examples.

Plaira,
Moitié,
Loisir,
Choisir,

and other similar words whose penultimate syllable is short.

However, there is one instance where these penultimate syllables can be made long as well as other penultimate syllables that normally have no reason to be long. /404/ This is when a masculine word of two or several syllables is followed by a monosyllable which ends the air, and that the final syllable of the masculine word is not long enough to sustain the required *cadence* at the end of the air. Then one is forced to make this penultimate syllable long, even though it is naturally very short. Here are some examples: *Qui ne le croiroit pas; Je ne le diray point; De ne vous aimer pas*. The penultimate syllable of the words *aimer, diray, croiroit*, is treated as long, since none of the final syllables of these words is long enough to sustain a long *tremblement*, and this should be carefully noted.

The only general rule I can give which makes penultimate syllables of masculine words long is when there is an *n* after a vowel, provided the *n* is not followed by another *n*, as in the words *donner*, *entonner*, for in this case each *n* works against the other's interests. But a difficulty arises, namely, whether the *n* makes all syllables the same length, or whether some syllables are longer than others. To this I reply that /405/ certain syllables containing an *n* are indeed longer than others, that is to say, they are so long that they can sustain a final *cadence*, as in *langueur*, *consentir*, *vanger*, etc., whereas others cannot sustain a long *tremblement* or *cadence*, such as *instant*, *combat* (where the *m* is equivalent to an *n* as regards pronunciation), *santé*, etc.. All these penultimate syllables are nonetheless long enough never to be made short. And if they happen to be at the end of an air and that the *cadence* is performed on the preceding syllable, such as in *un instant*, *le combat*, *la santé*, one should not make the penultimate syllable so short that it cannot sustain any ornament indicating its length, such as a few *doublemens* on the note to which they are joined. This could be skilfully done with the throat, as I have already mentioned several times.

This observation also applies to other long penultimate syllables of masculine words, which nevertheless /406/ are not long enough to be able to sustain a long *tremblement*.

All these observations lead me to conclude that the most helpful thing would be to provide a few lists of nearly all masculine words of two syllables which occur in French song, leaving aside the others, of which there is an endless number and which would only clutter people's minds. As for the masculine words that are an exception to the rule, it will be easy to judge which ones have a short penultimate syllable. However, I classify those that have a long penultimate syllable into two categories because they are of various lengths. That is to say that although those in one category may not be as long as those in the other, some ornament must still be performed on these penultimate syllables as an indication of their length, be it an *accent*, a simple *tremblement*, a *doublement* of the note, in short, something to distinguish them from short syllables.

Although I have sufficiently mentioned the penultimate syllable of masculine words that are an exception to the rule of short syllables, by saying that any syllable containing an *n* after a vowel is long, nonetheless, I must not refrain from /407/ giving examples. This is not only to clarify the matter but also to differentiate as much as possible between these masculine words whose penultimate syllable is extremely long and those whose penultimate syllable is not quite as long and hold the middle ground

between the extremely long ones and those which are, so to speak, ‘semi-long’. Therefore, here are some of those words which occur most frequently in airs and can sustain a final *cadence*, which is the hallmark of great length: *changer, danger, offencer, langueur, languir, songer, ranger, vanger*. Many other words with an *n* cannot sustain such a *cadence*, especially in certain small airs,⁵¹³ such as the words *tantost, constant, content, honteux, entier, enfin, flambeau, rendu, pensé, santé, bonté*, and particularly *instant*, whose very meaning seems to require more brevity.⁵¹⁴

Bon goust must be the rule for the above observation, for it may be that a word can sustain a *cadence* on its penultimate syllable in certain circumstances, yet not in others. The safest way is to perform some sort of /408/ ornament on the penultimate syllable to retain the length of the *n*, and to place the *cadence* on the antepenultimate syllable, counting backwards from the end, for in this way one is spared any criticism. There are even certain places where one must avoid performing a *cadence* on this type of penultimate syllable, for fear of altering the *mesure*, or rather, the *mouvement* of hundreds of small airs, such as a *gavotte* or *sarabande*, by adding too much affectation. Nonetheless, it remains a general rule that syllables containing the letter *n* can sustain at least an *accent* in all circumstances, a sure sign of length which does not apply to the letter *r* or *l*, nor to any syllable containing a consonant joined to another, as in *pourquoy, malgré, suspect, absent, excez, victoire*.

One must therefore accept that these consonants do not share the same advantage as the *n*, which makes a syllable so long that it can sustain a long *tremblement*, or at least an *accent*. But they can sustain a few small *tremblemens* or *doublemens de gosier*, as can all penultimate syllables of masculine words with /409/ an *r* after a vowel. Here are examples of such words.

<i>Alarmer.</i>	<i>Martyr.</i>
<i>Ardeur.</i>	<i>Parler.</i>
<i>Berger.</i>	<i>Parmy.</i>
<i>Charmant.</i>	<i>Perdu.</i>
<i>Chercher.</i>	<i>Pourquoy.</i>
<i>Dernier.</i>	<i>Pourtant.</i>
<i>Desormais.</i>	<i>Regarder.</i>

⁵¹³ ‘si ce n’est dans quelques petits Aïrs’ has been translated as ‘especially’ here in view of the context and information provided in the following paragraph.

⁵¹⁴ This observation reinforces the point that although Bacilly’s syllabic quantity is established in a scientific manner involving the sound of syllables, the meaning of the word must always be taken into account.

Dormir.

Servir.

Garder.

Superflus.

Hardy.

Surpris.

Horsmis.

Tarder.

Liberté.

Tirsis.

One cannot perform an *accent* or a *plainte* on the penultimate syllable of any of these words. This is all the more noteworthy as few musicians are aware of it and perform indiscriminately these ornaments on the word *charmant* as well as on *content*, and on *Berger* as well as on *vanger*.

What I have just said about the letter *r* is also applicable to other syllables, be they penultimate syllables of masculine words or ‘antepenultimate’ syllables, in short, to all kinds of syllables.

/410/ There are very few examples of syllables containing an *l* that have the same quantity as those containing an *r* when immediately preceding another consonant, as in *malgré, quelqu’un, Silvie, revolter*. The syllable containing the *l* should normally be short in each case because it is the penultimate syllable of a masculine word or the antepenultimate syllable of a feminine word (which are of the same nature in this case). However, here they are semi-long and require some type of ornament to distinguish them from a short syllable, that is to say, they need a little more emphasis and even sometimes a *doublement de gosier*.

Here are more penultimate syllables which can be treated as semi-long, for the same reason that they contain a consonant which immediately precedes another of a different kind, on which only some small ornament should be carefully performed, so as not to pass over them as lightly as if they were short syllables: *absent, desespoir, espoir, destin, discret, excez, esprit, extrême, objet, résister, respect, suspect*. I repeat, even a *doublement de gosier* should not be attempted, and if one is sometimes /411/ performed on the word *respect*, or *espoir* (which can be done in certain circumstances, though never on the words *esprit* and *discret*), *bon goust* must be the judge of the situation.

On the contrary, when the letter *s* is not struck, I mean emphasized, but is omitted, as in present-day spelling,⁵¹⁵ it often makes the syllable long enough to be able to sustain, with the usual caution, quite a long *tremblement* or an *accent*. Here are some examples: *Blasmer, brusler, cesser, empescher, fascheux, gouster, passer, tascher, resver, oster, presser*. However, the following syllables remain short, despite the *s*:

assez, chasser, desseïn, estoit, mespris, pousser, ressens, toujours. I know that some will say that the difference between *chasser* and *lasser* is obvious enough. But if I were to ask why the penultimate syllable of *pousser* should be shorter in singing than that of *passer*, I doubt I would be given any other reason than that of *bon goust*. This truth is illustrated in the following example from an air quite well known by everyone.

/412/ *J'avois déjà passé pres d'un jour sans la voir.* [Ex.181]⁵¹⁶

Example 181 [(Lambert) Ballard IX, 1666, fol.3v-4]

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows a vocal line in treble clef and a bass line in bass clef. The lyrics are: 'J'a - vois dé - ja pas - sé'. The second system continues the bass line with the lyrics: 'J'a - vois dé - - ja pas - sé'. The third system shows a vocal line in treble clef and a bass line in bass clef. The lyrics are: 'prés d'un jour sans la voir'. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, notes, and accidentals.

In this example there is no doubt that a *tremblement* can be performed on the penultimate syllable of the word *passé*, but the same could not be said if the word *passé* was replaced by *poussé*.

Compound vowels, or ‘diphthongs’, tend to make a syllable long, but not all compound vowels and not in all cases.

The diphthong *ai* is amongst the most troublesome, for it often makes a syllable extremely long, as can be seen in the words *appaiser, plaisir, raison, saison, baisier*, on the penultimate syllable of which one could even perform a final *cadence*. The words *enchaîner* and *maison* are on the other hand not quite as long and there are yet other syllables which are not long at all in spite of the vowel *ai*, such as in the words *faisoit, traiter, souhaiter* and even (which seems odd) the word *plaisoit*, whose penultimate syllable is always shorter than in *plaisir*.

⁵¹⁵ Bacilly is referring to the circumflex accent which was gaining ground increasingly as a substitute for the silent *s*. Syllables containing such an accent were discussed on p.402-3/ 431-2.

⁵¹⁶ This air has been located in two different sources: it was first published in Ballard IX (1666), fol.3v-4, and was then included in Lambert’s 1689 volume of airs printed by Ballard, pp.102-3. The words alone, by La Tuillière, are included in a manuscript, ‘Cantates et airs italiens et français’ dating from the end of the 17th century, at the B.N.F., Vm⁷ 3, fol.81 (see Massip [1999], pp.158, 326).

/413/ *Au* poses the same problem, as can be seen in the following words, *autant*, *beauté*, *cruauté*, which are long in all circumstances. These words can even sustain a final *cadence* much more easily than the following ones, *aussi*, *beaucoup*, *causer*, *échauffer*, which can nevertheless sustain quite long *tremblemens* and *accens*. But the words *aura* and *auray*, *aupres*, *sçauray* or *sçaura* are short and must be sung quickly and lightly for they cannot sustain even a small ornament. The last word in this list, however, appears to be long in this example from the book *in quarto*, on page 63 [Ex.182]:

On sçaura bien,

Example 182 [Lambert 1666, p.63]

as well as on page 7 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.183]:

Aussi bien sçaurez-vous.

Example 183 [Bacilly II, 1668, p.7]

This penultimate syllable is only long by accident, in that it is joined to the monosyllable *bien* or *vous*, which makes this type of penultimate syllable of a masculine word long, however /414/ short they may naturally be. This can easily be seen in these examples:

Quoy? voulez-vous.

Je n'en diray rien.

One can also see that, without the slightest hesitation, the penultimate syllable of the word *sçaura* was made short in the following air:

*Qui les sçaura mes secrettes amours?*⁵¹⁷ [Ex.184]

⁵¹⁷ The word 'amour' is normally masculine but its plural form is feminine in poetry and literature.

Example 184 [Ballard VII, 1664, fol.6v-7r]⁵¹⁸

Qui les sçau - ra,
Qui les sçau - ra, Qui les sçau -
[#]
Qui les sçau - ra, mes se - cret - tes a - mours?
- ra, Qui les sçau - ra mes se - cret - tes a - mours?

The diphthong *oi*, which appears to be as long as *ai*, is in fact shorter since neither a long *cadence* nor even an *accent* can be performed on the words *moitié*, *choisir* and *loisir* as can be done on *plaisir*. This is also true for the other compound vowels, namely *ou* in the words *couler*, *douceur*, *douter*, *douleur*, *couleur*, *vouloir*, *mourir*, *soudain*, *courir*, even *pousser* and *couster*; and though it would seem that the *s* makes them at least the same length as *gouster*, the latter is always longer. This can be seen in the following example: /415/ *Goustons bien les plaisirs*,⁵¹⁹ etc., in which an *accent* can be performed on the penultimate syllable, but not if there was instead the word *coustons*. Therefore one should never follow the example of the majority of singers, [who perform long ornaments on] the penultimate syllable of *douceur* or of *mourir*.⁵²⁰

There are other penultimate syllables of masculine words which are very long, even extremely long, although they only contain a single vowel, as in the words *reposer*, *oser*, *refuser*, *excuser*.

Finally, some others are of doubtful length and can be sometimes long and sometimes short, as in the words *Helas! Iris*, *Cloris*, *Oyseaux*, where the author of the old dialogue *Tirsis, que j'aime ce séjour*,⁵²¹ wanted a final *cadence* to be performed on the penultimate syllable of these words. However, this example is more suitable for studying than for copying.

⁵¹⁸ Caswell located this air in Ballard VII (1664), where the text for a second verse is provided.

⁵¹⁹ Bacilly (*Recueil* 1668) lists this as a 'menuet de Lully' to words by Quinault. The music has not been located.

⁵²⁰ Part of the sentence appears to be missing. The text reads: 'Il ne faut donc jamais faire comme la plupart des Chantres, la penultième de *douceur*, ou de *mourir*.'

⁵²¹ Bacilly (*Recueil* 1661), p.501, lists this as a dialogue by Antoine Boesset.

CHAPTER VI

Masculine words of more than two syllables.

/416/ What I have just said about the penultimate syllable of masculine words of two syllables also applies to words of three and four syllables. This is why I mixed them together in some of the examples that I have given, but now I need to discuss these other syllables, counting backwards. The question is, therefore, how to deal with the quantity of words that have more than two syllables.

What I have said concerning monosyllables can very well be applied in this case. This means that just as there can never be several consecutive short monosyllables without the possibility of making one out of two long according to the rule of retrograde symmetry, so, by the same rule of symmetry, there are no two consecutive syllables in a word of several syllables of which one cannot be made long.

/417/ And just as I have said that it was possible to have several long monosyllables in a row without any problem, it is equally possible to have several consecutive long syllables in a word, according to the rules that I have already given concerning the letters *n* and *s* and others that have a special status. Therefore, if a word has several syllables containing an *n*, each syllable has the right to be long. This can be seen in the words *inconstant*, *entendu*, *confondu*, *insensé*, and others, of which the penultimate syllable and the one before it are both long.

To put it more clearly, one should first see if the penultimate syllable of a masculine word (which should normally be short) is exempt from the rule, either because it contains an *n*, or due to another factor which makes it long. If this is the case, the one preceding it, which is called the antepenultimate syllable, loses its right to being a long syllable and becomes short, unless it too has a special reason for being long; /418/ if this happens, the syllable preceding the long antepenultimate must be short, unless it also has a reason for being long.

The same can be said for feminine words of several syllables, whose penultimate syllable is always long and consequently, the antepenultimate is always short, if there is no special reason for it to be long. The attributes of long syllables must be based on the list which I gave earlier in the chapter on monosyllables and on masculine words, which must take into account the presence of an *n* or an *s*, or *ai*, or an *r*, or other circumstances.

CHAPTER VII

The quantity of the last syllable of masculine words.

/419/ As for the last syllable of masculine words, it is as hard to establish some rules for it as it is difficult to draw up a list of long and short syllables. However, it is necessary to try to clarify this subject since this syllable is the cause of much wavering amongst composers and the cause of much trouble and difficulty for even the finest of them.

It seems that the last syllable of a masculine word ought to be long, like the penultimate syllable of a feminine word, since most masculine words have so much in common with their feminine counterpart as regards pronunciation, that it is almost impossible to distinguish between the two were it not for the meaning of the words. People unconsciously let /420/ a kind of ‘mute’ *e* slip onto the end of several masculine words, especially when the last letter needs to be struck and emphasized for the sake of proper pronunciation. As a result, one can hardly differentiate between the masculine words *martir*, *brutal*, *eternel*, *vermeil*, *reduit*,⁵²² *mortel*, as regards pronunciation and when they are out of context, and their feminine form: *martire*, *brutale*, *eternelle*, *vermeille*, *reduite*, *mortelle*.

It is therefore obvious that this type of last syllable is nearly always long, particularly when the following word begins with a consonant and not with a vowel, for in this case it could be short, as in these examples:

*Un martyr enflam[é],*⁵²³

Me conduit au trépas.

The observations I made for monosyllables and for the penultimate syllable of masculine words are also applicable in this case. That is to say, the last syllable of any masculine word containing an *n* following a vowel, is long, such as /421/ *constant*, *entens*, *charmans*, *amans*, *tourment*, *devient*, *feront*, etc.. These final syllables are all long, whether or not the following word begins with a vowel, for not only do they contain an *n*, but this *n* is followed by another consonant, namely an *s* or a *t*, which increases its length. This means that the vowel at the beginning of the following word

⁵²² The final *t* would be pronounced.

⁵²³ Although the editorial policy for this work is not to insert accents where they are missing, its omission here could mislead the reader into thinking that this word ends in a ‘mute’ *e* when it is in fact a masculine ending.

cannot affect it. Otherwise, if there were simply an *n* and it was followed by a word beginning with a vowel whose first syllable was long, the last syllable in question would have to be short, regardless of the *n*, as happens in the following words:

Si quelqu'un eut jamais.

Ma raison autrefois.

C'est un mal commun entre nous.

The last syllables of *raison*, *quelqu'un* and *commun* can be made short, because the next word begins with a long syllable beginning with a vowel; for if these next syllables were short, the syllable containing an *n* would retain its length. /422/ Here are some examples:

Si quelqu'un a pensé.

Il est commun à tous.

The second general rule, which has no exceptions, is that the final syllable of all masculine, and even feminine words (provided there is no elision) is always long when it is held up by a full-stop or a comma, or by the caesura or the end of the line. Here are some examples:

Ah! qu'il est malaisé, quand l'amour est extrême.

Elle a changé cette Inhumaine.

Enfans de ma langueur & de mon desespoir.

The last syllables of *malaisé*, *changé* and *langueur* are long, for the sole reason that they are at the caesura;⁵²⁴ otherwise they could be short, as in the following examples:

⁵²⁴ These three examples occur in the Bacilly and Lambert volumes (**Exx.xxxvii-xxxix, over**): Bacilly's point is clearly illustrated in the music. The word 'douleur' replaces 'langueur' in Lambert's air, Ex.xxxix.

Ex.xxxvii [Bacilly I, 1668, p.5]

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line in 3/2 time with lyrics: "pas Ah! qu'il est mal - ai - sé quand l'a-". The second system continues the lyrics: "-sé quand l'a - mour est ex - tre - - me" and "-mour est ex - tre - me est ex - tre - me". Fingerings (6, 5, #, 6, 4, #, ♭) and breath marks (+) are indicated above the notes.

/423/ *Le Ciel a changé son couroux.*

Soûpirs de langueur & d'amour.

In this case the last syllables of the words *changé* and *langueur* can be made short without affecting the quantity.⁵²⁵

3. One must pay attention to words that end with an *s* joined to an *r*, as I mentioned in the chapter on monosyllables. For example, the words *divers*, *plaisirs*, *dehors*, *alors*, *ailleurs*, *couleurs*, *discours*, *secours* and other similar words, must always have their last syllable long.

4. What I have said about monosyllables which end simply with an *s*, making them long, can also be applied to the final syllable of masculine words, such as *helas*, *trépas*, *soucis*, *esprits*, *épris*, *avis*, *depuis*, *refus*, *confus*, *superflus*, *dessous*, etc., on which one can perform an ornament suitable for long syllables. The same applies to words ending with an *x* or *z*, like *couroux*, *fascheux*, *heureux*, *amoureux*, *honteux*, *cheveux*, *injurieux*, /424/ *jaloux*, etc., *excez*, *beautez*, *aprez*, *auprez*. However, some words ending in *z*, namely masculine verbs whose penultimate syllable is long, must be exempt from this rule, for when they precede a monosyllable, the syllable containing the

Ex.xxxviii [Bacilly I, 1668, p.6]

Musical notation for Ex.xxxviii. The score is in 3/4 time and features a treble clef. The melody consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are: "El - le a chan - gé cet - te in - hu - mai - ne". There are some markings above the notes, including a bracketed 'b' and a '+' sign.

Ex.xxxix [Lambert 1666, p.8]

Musical notation for Ex.xxxix. The score is in 2/4 time and features a treble and bass clef. The melody consists of a series of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: "En - fans de ma dou - leur et de mon de - ses - poir, I - nu[tils]". There are some markings below the notes, including a '3' and a '#3'.

⁵²⁵ On pp.17-18 of the 1679 'Réponse' (see Appendix 2), Bacilly changed his mind about the rule that the final syllable of certain masculine or feminine words can be shortened and thrown onto the following syllable; for these last two examples, therefore, he writes that the second syllable of 'changé' should not be shortened in favour of the 'son' and neither should that of 'langueur' be shortened in front of the '&' ('et'). It is better to maintain some distinction between each syllable. Bacilly adds that the same can be said of the examples given on p.420/ 440 and following ones, where syllables which he has said should be made short are in fact long.

z yields to the penultimate syllable, and becomes short. This can be observed in the example *Reposez-vous*, on page 59 of the [first] book *in octavo* [Ex.185]; the author rightly noted that since the penultimate syllable of the word *reposez* was naturally long, the last syllable had to yield to it and pass swiftly onto the word *vous*.

Example 185 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.59]

re - po - sez vous préz de Cli - me - ne

In the first verse, however, on the words *Vous pourrez bien* [Ex.186], this was not the case: since the penultimate syllable of *pourrez* is short, the syllable containing the z could remain long and the author suggests that an *accent* be performed on it.

Example 186 [Bacilly I, 1668, p.58]

vous pour - rez bien vous sa - tis - fai - re

vous pour - rez bien vous sa - tis - fai - re

One can rightly say that such examples are rare, yet here are a few more to clarify the point:⁵²⁶

Que pretendez-vous? [Ex.187]

Example 187 [Boesset IX, 1642, fol.31v-32 (*dessus*)]⁵²⁷

Que pre - ten - dez vous, mes de - sirs,

Vous l'entendez mal.

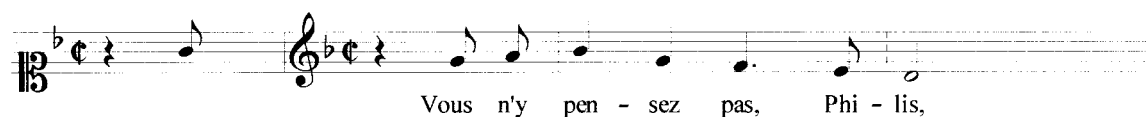
Que ne me laissez-vous?

Vous n'y pensez pas. [Ex.188]⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ Bacilly (1679), p.22 (see Appendix 2) changed his mind about this rule in the 'Réponse', suggesting that he was wrong to treat these examples differently and settling on a rule that all such syllables ending with a z should be short.

⁵²⁷ This air is also in 'Airs' ms.c.1661, p.233, where Caswell located it.

Example 188 [Bacilly 1666, fol.3r-4v]



/425/ Since the penultimate syllables of the words *entendez*, *pretendez*, *laissez*, *pensez*, are long, the *z* of the last syllable must yield to it. This would not be the case in the following examples:

Me direz-vous.

Vous devez bien.

And yet this observation is a question of *bon gout*, for a syllable containing a *z* could be made short even if the penultimate syllable of the masculine word is naturally short, as can be seen in this air.

Non vous ne m'aimez pas. [Ex.189]

Example 189 [Foucault ms. f.74]⁵²⁹



It can be said that normally, syllables ending with a *z* in verbs belonging to the 'future' tense (to speak in grammatical terms) have more right to be long than those of verbs belonging to the present tense. Thus I believe that the *z* in *pourrez* and in *donnerez* is longer than that of *pouvez* and *donnez*. The rule governing the imperative form of verbs is even more general: the *z* is /426/ almost always short, even though the penultimate syllable is naturally short, as can be seen in these examples: *Consolez-vous*, *Hastez-vous* and *reposez-vous* which are straightforward.

I said 'almost always', because it is true that it is often a question of *bon gout*, for which no positive rule can be established, as can easily be seen in this well-known air:

Disposez de mon sort, etc., [Ex.190]⁵³⁰

⁵²⁸ These are the first words of an air in Bacilly (1666), fol.3v.

⁵²⁹ In the second (1668) volume of his *Recueil*, Bacilly credits this air to Lambert (Lachèvre [1967], vol.3, p.496).

Example 190 [(Lambert) 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.67]

Dis- po - sez de mes jours au gre de vos -

- tre hay - ne Phi - lis or - don - nez moy de cou -

-rir de cou -rir au tre - pas J'o - be - is bel - le in - hu -

- may - ne Mais ne m'or - don - nez point de ne

vous ay - mer pas de ne vous ay - mer pas

Here the author has made the syllable containing the *z* in *Ordonnez-moy* a long one, yet at the same time, he has made it short further on, *Mais ne m'ordonnez point*. He was quite right to do so, despite the contradiction which critics are bound to point out,⁵³¹ and similarly in the following examples:

⁵³⁰ This air was located by Caswell in 'Airs' ms. c.1661, p.67, but it begins 'Disposez de mes jours'. Bacilly (*Recueil* 1661) lists this (as 'Disposez de mon sort') as an air by Lambert to words by de Prade (Lachèvre 1967, vol.2, p.424).

⁵³¹ Eleven years later in the 'Réponse', Bacilly no longer found a good reason for this discrepancy and believed that the author himself would agree that there is none: both syllables should be short. (Bacilly [1679], p.23, see Appendix 2.)

*Je vous dis toujours aimez-moy?*⁵³²

Ah! que ne m'aimez-vous?

Non, vous ne m'aimez pas, Climene. [See Ex.189]

/427/ In the first two examples, the final syllable containing the *z* is treated as long (leaving aside the cacophony created in the first one by the two *ms*, which is avoided in the second example), and is treated as short in the third example.

Besides, when I say that this type of *z* makes a syllable short in most cases when placed before a monosyllable, I mean when the monosyllable stands alone and is not passed over to fall onto a longer monosyllable, as can be seen in the following example:

Sçavez-vous bien pourquoi?

For here the syllable containing the *z* retains its natural length because of the word *bien*, which is longer than *vous*.

Finally, one must consider whether the penultimate syllable of masculine words is long due to an exception to the rule; for taking this into account, the final syllable should, or at least could be short, principally when it does not end with a struck *r*, or with an *l* or a *t* whose /428/ pronunciation is not omitted. For if it ends with a pronounced consonant, and is followed by a word beginning with another consonant, this gives grounds for making it long.

When the penultimate syllable is short, there is a good reason for the last syllable to be long, or at least one should pause on it, without passing immediately on to what follows.

THE END

⁵³² Caswell located this air in Ballard (1699); the correct page reference is p.116. It is entitled 'Chansonnette de M. Montailly. However, in the 1661 *Recueil*, Bacilly lists this as an air by 'Molier' (Louis de Mollier), which suggests that this version is not the one Bacilly had in mind. The fact that the example (given here as **ex.xl**) illustrates the contrary to what Bacilly is explaining reinforces this suggestion.

Ex.xl (Ballard 1699, p.116)

The image shows a musical score for a French song. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. The lyrics are written below the notes. There are two plus signs (+) above the notes for 'moy' and 'quoy' in the treble staff, indicating a long note. The lyrics are: 'Je vous dis tou-jours, ai - mez - moy, Phi - lis vous sça - vez bien pour - quoy;'. The bass staff has a similar melody with lyrics: 'Je vous dis tou-jours, ai - mez - moy, Phi - lis vous sça - vez bien pour - quoy;'. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

GLOSSARY OF FRENCH TERMS

Below is a list of terms used in the *Remarques*, which appear in French and in italics in the present translation. It includes technical terms related to ornamentation and embellishment.

* indicates a term listed elsewhere in the glossary.

Accent – also called *aspiration*; a small grace note of indeterminate rhythmic value on the upper auxiliary, inserted between two notes at the same pitch or when the second note is one step lower (but see Ex.174, p. 422, where the second note ascends). Bacilly calls it a ‘ridiculous hiccough’ when it is inappropriately placed. It should be performed lightly and shorter than its notated value and only on a long syllable. It is best suited to sorrowful expressions. (See also *plainte**.)

Air à boire – a drinking song, also called ‘chanson bachique’. This is a short, strophic binary air for one or more voices with vocal or instrumental accompaniment that typically celebrates wine. It is usually in a simple syllabic style and based on dance rhythms.

Air de ballet – a strophic, binary air integrated into a dramatic situation in a court ballet.

Air de mouvement – a short, secular solo air with a regular dance metre; though lively in character, the pace need not necessarily be fast.

Air précieux – Bacilly uses this term to describe broadly the style of air popular during the first half of the seventeenth century when referring notably to the airs of Pierre Guédron and Antoine Boësset.

Air de récit – a general term for any solo vocal piece. This included the air, the early secular French solo cantata and the dramatic air in ballets which was contrasted to chorus sections; where he uses this term, Bacilly evokes the solo vocal writing found in settings of the Lamentations of Jeremiah.

Air sérieux – normally strophic air in free metre for one or two voices, with vocal or instrumental bass part. These were most commonly in binary form with repeats, though ternary and rondo form was also used, and observed the poetic conventions of salon poetry; the complex *double** was a characteristic feature of such airs.

Animer – another name for the *doublement du gosier**. Bacilly seems to use the term literally as derived from the Latin word *anima*, or soul, for this ornament is very effective in moving the passions of the soul. It is also the common name for a special type of *port de voix** which involves throwing the lower note onto the upper note by way of a light repetition of the lower note in the manner of an *acciaccatura*.

Basse – The bass voice and lowest vocal register. It uses the F³ and F⁴ clefs and has a range of approximately *F* to *d'*.

Cadence – a three-part cadential trill, always on a long syllable, which normally involves a preparation (the *soûtien**), a trill (*tremblement**) and a termination (*liaison**). When the *cadence* ascends to the final note, a *port de voix** replaces the *liaison*. A very slow *cadence* is suited to expressions of sorrow.

Chanson – much like the *air sérieux* in structure, the *chanson* (also called ‘air à danser’ or ‘air galant’) is characterised by its regular dance metre and the lighter or more directly pastoral imagery of its poetic text. Due to its set metre, embellishment in the *double* is more restricted than in the *air sérieux*.

Chanson bachique – see *air à boire*

Coulemens – (from ‘couler’, to flow) these are long ascending or descending diminutions that usually span an octave (see Exx. xxix and xxx, p. 318). According to Bacilly, they were commonly called ‘roulemens’ (*sic*, from ‘rouler’, to roll).

Coup de gosier – another name for the *doublement du gosier**; also generally a movement of the throat when progressing from one note to another.

Demy-port de voix – an incomplete *port de voix* involving only the first two steps of a full *port de voix **, omitting the sustaining of the final note. The *doublement* on the upper note is much more delicate. It is particularly suited to languorous expression.

Dessus – the uppermost vocal part in an air; by extension, it implies the soprano register (also called *superius*) which could be subdivided into ‘premier dessus’ (range approximately *f'* to *g'*) and ‘second dessus’ (*d'* to *g'*) or ‘haut dessus’ and ‘bas dessus’. It uses the G² and C¹ clefs.

Double – the second verse of an air, performed in a highly embellished and ornamented manner.

Double cadence – Bacilly’s description is vague, but we are told that it can be performed in two ways: the first may correspond to the Italian *trillo* or note-reiteration, the second to a turn or a turn-related figure.

Doublement du gosier – among the most frequent ornaments, it is a note-reiteration or pulsation similar to bow vibrato, which later theorists called *balancement*. When several are performed in succession, the effect may be that of a controlled intensity vibrato. The *doublement* is only performed on long or semi-long syllables and is suited to joyful expression.

Flexion de voix – a short, quick trill, probably a mordent figure.

Fredons – also ‘fredonner’ (‘warbling’). Bacilly explains that *fredons* are synonymous with diminutions.

Galant – the style of salon poetry Bacilly sets in his airs, which aspires to ‘natural’ expression and the avoidance of pomposity following strict thematic conventions. An *air galant*, however, is an air of lighter poetic and musical character than the *air sérieux** and with a regular dance metre.

Goust – This term is discussed in Ch. 5 of the Contextual Essay. It implies an instinctive reason composed of a finely balanced mixture of natural instinct and education and serves as a critical faculty in all aspects of singing, particularly ornamentation and embellishment.

Hautecontre – the second highest vocal register, after the *dessus*. It was the highest male voice, a high tenor with a range of approximately *g* to *a'*. It uses the C² and C³ clefs.

Liaison – a light note that terminates the *tremblement* by joining it to the following note, anticipating the latter at the same pitch (when the following note is one step below the *tremblement*) or a step above it (when the following note is two steps below the *tremblement*). It is usually sung to the same syllable as the *tremblement* on feminine rhymes; when instead it anticipates the syllable of the following note, it becomes ‘detached’ from the *tremblement* and is sung more heavily: this is suitable for final cadences. For masculine endings, the note of the *liaison* has a syllable to itself: there is thus no verbal *liaison*. It is omitted entirely when the note of the *cadence* is not followed by another note.

Mesure – the time signature which has tempo implications according to the type and character of the air.

Mouvement – broadly the character, or the ability to render the character of an *air*, which is related to tempo and to the nature of the poetry. More specifically, *mouvement* is regarded as an ornament and refers to singing with emotion, that is, the capacity of moving the passions of the soul.

Passage – embellishment synonymous with diminution. It provides a link, or ‘passage’, from one note to the next.

Plainte – another name for the *accent*, but the term is only appropriate when two notes are performed as the *accent* instead of one, either by lightly repeating the note of the *accent* or, as in one of Bacilly’s examples (Ex.70) by inserting an additional *accent* above one that is already indicated, resulting in a double *accent*. It is only performed on long syllables and is suited to sorrowful expression.

Port de voix – this is a three-step ascending ornament: the lower note is divided equally in two, and the second of these notes is sustained before the voice leaps to the upper note; a *doublement** is performed on the upper note as soon as it is sung; the upper note is then sustained after the *doublement*. It can be performed on ascending intervals of up to a sixth and has no symbol to indicate it. A *port de voix* on the interval of a third ascends through the middle note.

Port de voix coulé or *glissé* – an alternative way of performing a *demy-port de voix**, it involves a slide to the upper note in semitones. There is probably a division of the lower note, though none is specified. There is no mention of a *doublement* on the upper note, and as the latter preserves its full value, it is probably absent. It is suited to sorrowful expression.

Port de voix perdu – listed as a second alternative way of performing a *demy-port de voix**, in which the lower note is sustained, borrowing most of its value from the upper note; the latter is effectively ‘lost’. No specific mention is made of splitting the lower note nor of a *doublement*, though both of these were possibly included.

Retour de cadence – a small *tremblement* with a *liaison*, followed by return to the note of the *tremblement* in order to perform a longer *tremblement* before terminating the *cadence*.

Roullemens – See *Coulemens*.

Simple – the first verse of an air, normally plainly sung with limited ornamentation and embellishment, in contrast to the second verse.

Soûtien – also called *anticipation*, *preparation* and *appuy*, it is a sustained preparatory appoggiatura, usually on the upper auxiliary, leading to a *tremblement**. It can sometimes be at the same pitch as the note on which the *tremblement* is performed, or can be omitted altogether. Those who cannot perform a *cadence* well are advised to sustain the *soûtien* for most of the value of the *cadence* in order to avoid it.

Superius – see *dessus*.

Taille – the natural tenor voice and third register below the *dessus** and *hautecontre**. Its range was approximately *f* to *g'* and it uses the C³ and C⁴ clefs.

Tremblement – the alternation of two neighbouring notes, it is associated with the *cadence* of which it is the middle component: thus the *tremblement* is usually preceded by a *soûtien** (a main-note start is also possible, though not as frequent) and terminated by a *liaison*. Bacilly’s ideal is for a *tremblement* to be performed slowly and accelerate towards the end when it is part of a *cadence*. Very rarely, it can be terminated by a light upward grace note. A *tremblement* is almost never performed on a short syllable. It can also be independent from the *cadence* and of variable length: a shorter and quicker *tremblement* can be performed without preparation or termination.

Tremblement étouffé – its definition is obscured by Bacilly’s use of the equally obscure *double cadence* to define it, explaining that it is an ornament which is smothered before it can become a *double cadence*. It would seem to involve a long *soûtien** followed by a single note-reiteration. It is suited to sorrowful expression.

APPENDIX 1
 Bacilly II (1668), p.75: 'Aprez mille rigueurs' (*double*)

Double

Je ne me plain - dray plus
 de vous voir in - sen - si - ble + je cons -
 - ens aux touments que vous me des - ti - nez
 Aug - men - tez vos ri - gueurs en - cor s'il est pos -
 - si - ble au moins cru - el -
 - le + re - ve - nez au moins cru - el - le
 cru - el - le re - ve - nez.

APPENDIX 2

Note on sources:

Bacilly uses the latest edition of his *Trois livres d'airs* in the 'Réponse', that is, the enlarged 1679 edition, now lost (see Editorial notes). Many of these airs were amended versions of airs in the original 1668 edition. Where no later version of these airs has been found, the original 1668 version has been provided as a point of comparison. Eleven airs in the 1679 edition were not previously included in the *Trois livres d'airs*. Eight of these are found in Ballard volumes dating from 1668 to 1678 (these have no music for the second verse and the vocal parts are printed on facing pages), one is found in a volume of 1703, two are 'chansons à danser' from Bacilly's 1671 *Meslanges d'airs à deux parties* and three have not been located.

Of the eight airs Bacilly mentions in the lost 1679 *Journal des nouveautez du chant*, six were published in C. Ballard's 1679 *Premier recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire de differents auteurs à deux et trois parties*. A comment in the October 1679 issue of the *Mercure galant* tells us that the airs in Ballard's volume are all by Bacilly and that this volume is in fact a Ballard version of Bacilly's 1678 *Journal des nouveautez du chant*, which was engraved (see Lescat's catalogue (1998), pp.7-8). One air has not been located.

The airs in the *Journaux etc. d'airs sérieux, d'airs bachiques et de chansonnettes à deux et à trois parties* (Paris, G. de Luyne, n.d.) are, according to its preface, by a certain 'Mademoiselle Michon' who was five years old at the time of writing them. However, this (engraved) publication contains one of the airs ('Les Moucheron') from the missing 1679 *Journal des nouveautez du chant* mentioned by Bacilly, as well as another air, 'Puisque nous avons la Paix', for which Bacilly fails to give a reference on page 31 of the 'Réponse'.

There are three references to airs from Bacilly's *Airs spirituels*. In the 'Réponse', Bacilly mentions a new, enlarged 1679 edition of the second volume, first published in 1677, but this edition is lost. Ballard's counterfeit edition of the two volumes appeared in 1679 but is based on the original 1672 (volume 1) and 1677 volumes. A subsequent edition of the two volumes by de Luyne appeared in 1688. As Bacilly takes his three examples from the lost (1679) edition of the second volume, the 1688 edition has been used as the source for these examples.

A DISCOURSE IN REPLY TO THE CRITICISM OF
THE ART OF SINGING¹

AND FURTHER TUITION FOR THOSE WHO ASPIRE TO PERFECTING THIS ART.

[1679]

/3/² When I presented my treatise on the art of proper singing to the general public, I did so first of all for my own satisfaction; and secondly, to please some of my friends and moreover some distinguished noblemen who requested me to do so, saying that it was a pity not to release this work considering I was the only one capable of undertaking it, due to the fact that I am /4/ well-read and have some knowledge of poetry and of declamation, combined with a personal ability, so I had the advantage over those who were taught nothing but music of knowing how to establish rules of quantity as regards French song, on which its regularity entirely depends.

Therefore, I was not hoping that it would meet with general approval, having rightly foreseen that the envy or ignorance of most teachers of this art would spread rumours against me for claiming to provide written rules for something no one had ever attempted before; but what comforts me is that though musicians disapproved of it, several people of merit and ability, even some members of the Académie [française] and above all public speakers by profession have found in it enough to give them satisfaction and have praised me for my work, having found unusual and interesting things in this treatise which they thought to be /5/ beyond the reach of ordinary musicians, who so far have not managed to gain in society the respect that such a considerable art deserves.

To be honest, one has to admit that singing is not as prized as it ought to be; being labelled as a singer is enough to be held in contempt and often this attribute, far from being a credit to the one who has it, only seems to obscure his other skills. This is such a strong belief in society that no one would dare say otherwise, so much has the practice of singing become contemptible for the reason that so few people have made the effort to acquire along with it some knowledge of literature and of the correctness of language, and have been content with their talent without thinking to cure themselves of the failings that normally come with it, I mean regarding standards of behaviour and

¹ The title of the 'Réponse' refers to the 1671 and 1679 titles of Bacilly's treatise, both of which differ from the original 1668 publication (see Editorial notes, p.155).

² The 'Réponse' precedes the main text of the treatise and is numbered separately.

the proprieties of conversation in society, with the result that the position of singer is lowered to that of minstrel when one wants to be disparaging. Therefore one sees that if a man is called /6/ [a singer], he will at once deny it and will refute it as a deliberate insult, saying that he does not sing for his living, only for his pleasure.

It would therefore be desirable for those who wish to cultivate this fine art to have at least some basic knowledge of the French language and above all some notion of spelling, which would help them avoid the thousand pitfalls that I notice every day. For example, they would know the difference between *bonne* and *bone*, and between *comme* and *come*, *ailleurs* and *aileurs* in the first air of the first book *in octavo*, *Tout languit dans nostre bocage* [Ex.1] and in the air *Sortez petits oiseaux* on page 81 [Ex.2].

Example 1 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* I, 1679, p.1 (new air). Bacilly *Meslanges* 1671, f.26v-28.]

pour chan - ter ail - leurs: Fai - sons com -
pour chan - ter ail - leurs: Fai - sons com -
- me eux, al - lons cher - cher Cli - me - ne,
- me eux, al - lons cher - cher Cli - me - ne,

Example 2 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* I, 1679, p.81 (new air). Ballard XXI, 1678, fol.1v-2]

§
Por - tez ail - leurs cet - te ai -
[Por]tez ail - leurs, Por - tez ail - leurs cet -
- ma - ble nou - vel - le,
- te ai - ma - ble nou - vel - le, L'in - grat Tir[cis]

They would know the difference between an aspirate *h* and one that is not and would not say, as a thousand people do while singing the *double* of *Mon cher Troupeau* on page 80 of the second book *in octavo* ‘toutazarder’, instead of ‘tuhazarder’ by eliminating the *t* and not the *h*.³ Nor would they say ‘trouverrez’ instead of ‘trouverez’ in /7/ the air *Soucy chagrin* on page 23 of the *Journal des Nouveautés du Chant* [Ex.3].

Example 3 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679, p.23 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil* 1679, fol.6v-7]⁴

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Soucy chagrin'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef, both in common time (C). The lyrics are: 'Vous ne trou-ve-rez, Dieu mer-cy, Par-my les bu-veurs'. The second system also has a treble clef and a bass clef, both in common time. The lyrics are: 'que voi-cy, Vous ne trou-ve-rez, Dieu mer-cy, De ré-veur ny d'a-mant tran-si.' There are repeat signs at the beginning and end of the first system, and a 'dal' sign at the end of the second system.

They would know when to pronounce a double *r* when singing and would not say ‘leur age’ instead of ‘leur rage’, to which a singer recently drew my attention. As for [being aware of] more specific observations that I will mention further on, which sometimes even go against notions of spelling, it would be asking too much of these people; at least they should submit more willingly to those who are knowledgeable on this subject and not wildly criticise what is beyond their understanding.

It is therefore true to say that singing involves a lot more than one can imagine if one considers the level of perfection I believe it has reached and from whence it will soon decline, for want of anyone getting ready to take over from those who raised it to this level and are too old to maintain it there much longer.

This assertion will no /8/ doubt seem somewhat presumptuous to those who are ignorant of all the particularities that complement this fine art and are under the illusion that if some have been able to reach perfection in this art, then others will be found who can perpetuate and maintain it in the future; but they do not realize that it is already a

³ This air from Bacilly’s lost *Trois livres d’airs* vol.II, 1679, was published in Ballard (1703), pp.20-21; the double is not provided by Ballard.

⁴ This air was published with a second *dessus* part.

miracle nowadays to have found in this century a man who by himself had all the qualities that are not even found in all the musicians put together and who was generous enough (a quality very rarely found amongst musicians) to share them freely with a few others, who perhaps when they wish to will not find good and responsive pupils to whom they could pass on their teaching and their knowledge. For I maintain that it is very rare in this art to encounter pupils capable of instruction, partly due to the neglect in teaching young musicians some knowledge of literature, but mainly because each individual is so strongly attached to his nation's bad habits /9/ that all the education in the world would not rid them of their errors of speech, be it in pronunciation or quantity.

I am therefore saying that there is only one man at present of whom it can be said *gaudeant bene nati*,⁵ who is well-versed in literature, possesses a charming voice, prodigious skill, delicate taste, marvellous discernment, a natural ability to execute what is most perfect in singing, the knowledge of music and of composition. What is more, he had the privilege of being noticed in his youth (for his singing and even more so for the fine body and mind with which he was born) by a great king who was wise enough to recognize his rare merit by granting him the most prestigious positions, in which he developed further the refinement of singing that came naturally to him, so that the attribute of singer, which normally shames those who possess it, has always been borne honourably by him and has set him apart from other courtiers.

This is why we still see nowadays /10/ that nothing is considered good in singing unless he has judged it to be so, and that the older he grows, the more inspiration he has, as I have noticed day after day over the past twenty-five years I have had the honour of being acquainted with him, and I know from experience that the most accomplished composers are only too pleased when he takes the trouble of polishing their works, I mean as regards the ornaments of French song, which he knows how to apply to words with infinite discernment and delicacy. What am I saying, of French song: even of foreign song, Italian I mean, and Spanish, in which he knows how to adjust the melodies to make them fit the words whose strengths and weaknesses he knows better than the foreigners themselves who have admired him, especially Signor Luiggi⁶ who wept with joy on hearing him execute his airs – what am I saying execute?

⁵ 'Let the well born rejoice'.

⁶ Luigi Rossi.

I mean embellish them and even change notes here and there to fit the Italian words better.

Nevertheless, to conclude his praise /11/ I must say that a man of his stature who would have a right to speak out with all the authority conferred upon him by the perfection of his talent, instead has a perfect modesty and one could even say that he is too lenient in excusing the shortcomings he notices in singing, saying ‘that there is no accounting for tastes and everyone is entitled to his own feeling’ and that everything ‘is good in singing as long as it is well performed’. Yet it is a fact that there are embellishments that, though well performed, are nonetheless wrongly applied to the words. And as for the performance itself, feelings and opinions are divided.

Some people think that since singing has elements of declamation and since its aim is to express the passions, it must be performed with great affectation, which others would qualify as ‘histrionic singing’; as for me, I believe that this great affectation, often accompanied by grimacing, adds nothing to singing and is only applicable to recitative, by which I mean the stage; but as regards /12/ the singing performed in the salons, I maintain that its charm is enhanced by eliminating this over-pompous manner of singing which suppresses all its daintiness and delicacy, provided that pronunciation is not affected, especially the *r* that follows or precedes a consonant and the *o*, which should never be pandered to.

To demonstrate what I am saying, I have noticed that of two illustrious ladies who sing to the height of perfection, one has the advantage over the other in being able to perform those playful wordless airs that consists purely in a delicacy of the throat, which the second lady agrees she could never achieve; and yet when it comes to performing recitative and bringing singing to life, the first lady fulfils her task as well as the second who can only sing in this affected manner. This shows that being able to sing daintily is an added quality and not otherwise, and that it is far easier for one who sings delicately /13/ to bring singing to life when appropriate than it is for one who sings with more emphasis to make the throat flexible enough for a thousand delicacies.

One must therefore conclude in favour of ‘galant’ and delicate singing and say that the other manner is better suited to a master singer, whose aim it is to delight an assembled audience, than to a lady who sings solely for her own enjoyment.

But to come to the criticism of this book, I do not mean the crude criticism worthy of the parentage and education of the one who levelled it, who is in the habit of jeering at everything with impunity and who saw fit by means of a pitiful play on words

more worthy of a kitchen boy than of a man who moves in polite society, to call ‘stinking bacon’⁷ [(] as I say, when alluding to the art of singing)⁸ a work for which he should have some respect (as he should for *airs spirituels*, which he calls ‘unspiritual’, a name in truth best suited to its progenitor). /14/ He should remind himself that he consulted the author (from whom he learnt all the most significant airs he knows) about certain questionable points regarding the French language when applied to singing, which were so laughable that even a child would have known the answer, and yet he thinks so highly of himself as to dare to set himself up as an authority before those who should eternally be his masters; I mean the composers of whom he can only be a permanent imitator, not only as regards composition but even for the application of [the art of] singing to airs that are given to him in notated form.⁹

Let us therefore leave aside this ridiculous criticism, and put it on a par with the dubious praise and feigned applause referred to in Chapter Eleven of this treatise when referring to certain old gentlemen; for it wants to impress upon me, out of wicked spite and in order to conceal both malicious gossip and ingratitude in certain quarters, that I wanted to write about a man to whom the whole world is /15/ indebted for fine singing and who, in spite of his age, is the authority for all those who take it into their heads to sing due to his delicacy and facility that come as naturally to him as if he were only thirty years old.

I want to discuss a rather more significant criticism that warrants a point-by-point answer and I even agree that some things were worth correcting, which I have done. Here is therefore what I have drawn from it.

Some say that I have devised rules for the quantity of French syllables that are often prejudicial to vocal ornamentation.

To this I reply that vocal ornamentation must be considered either with or without words and a certain ornament may be appropriate without words, yet unsuitable when associated to a syllable that, due to its brevity, cannot sustain it.

Here is quite a recent example of a monosyllable on which an ornament that is only suited to long syllables is regularly performed. /16/ I refer to the words *l'on aime*, in which the monosyllable, which precedes a vowel, must become short although it would have been long had it preceded a consonant. Consequently, one must not claim

⁷ ‘lard relans’ (the modern spelling is ‘relent’).

⁸ ‘l’art de chanter’. The play on words in question is not entirely clear but may be ‘lard relans’ for ‘l’art relans’.

⁹ This refers to the application of improvised ornamentation and embellishment.

that the words *l'on aime* are in the same category as *l'on pense* or *l'on passe* or other similar words.

What is more, when I discussed this type of syllable that contains the letter *n* preceded by a vowel and is followed by [a word beginning with] a consonant,¹⁰ I admit that I went too far and that it is much safer to keep them short, though not entirely so; they should be semi-short and retain as a small indication of their length the *doublement de gosier* that is discussed in Chapter 12, page 196. This is better than exposing oneself to censure by giving them a more significant indication of length such as a long *cadence*. For example, in the air *C'est folie dans la vie*,¹¹ on page 79 of the *Journal des Nouveautés du Chant*, it is much better to place the *cadence* on *le*, on the words *le bon vin*, than on *bon*, particularly in the other vocal part.

/ 17/ However, I could not avoid making such a syllable a long one, considering that it was so full of consonants. This is in one of my *airs spirituels*, on page 39 of the second volume, on the word *Redempteur* where, according to the rule, the *cadence* ought to have been placed on the first syllable of this word [Ex.4].

Example 4 [Bacilly *Airs spirituels* vol.2, 1679, p.39 (lost). Bacilly I, 1688, p.32]

The musical notation for Example 4 is a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of several measures. The lyrics are: O — mon u - ni - que — Re - demp - teur. The word 'Redempteur' is split across two measures, with 'Re - demp' in the first and '- teur' in the second. There are various ornaments and phrasing marks above the notes.

On page 43 of the first book of airs *in octavo*, one will notice that the first syllable of the word *contraindre*, which was long in the first edition, has been corrected.

Example 5 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.43. Bacilly I, 1668, p.43 shows original version before 1679 amendments]¹²

The musical notation for Example 5 is a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 3/2, and then to 2/2. The lyrics are: bien sans beau - coup me con - train - dre. The word 'contraindre' is split across two measures, with 'con - train' in the first and '- dre' in the second. There are various ornaments and phrasing marks above the notes.

¹⁰ See Pt.3, Ch.III, rule 2.

¹¹ This air has not been located.

¹² This extract is from the third verse of 'Qui conte les faveurs', a rare example in the two volumes of an air with more than one subsequent embellished verse. However, Bacilly only provides the first half (the first ten bars) of this third verse.

I also find it appropriate to add a comment concerning vocal performance that seems contrary to a rule I thought infallible, and which would indeed be so if it were true to say that one should sing as one speaks, be it in public or in private, and that speech in singing is no different from that of declamation¹³ itself. One should avoid throwing certain final syllables, either masculine or feminine ones, or even monosyllables, onto the following word; for nothing can be more misleading, and it is /18/ only in the last few years that I have acknowledged this fact and even the most talented people can be seen making this mistake every day.

Accordingly, I have to retract what I wrote on page 423 concerning the words *Le ciel a changé son couroux* and *Soupirs de langueur et d'amour*. In these examples, it is much safer not to throw the final syllable of *changé* onto the word *son*, nor the last syllable of *langueur* onto the word *et*; for this results in (*gé son*) and [(*gueur et*).¹⁴ The same goes for the examples on page 420 and the next ones, where I wrongly said that some masculine final syllables can be thrown onto the following vowel; for it is better to keep some sort of separation.

There are many more examples concerning this rule in the *in quarto*¹⁵ and *in octavo* books, which have recently been enlarged with several notable airs and have also been corrected here and there not only in accordance with this rule, which is of great importance; but also /19/ in keeping with the new understanding I have acquired, of which I confess I was naively ignorant, which just shows you that one improves every day when one takes the trouble to study things carefully and when one does not take things for granted, which is the problem with many people and especially the young.

Here is an example in the first air, *Rochers je ne veux point*, etc., of the second book of airs *in octavo*, on the words *redise les malheurs*, when one throws the final syllable of *redise* onto the word *les*, resulting in *se les* [Ex.6]. Instead these should be kept apart by the means of a *la* and *sol* added to the *fa* of *les*.¹⁶

¹³ 'declaration' (*sic*).

¹⁴ In the original text the parentheses have been muddled: it reads '(*gé son*) (and) *gueur et*'.

¹⁵ The latest edition (the fourth) of the Lambert volume appeared in 1669 (see Editorial notes, p.157).

¹⁶ Presumably, these two grace notes, *a'* and *g'*, precede the *f'* of 'les' and also anticipate this monosyllable.

Example 6 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.II, 1679 (new air). Bacilly *Meslanges* 1671, fol.22v-23]¹⁷

Ro - chers, je ne veux
 Ro - chers, je ne veux
 point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs
 point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs

The same applies to the words of the air *Parmy les maux* on page 21 of the same book [Ex.7], where one must avoid joining the final syllable of the word *Parmy* to the following word, *les*, which sounds as if *miles* were written. One must therefore lengthen the final syllable of *Parmy*, or even better, a *fa* must be added to the *mi* of *les* while keeping it short.

Example 7 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.II, 1679, p.80 (new air). Bacilly *Meslanges* 1671, fol.24v-25)

Par - my les maux que l'ab - sen - ce nous cau - se, L'es - poir d'un prompt re - tour,
 Par - my les maux que l'ab - sen - ce nous cau - se, L'es - poir d'un prompt re - tour,

¹⁷ A different version of this air was published by Ballard in 1668 (ex. i):
 Ex.i [Ballard XI, 1668, fol.7v-8]

Ro - chers, je
 Ro - chers, je ne veux point, je
 ne veux point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs,
 ne veux point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs,

The same goes for the words *de part à ma tendresse*, from /20/ the air *Si je puis une fois* on page 60 of the *Journal des Nouveautez du Chant* [Ex.8]. Instead of joining the two syllables *maten*, one should add a *re* and say *mi re mi*.

Example 8 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil* 1679, fol.34v-35]¹⁸

Qu'il n'es-pe - re ja-mais de part à ma ten- dres - se;

And in the air *J'ay trouvé le secret* on page 50 of the same *Journal* [Ex.9], one should similarly avoid throwing the last syllable of *finissent* onto the word *aujourd'huy*, as if *sentau* were written, and the two should be kept apart by means of an *accent* on the said final syllable.

Example 9 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil* 1679, fol.11v-12]

Mes plain-tes, mes cha - grins fi - nis - sent au - jour-d'huy,

On page 34 of the first book *in [octavo]*¹⁹ on the words *Si vous estes des*, etc. [Ex.10], and on page 52 on the words *tant de severité* [Ex.11], one will similarly notice the correction made in accordance with this rule, as well as on page 59, on the words *Parmy les champs* [Ex.12].

Example 10 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.34. Bacilly I, 1668, p.34 shows original version before 1679 amendments]

Si vous es - tes des plus cru - el - les Pour

¹⁸ The lower part is labelled 'basse continue' in the source and the first words of the air appear in the first bar.

¹⁹ The text reads 'du I. Livre in 4'.

Example 11 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.52. Bacilly I, 1668, p.52 shows original version before 1679 amendments]

Pour - quoy Phi - lis tant de se - ve - ri - té
 [ayme] Pour - quoy Phi - lis tant de se - ve - ri - té

Example 12 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.59. Bacilly I, 1668, p.59 shows original version before 1679 amendments]²⁰

Cher - cher des fleurs par - my les champs

I also recall two examples affected by this rule amongst the airs of Mr. Boësset: *Du plus doux de ses Traits* [Ex.13] and *Me veux-tu voir mourir* [Ex.14], in the first of which the final syllable of *je l'aime* is thrown onto the word *sans*, resulting in *me sans*, instead of keeping them apart by placing these three notes, *re ut re*,²¹ on the syllable *me*; and in the second example, on the words *ce /21/ funeste plaisir*, the final syllable of *funeste* is thoughtlessly joined to *plai* when one should instead add a dot to the last note of *funeste* or repeat²² the note on *plai*.

Example 13 [Boësset VIII, 1632, fol.1v-2]

Je l'ay - me Je l'ay - me sans de - sir,
 Je l'ay - me sans de - sir, Je l'ay - me sans de - sir,

Example 14 [Boësset IX, 1642, fol.28v-29]

[don]ner à tes yeux ce fu - nes - te plai - sir.

²⁰ This air was included in Ballard (1703), pp.236-8; however, the music is only provided for the first verse, whereas the words Bacilly points to are in the second. Ballard's text reads 'Et chercher des fleurs dans les champs', which differs from Bacilly (1668), I, p.59 'Chercher des fleurs parmy les champs'.

²¹ I.e. *d'' c'' d''*.

²² 'doubler la note', i.e. by way of a *doublement*.

In the past few years two notable airs have become fashionable in which no one noticed this error though it was even more glaring than in the previous examples. These airs are *Lorsque Tircis sçeut m'engager* and *Des pleurs que je répans*. In the first one, the word *sçeut* was thrown so heavily that the result was *sumen*, instead of singing *mi re mi* on the first syllable of *m'engager*. [Ex.15]

Example 15 [Le Camus (1678), pp.54-54]²³

In the second air, the words *j'aime à m'entretenir* were linked together so inappropriately that the result was a dreadfully cacophonous *Maman*, when singing three notes on the final syllable of *j'aime à* in order to keep it apart from the first syllable of *m'entretenir* could remedy the problem.²⁴

I am well aware that incredulous people will not hesitate to say that all these errors are fictitious and that /22/ all kinds of words can be made to sound ridiculous by cutting them up in this way; I would have agreed with them before having second thoughts induced in me by a man more talented than either them or me, and I would have found it hard to say otherwise, which proves that the more one progresses, the more one acquires enlightenment and an understanding of things that are of close interest.

²³ This air was also published in Ballard XVII (1674), fol. 8v-9.

²⁴ This air appears in Ballard XX (1677), fol.34v-35. However, the words 'j'aime à m'entretenir' do not occur here. The second half of the air begins 'J'ay beau m'en souvenir', which may be a variant of Bacilly's reference and so is provided here as ex. ii.

Ex.ii:

There is yet another rule on page 424 of this treatise where I admit having been too set in my opinion when I differentiated between the examples *Que pretendez-vous? Vous l'entendez mal, Que me laissez-vous? Vous n'y pensez pas,*²⁵ and these: *Je vous dis toujours aimez-moy, Ah! Que ne m'aimez-vous? Sçavez-vous bien pourquoi?*²⁶ For it is true that the best thing to do is to make all syllables ending with a z short. As for what I wrote concerning the words *ordonnez moy* in the air *Disposez de mon sort*²⁷ to justify the long final syllable /23/ of *ordonnez*, the author's²⁸ claim that the same cannot be said of the words *ne m'ordonnez point* that follow is groundless; for I believe that he himself would now accept the fact that each final syllable is as short as the other, as are all similar syllables that are naturally long but become short when followed by the monosyllable that completes their meaning.

In accordance with this rule I have shortened a note that I had thought should be long in the air *Après mille rigueurs* on page 73 of the second book *in octavo* [Ex.16], on the word *partez*, whose final syllable, being followed by the monosyllable *donc*, loses its length without question.

Example 16 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* 1679. Bacilly II, 1668, p.73 shows original version before 1679 amendment]

The image shows a musical score for two systems. The first system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff has a 3/4 time signature and contains the notes for 'A - prez mil - le ri -'. The bass staff has a 3/4 time signature and contains the notes for 'A - prez mil - le ri -'. The second system also consists of two staves. The treble staff has a 3/4 time signature and contains the notes for '-gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli - me - ne'. The bass staff has a 3/4 time signature and contains the notes for '-gueurs vous par - tez donc Cli - me - ne'. There are various musical notations such as '6' and 'b' above and below notes, and a bracketed 'b' above the treble staff.

There is a comment I would like to make in connection with this rule to which few people pay attention when they sing this very well-known air, *Que servent tes conseils*: they make the final syllable of *malgré* as long as possible, not taking into

²⁵ See present translation, Exx.187 and 188, pp.443-4.

²⁶ See present translation, p.446 (no musical examples).

²⁷ See present translation, p.445, Ex.190.

²⁸ Michel Lambert.

account that it is followed by the monosyllable *moy*, when it is /24/ the first syllable [of *malgré*] they should be making long. [Ex.17]

Example 17 [Ballard VIII, 1628, fol.14v-15]

Mal - gré moy me fait con - sen - tir

This rule not only applies to French but also to Latin, and I took exception to the work of a composer quite proficient in Latin who, having written a motet on the Blessed Sacrament, claimed that the final syllables of the three words *sanctifica*, *vivifica*, *conforta* were long; but these being followed by the word *me* unquestionably lose their length and it is their originally short penultimate syllable that becomes long.

The same can be said of monosyllables which, though normally long, become short when they are followed by another monosyllable that completes the meaning of the words, as I pointed out in the air *Rochers je ne veux point*, in which the monosyllable *veux* from long becomes short and transfers its length to *ne*, normally a short monosyllable [Ex.18].

Example 18 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.II, 1679 (new air). Ballard XI, 1668, fol.7v-8]

Ro - chers, je ne veux

Ro - chers, je ne veux

point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs

point que vos - tre e - cho fi - del - le Re - di - se les mal - heurs

There are many similar examples in the corrected edition of the airs *in octavo* where small stars indicate the corrections: on page 31 of the first book, on the words *plus temps* [Ex.19]; on page /25/ 48 of the same book on the words *plus belle* [Ex.20]; on page 4 of the same book on the words *Revoltons nous*, where the final syllable of *Revoltons* has been made short though it was previously long [Ex.21].

Example 19 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.31. Bacilly I, 1668, p.31, shows original version before 1679 amendment]

[char]mes he - las il n'est plus temps

Example 20 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.48. Bacilly I, 1668, p.48, shows original version before 1679 amendment]

Mais la plus belle vi - - -
 Mais la plus belle vi - - -
 -e ne vaut pas la mort que j'at - tens
 -e ne vaut pas la mort que j'at - tens

Example 21 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.4. Bacilly I, 1668, p.4 shows original version before 1679 amendment]

[tré]pas Mon cœur re - vol - -
 [tré]pas Mon cœur Mon cœur re - vol - -
 - tons nous con - tre el - - le
 - tons nous con - tre el - - le

Secondly I am criticised for having failed to give general rules in musical notation for the different types of ornaments applicable to a simply notated melody.

In truth I cannot but admire the stupidity of those who think that one can make infallible rules according to the intervals of a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth or an octave for ornamenting a melody which (as is customary) is notated in a simple way, as if this

did not entirely depend on the meaning of the words, their quantity and their expression; and if one were to write down all the different possibilities of *passages* and diminutions, which is all what ignorant people believe proper singing to be about, the very choice of ornaments would give no end of trouble /26/ to those who are ill-versed in French; and their number is so great that it is quite a common occurrence among musicians who often cannot even read it nor write it.

I therefore found it preferable to advise those willing to acquire a good notion and a perfect understanding of vocal ornaments, if not scientifically then at least as a matter of ‘routine’, to study carefully with the required discernment the second verses in diminution contained in all the engraved volumes, in those of Monsieur Lambert *in quarto* as well as those in two volumes *in octavo* in which, in the present year 1679, several *passages* have recently been corrected that were not placed with all the accuracy and the better understanding I have acquired since the first edition; one will notice that small stars have been added to indicate where these corrections were made. They have in addition been enlarged with the most beautiful airs, including their second verses, to have been published /27/ for a long time, namely *Rochers je ne veux point que vostre Echo fidelle*;²⁹ *Après avoir souffert sans declarer mon feu*;³⁰ *Tout languit dans nostre bocage*;³¹ *Voicy le temps ou tout parle d’amour*;³² *Le Printemps il est vray ramene la verdure*;³³ *J’ay mille fois pensé dans ma douce langueur*;³⁴ *Sortez petits oiseaux, sortez de ce bocage*;³⁵ *Parmy les maux que l’absence cause*;³⁶ *Que je vous plains tristes soupirs*;³⁷ *Mon cher troupeau cherchez la Plaine*;³⁸ *Puis qu’une insensible Bergere*.³⁹

The airs in the *Journal des Nouveautez du Chant* are also well worth studying for improving oneself as regards vocal technique and the application of appropriate *passages* to words, due to their accurate second verses.

²⁹ See Exx.6 and 18.

³⁰ Ballard XVI, 1673, fol.35v-36 contains the air ‘Après avoir souffert sans declarer mon sort’.

³¹ See Ex.1.

³² See Ex.24 below.

³³ Ballard XIX, 1676, fol.2v-3.

³⁴ Ballard XII, 1669, fol.2v-3.

³⁵ See Ex.2.

³⁶ See Ex.7.

³⁷ Lachèvre (1967), vol.3, p.711, lists this as a poem signed ‘Air B.’.

³⁸ See Fn.3.

³⁹ Lachèvre (1967), vol.3, p.704, lists a literary incipit that closely resembles this, ‘Puisqu’une irascible bergère’.

The *airs spirituels* I have published in two volumes, the second of which was enlarged by one third in the present year 1679, can also be /28/ very edifying provided one takes the trouble of comparing the second embellished verses with the first ones by singing them plainly, noting the care and skill applied in correcting the flaws [when the words] did not tally with [the melody of] the first verse. Amongst these airs, there is one in the second volume on page 48, *Malgré mes passions* where one will notice that the fourth line of the second verse,

Occupez desormais mon ame toute entiere [Ex.22a]

is much longer than that of the first verse:

Et je crains ce que je desire [Ex.22b]

But as there is a repetition in the first verse, resulting in a lengthening of the line, and that there is no such repetition in the second verse, the whole thing sounds fine, so much so that unless the two lines are compared with each other, this discrepancy is not noticeable.

Example 22a [Bacilly *Airs spirituels* vol.2, 1679, p.48 (lost). Bacilly I, 1688, p.36]

Example 22a shows a musical score in 3/2 time. The top staff contains the melody for the first verse, with lyrics: [pou]voir Oc - cu - pez des - or -. The bottom staff contains the melody for the second verse, with lyrics: - mais mon a - me... tou - te en - tie - - re. The second verse melody is significantly longer than the first, due to the absence of a repetition that would have lengthened the first verse.

Example 22b [Bacilly *Airs spirituels* vol.2, 1679, p.48 (lost). Bacilly I, 1688, p.36]

Example 22b shows a musical score in 3/2 time. The top staff contains the melody for the first verse, with lyrics: pas Et je crains Et je. The bottom staff contains the melody for the second verse, with lyrics: pas Et je crains Et je. The two verses are of equal length, as the first verse includes a repetition that lengthens its line.

[b]
crains ce que je de - si - - - re
crains ce que je de - si - - - re

It is therefore very useful for those who wish to learn /29/ vocal ornaments, which consist of *passages* and diminutions and their application to words, to study the second verses contained in all the engraved books. Monsieur Lambert's book contains twenty. The two enlarged books *in octavo* contain fifty-two. The *Journal des Nouveautés du Chant* has fifteen. The first volume of *airs spirituels* has eleven and the enlarged second volume, thirteen, so all together that makes about one hundred and ten second verses. These engraved books can all be found at G[uillaume] de Luyne's, bookseller at the palace.⁴⁰

What is more, I am willing to give further clarifications concerning any doubtful points that may remain, as I have done for several professionals who benefited from it and were very grateful.

The majority of other *doubles* are so erroneous as regards the quantity of French that far /30/ from being educational, they only reinforce the ignorance of those who learn them as they are written by composers who are either so ill-read or who compound whatever knowledge they have with a provincial parlance, which is the scourge of French singing. However, as one is so easily taken in by the little worth of these works, I have nothing to say other than *qui vult decipi decipiatur*.⁴¹

I still have to give a few clarifications concerning some questionable points that were put to me. On whether one should say *quelque* instead of *queque*, it is ridiculous to doubt that the *l* should be pronounced, notwithstanding the opinion of an illustrious man who recently was stubbornly assuring me otherwise.

On knowing whether the final *s* in the words *Tu pourras aisément*, from the air *Est-ce pour Cloris* on page 75 of the *Journal* [Ex.23], and in *Voicy le temps ou tout parle d'amour* on page 85 of the first book engraved *in octavo* [Ex.24] should be pronounced.

⁴⁰ 'au Palais' refers to the Palais de Justice in Paris. Many booksellers had their shops around the university and the Palais the Justice, the administrative and royal judicial centre with its numerous courts. It was there that specialised booksellers had their stalls. (Martin [1996], pp.7-9.)

⁴¹ 'Let him who wants to be deceived, be deceived'.

Example 23 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679, p.75 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil* 1679, fol.32v-33]⁴²

Soû - pi - re plû - tost pour la pin - te, Tu
 Soû - pi - re plû - tost pour la pin - te, Tu
 pour - ras ai - sé - ment con - ten - ter ton de - sir.
 pour - ras ai - sé - ment con - ten - ter ton de - sir.

Example 24 [Bacilly (lost) *Trois livres d'airs* vol.I, 1679, p.85 (new air). Ballard XIX, 1676, fol.22v-23]

Voi-cy le temps où tout par - le d'a-mour,
 Voi - cy le temps où tout par - le d'a-mour, Les oy - seaux,

/31/ I say that even if one were taking a breath and that some kind of pause was indicated, since the mind registers that a vowel comes next, the *s* must be pronounced, and the opposite is true when a consonant follows the *s*: the same can be said of the word *Vergers* in the air *depuis que nos Vergers ont perdu* etc. on page 9 of the *Journal* [Ex.25], and of the word *Guerriers* in the air *Puisque nous avons la paix* [Ex.26], the final *s* being followed by a vowel, the *s* must be sounded without pronouncing the *r*, but if a consonant followed, neither of these two consonants would be pronounced as it is explained at greater length on page 314 of this treatise regarding the word *Toûjours*.

Example 25 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679, p.9 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil*, 1679, fol.25v-26]⁴³

De - puis que nos ver - gers ont per - du leur ver - du - re,

⁴² This air was published with a second *dessus* part.

⁴³ The lower part is both labelled 'basse continue' and is supplied with the first three words of the text.

Example 26 [*Journaux etc.*, (n.d.) pp.29-30]⁴⁴

tous luy ren - dre hom - ma - ge Bra - ves guer - riers il n'est plus temps de car - na - ge

tous luy ren - dre hom - ma - ge Bra - ves guer - riers il n'est plus temps de car - na - ge

As for the word *Berger* in the air *Allez Berger retirez-vous* on page 52 of the *Journal* [Ex.27], the *r* must be sounded and sustained a short while to indicate that only one shepherd is involved.

Example 27 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679, p.52 (lost). Ballard *Premier recueil*, 1679, fol.13v-14]⁴⁵

Al - lez, Ber - ger, re - ti - rez - vous,

Al - lez, Ber - ger, re - ti - rez - vous, Lais[ser]

The same occurs in the air *Les Mouchérons etc.* on page 15 of the /32/ 1679 *Journal* [Ex.28], on the words *Que leur instinct*, where the *c* of *instinct* must be pronounced but not the *t*.

Example 28 [(Bacilly) *Journal* 1679, p.15 (lost). *Journaux etc.*, (n.d.), pp.31-2]⁴⁶

Que leur in - stinct est ad - mi - ra - ble

Que leur in - stinct est ad - mi - ra - ble

⁴⁴ In this *air à boire* (a rondo) the bass part is presented first and the upper part, labelled 'contrepartie', is on the following page.

⁴⁵ This air was published with a second *dessus* part.

⁴⁶ In this *air à boire*, the bass part is presented first and the upper part, labelled 'contrepartie', is on the following page.

Speaking of this word, I have noticed a very common error regarding the pronunciation of the syllable *in* that people pronounce like the syllable *ain*⁴⁷ not only in the final syllable of the words *chagrin*, *destin* and the monosyllables *fin*, *vin* etc. but also in other similar French words; one hears it again and again and nothing can be more ludicrous. One should therefore tone down this pronunciation when the *rime* requires that some *e* or *a* be mixed with it so that *vin* and *chagrin* rhyme with *main*, *inhumain*, *certain* and other similar words as is the custom, whether rightly or wrongly (a point that has not yet been settled);⁴⁸ but when no rhyme is involved, there is no reason whatsoever to mix in this type of *e*;⁴⁹ it is entirely superfluous.

THE END

⁴⁷ In his discussion on the compound vowel 'oi' (p.285/ 345), Bacilly indicates that 'ain' is pronounced as an open *e* vowel, that is, 'è', with the *n* sounded at the end ('è-n'), in contrast to the modern nasalised pronunciation of 'ain'.

⁴⁸ Therefore 'in' should not normally be pronounced as 'ain' (i.e. 'è-n'), but this cannot be avoided when a word such as 'vin' is made to rhyme with 'main', in which case one should 'tone down' the open *e* vowel.

⁴⁹ That is, an open *e*.

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