The Old English Edition. Ro. iii.

SIX MADRIGALS

TO FOUR VOICES.

BY

GEORGE KIRBYE, 1597.

EDITED BY

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Preface.

THE object of this Edition is to present in an accessible form various works by English composers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, which would otherwise be difficult to obtain.

It is intended to reprint a selection from the music hidden away in public and private libraries, which is almost unknown, except to antiquaries and collectors of rare books.

Each volume will be accompanied by Introductions, Biographical Notices, and references to the authorities whence information is obtained.



Introduction

to Mo. iii. Old English Edition.

VERY little is known of George Kirbye's life. Neither the date nor the place of his birth has yet been discovered, though it is not unlikely that he was a native of Suffolk, where the surname Kirbye was and still is common. His connection with Rushbrooke and the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmund's, gives some grounds for this conjecture.

In 1592 occurs the first mention of his name. In that year Thomas Este published his "Whole Book of Psalms," and he employed Kirbye amongst others to write new settings to the old Psalm-tunes for this work. In his preface Este explains that "although I might have used the skill of some one learned Musition, in the setting of these Psalmes in 4 parts, yet for varieties sake, I have intreated the help of many: beeing such as I know to be expert in the Arte and sufficient to answere such curious carping Musitions, whose skill hath not bene employed to the furthering of this work." Now as Kirbye contributed more to the Book of Psalms than any of the ten musicians employed, excepting John Farmer, we may assume that he had made some reputation as a musician as early as 1592.

[Este's Whole Book of Psalms, 1592. Mus. Ant. Society's edition.]

Some time before 1597 Kirbye entered the service of Sir Robert

^a A William Kirbye lived at Barrow, near Bury St. Edmund's, where his daughters Anne and Susan were baptized in 1593 and 1594 respectively. The name is still to be met with at Bury St. Edmund's, and in the surrounding district.

Jermyn of Rushbrooke, near Bury St. Edmund's b, as domestic musician and instructor to his daughters, Mistress Anne and Mistress Frances Jermyn. It was for them (as he tells us) that he composed his book of Madrigals, published in 1597, and now reprinted for the first time.

Sir Robert Jermyn^c is described by Fuller as "a man of great command" in Suffolk, which he represented in Parliament more than once. He was knighted on the occasion of the Queen's visit to Bury St. Edmund's in 1578. His daughter Anne was married to Sir William Poley of Boxted, in Suffolk. Of Frances nothing is known.

[For an account of Sir Robert Jermyn and his family, see Cooper's Athenæ Cantabrigienses (1861), vol. ii. 323, where full references are given.]

On February 16, 1597-8, George Kirbye married Anne Saxye at Bradfield St. George, the next parish to Rushbrooke. Her family does not seem to have belonged to that village.

In 1601 was published the "Triumphs of Oriana," a collection of Madrigals by various composers, one of which was written by Kirbye. It has not been noticed that there were two editions of this book in 1601. In some copies (e.g. that in the Bodleian Library) Kirbye's contribution is a six-part Madrigal, "With angel's face and brightness," while in other copies this is replaced by a second six-part Madrigal, "Bright Phœbus greets most clearly."

After 1601 nothing is recorded of Kirbye.

Besides the works already mentioned, which were printed in his lifetime, Kirbye wrote some anthems, and a considerable number

b It may be worth noting that another composer of some distinction, Robert Johnson, was in the employment of Sir Thomas Kitson, at Hengrave Hall (also near Bury St. Edmund's), as early as 1575. [Rimbault, Preface to Mus. Ant. Society's Edition of Purcell's "Bonduca."]

[•] The Jermyn family, which had held Rushbrooke from the reign of King John, became extinct in 1708. The beautiful old house is still standing, but I have not been able to ascertain whether there are any traces left of Kirbye's residence there.

of Madrigals, which still exist in manuscript. In the library of the Royal College of Music is a manuscript collection of Madrigals formed by a William Firmage, which once belonged to the Sacred Harmonic Society. The writing probably dates from towards the middle of the seventeenth century. Among them are twenty-six by Kirbye. As the books containing the Quintus and Sextus parts are lost, only the four-part Madrigals are complete. The following is the list:—

An asterisk is placed against the names of those Madrigals which are not contained in the Edition of 1597, nor in the "Triumphs of Oriana."

Four-part Madrigals.

*Farewell, false Love.
Lo, here my heart.
Alas! what hope of speeding.
Farewell, my love.
Sleep now, my Muse.
Woe am I.
What can I do.

Five-part Madrigals.

That Muse which sung.
See, what a maze of error.
If pity reign.
Sweet love, oh cease.
What, shall I part.
Ah, sweet, alas.
*My lady wept.
*But when himself (2nd part).

Six-part Madrigals.

*Oh! help, alas.
*Oh! shall I die.
Up, then, Melpomene.
Why waile we thus (2nd part).

Six-part Madrigals (continued):—

- *Unkind, alas!
- *Oh! when my love.

 Must I part.

 With angel's face.

 Ah! cruel hateful fortune.
- *Mourn now, my Muse.
- *As sudden death (2nd part).

It is possible that the Madrigals marked with the asterisk formed part of the material for a second publication which apparently was contemplated by the composer; this seems at least to be implied by the dedication of the 1597 book. His intention, as far as is known, was not carried into effect d.

Burney, in his History of Music (vol. iii. p. 123), speaks of Kirbye as one of the best of the English madrigal writers. "Of the excellent madrigals by George Kirbye, as several have lately been revived at the Concerts of Ancient Music and Catch Club, there seems the less necessity to insert specimens, or give a further account of them here."

The original edition, published in 1597, contains twenty-four Madrigals. Of these six are for four voices, twelve for five voices,

- d In the Library of Christ Church, Oxford, are old manuscript copies of three Madrigals by Kirbye, beginning, "Woe is me, my strengthe fayles," "Vayne worlde, adieu," and "Sleepe restless thoughtes." These are the same as the Madrigals, "Woe am I, my heart dies," "Farewell, my love," and "Sleep now, my Muse," though the words (which are of a devotional character) are different.
- Oliphant (Musa Madrigalesca, 1837, p. 309) says that the edition of 1597 contains twenty-five Madrigals, and quotes some verses beginning—

"It is my well-beloved's voice That soundeth in mine ear,"

which, as he says, were also set by Thomas Tomkins (1622). The copy in the British Museum is perfect, and this Madrigal is not to be found in it. If Oliphant really saw a copy containing this 25th Madrigal, there must have been two editions of 1597.

and six for six voices. The six four-part Madrigals are given in the present volume: the others will be published as No. 4 and No. 5 of the Old English Edition. The voice parts are printed in separate books, Cantus primus, Cantus secundus, Altus, Sextus, Tenor, and Bassus, the four-part Madrigals being contained in the Cantus primus, Cantus secundus, Tenor and Bassus books. A table of the clefs employed in the old edition will be found at the end of this volume, which will shew the voices for which the Madrigals were originally written: as, to suit the convenience of Choral Societies, it has been thought best to transpose them, so as to bring them within the compass of the usual four unequal voices. Beyond this transposition no alteration has been made in the score.

A Pianoforte score has been added for use at practices only. A note by Mr. H. Ellis Wooldridge, on the Pianoforte accompaniment of Madrigals, will be found on page 8. The Editor takes this opportunity of expressing his thanks to Mr. Wooldridge, who not only drew his attention to Kirbye's Madrigals, but has also given him most valuable advice and assistance, and has superintended the preparation of this edition. His thanks are also due to the Rev. Canon Turner, for his help in searching the parish registers of Bradfield St. George and Rushbrooke; and to the Rev. E. Woods, of Barrow; to Lord Francis Hervey, M.P., for information about the Jermyn family papers; to Mr. A. H. Peppin, for an account of the Madrigals at the Royal College of Music; and to the Rev. T. V. Bayne, for an account of those at Christ Church, Oxford.

Note. THESE MADRIGALS CAN BE OBTAINED SEPARATELY AT SIXPENCE RACH.

NOTE ON THE PIANOFORTE ACCOMPANIMENT OF MADRIGALS.

ALTHOUGH a Pianoforte accompaniment may sometimes be necessary, in order to give confidence to less experienced singers during the first reading of a madrigal, it should not be resorted to unless the necessity is very great, and in any case should be abandoned before the final rehearsals; for the effect produced by an accompanied performance, however perfect, must always be such as the composer not only did not intend, but could not possibly have intended, or even have foreseen.

The violation of the conditions of the madrigal—for such it is which is implied in the idea of a modern accompanied performance, does not consist in the mere support of voices by means of a keyed instrument with fixed or even with tempered intervals; for though the music will always be better without that kind of accompaniment, the fact is that compositions for four voices had been published with a short score for the cembalo before the year 1600. The violation of old conditions consists in the rendering of compositions made at a time when all known scales were either natural or of unequal temperament, by an artificial scale invented within the last fifty years of which the temperament is equal. The difference is essential; but the reasons why it is so, though they have been made sufficiently clear by scientific writers, could not suitably be given within the limits of this note. The extent of the difference, however, may be demonstrated by a few simple figures, which it will require no effort or trouble to understand.

The octave, upon modern keyed instruments, is divided, as everybody knows, into twelve equal semitonic intervals; and if, for convenience of comparison with other scales, we again divide these into hundredths, or cents, we have 1,200 as the contents of the octave, and the modern diatonic scale may then be said to consist of five tones of 200 each, and two semitones of 100 each. Thus it stands upon any well-tuned pianoforte which is likely to be used for the accompaniment of madrigals. But what relation does it bear to the sounds imagined by an old musician in composing? An old musician distinguished between his whole tones, calling some major and others minor, and valued them at 204 and 182 respectively. His major 3rd and major 6th were much smaller than those on the pianoforte,—386 and 884 instead of 400 and 900. Some of his intervals on the other hand were much larger: his semitone was 112 instead of 100, and his imperfect 5th and minor 6th were 612 and 814 respectively, instead of 600 and 800 as our tuning makes them. In short, only one of his intervals, the perfect 5th, resembled its namesake in the modern scale.

The scale of the madrigal writer was empirical. It had grown out of the old modal scale with which music began, which had been devised for melody only, and in which harmony was practically impossible; and it had been gradually brought to perfection by many generations of singers in their efforts towards more and more beautiful consonance. Happily, we have not to regret its loss, for it is so inseparable from diatonic harmony that voices, if they are not troubled by accompaniment, will always instinctively fall into it, and sing no other. So that there is no reason to believe that a madrigal composer, if he could hear a modern unaccompanied performance of his work, would be able to detect any important departure from his intention.

The keyed instruments, which may or may not have been sometimes used to accompany madrigals, were probably as a rule tuned in imitation of the vocal scale, untempered. For considering

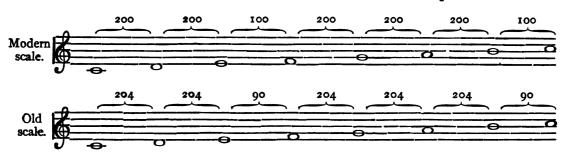
[•] It is important to remember, in considering this and the following scales, that the ear will not tolerate a deviation of more than 4 cents from the standard of any interval.

that modulation, which creates the necessity for temperament, was scarcely more than partial even at the end of the sixteenth century, and in its farther flights went in fear and trembling, the vocal scale would create little or no difficulty. But since the scale now known as the scale of unequal temperament had been constructed by the Spanish theorist Salinas in 1577, we may suppose that some keyed instruments of the madrigalian era would already have been tuned to it, and might have been used to accompany compositions of several parts. In this scale the major 3rd and minor 6th were the same as in the vocal scale, but the distinction between major and minor tones was abandoned, all alike being valued 193, and the semitone 117. The result of these differences, as well as of others which the reader may perceive in the comparisons given below, was that the harmonies became rather less beautiful than in the vocal scale, but remained still much better than those produced by the scale of the pianoforte.

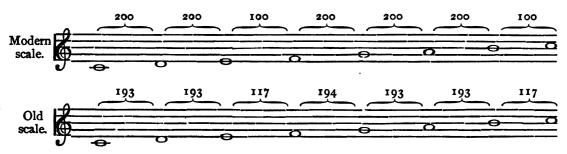
H. E. W.

b The fact that it was possible, beginning in G for instance, to close in C or D and thence return to G, was described by Morley (1597) as "a wonder of nature."

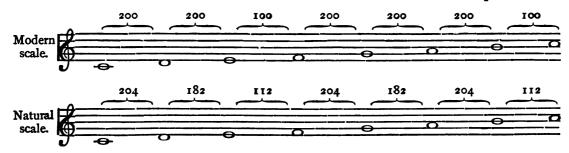
The modern diatonic scale and old modal scale compared.



The modern diatonic scale and old scale for keyed instruments compared.



The modern diatonic scale and natural vocal diatonic scale compared.



The first set

OF ENGLISH

MADRIGALLS

to 4. 5. & 6. voyces.

Made & newly published

by

GEORGE KIRBYE.

LONDON

Printed by Thomas Efte dwelling in aldersgate ftreet
1597.

To the vertuous, and very worthy Gentlewomen, Mistris Anne; & Mistris Frauncis Iermin, daughters to the right worshipfull, Syr Robert Iermin Knight, (his very good Maister) G. K. wisheth in this life, increase of all vertues, and in the life to come, the full fruition of all happinesse.



T were a thing very vnnecessary (thrife worthy & vertuous gentlewomen) for mee (although I were able) to speake any thing in commendation & praise of Musicke, considering (besides that many learned men haue learnedly written in commendation thereof) the examples of times past, and our owne experience euery day, doth giue sufficient testimonie both of

the pleafure & proffit that it bringeth to a distressed & melancholy mind. Also I think it convenient not to answere (otherwise then with silence) to those (more fencelesse then brute beastes) that with open mouthes doe in-veigh, & speake all the evill they can against that excellent knowledge. But it standeth mee in hand, rather to crave pardon, for this my boldnes, in putting to the veiw of so many learned Musitions (which this age & Realme assorbed), these first fruites of my poore knowledge in Musicke, yet I hope, that as they themselves had small entrances, beefore they came to their perfection, so they will savourably, accept of these beginnings, looking for better hereaster: And in hope of their better likings, I have made choise of you to patronise these my labours, as well for the Haereditarie vertues of your godly parentes

alreadie dwelling in you, as also for the delight, knowledge, & practise which you haue in Musicke, in the which sew or none (that I know) can excell you. Vouchfase therefore (worthy Mistrisses) to vndertake the tuition of that, which by right & equitie, you may challenge for your owne, being no straungers, but home bredd, & which for your delight & cotentments were first by me compiled: & as you seemed to like them, being mine, so I doe not doubt but you will more fauour them, now beeing your owne. Then I (your deuoted seruant) shall think my paines heerein very well rewarded, & be better encouraged to employ my time hereafter in your further seruice.

Yours in all duetie, GEORGE KIRBYE.

The Table.

Songs to four voices.

	senge to jour voices.	
I.	Lo! HERE MY HEART I LEAVE { [transposed a major second lower.]}	PAGE I
II.	Alas! what hope of speeding \{ \begin{align*} \text{Mode IX.} \\ [transposed a major second lower.] \end{align*}	9
III.	WHAT CAN I DO, MY DEAREST { Mode I. transposed. [transposed a minor third lower.]}	17
IV.	Woe am I, my heart dies . { Mode I. transposed (Chromatic).} [transposed a minor third lower.]}	26
v.	FAREWELL, MY LOVE { Mode IX. transposed. [transposed a minor third lower.]}	35
VI.	SLEEP NOW, MY MUSE { Mode IX. transposed. { [transposed a minor third lower.]}	43

Songs.



Songs.



Song i.



Lo! here my heart I leave with her remaining,

That never yet did deign to do me pleasure;

And, when I seek to move her with complaining,

She scorns my sighs and tears, alas, past measure.

Sweet Love, O turn her heart at last and joy me,

Or else her deep disdain will soon destroy me.

Song ii.

4

ALAS! what hope of speeding,
Where hope beguil'd lies bleeding?
She bade come, when she spy'd me,
And, when I came, she fly'd me.
Then, when I was beguiled,
She at my sighing smiled.

But if you take such pleasure
Of hope and joy, my treasure,
By deceit to bereave me,
Love me, and so deceive me.

^{*} These words were also set to music by Wilbye, and published in his first book of Madrigals, 1598.

Song iii.

8

What can I do, my dearest,

Of the sweet help deprived

Of those thy fair eyes,

By which I still have lived?

How can my soul endure,

Thus charg'd with sadness,

Exile from thy dear sight

So full of gladness?

Song iv.



Woe am I, my heart dies

As that which on thy will relies.

Since then I die, only in hope to please thee,

No grief of death, though cruel, shall disease me.

Yet shall I be tormented,

Cruel, to see thee pleas'd and contented.

Song v.

F

FAREWELL, my love, I part contented,
Since 'tis ordain'd that I must leave thee:
Oh, might I stay, although tormented,
The pain next death would little grieve me.
No greater torment can be proved
Than thus to part from my beloved.

Song vi.



SLEEP now, my Muse, and henceforth take thy rest,
Which all too long thyself in vain had wasted:
Let it suffice I still must live opprest,
And of my pains the fruit must ne'er be tasted.
Then sleep, my Muse; Fate cannot be withstood:
Its better sleep than wake and do no good.

A Table of the Clefs

Used in the original edition 1597.

Nos. 1 and 2.

Cantus Primus.

Cantus Primus.

Cantus Secundus.

Cantus Secundus.

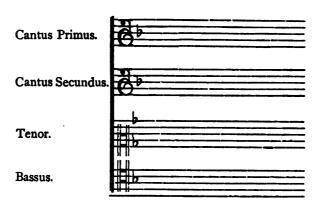
Tenor.

Bassus.

Passus.

Nos. 3 and 4.

Nos. 5 and 6.



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I.

Lo here my heart.



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I.

Lo here my heart.



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II.

Alas! what hope of speeding.











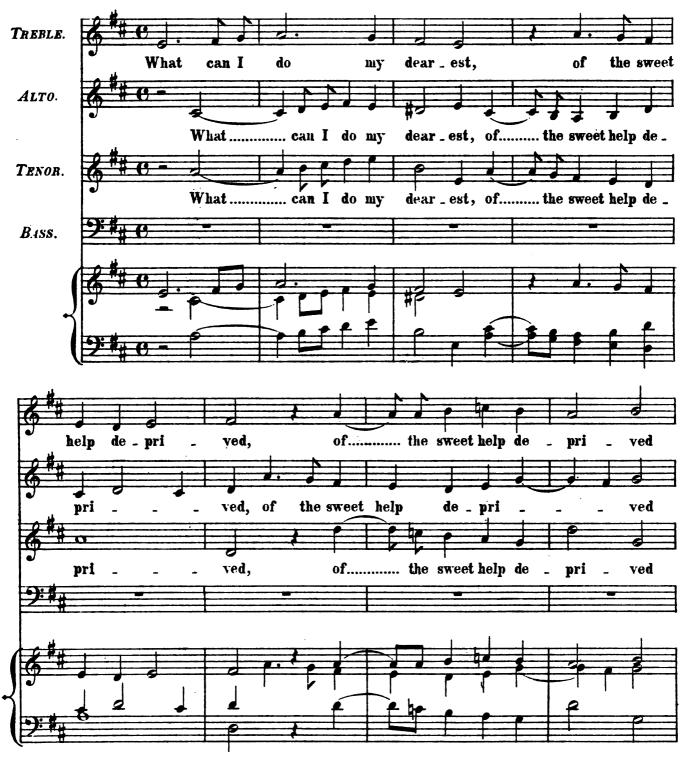






III.

What can I do my dearest.























IV.

Woe am I, my heart dies.





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V. Farewell my love.

















VI. Sleep now, my Muse.











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Here endeth the Songs of Four Parts.
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