

The ART of
DESCANT:
OR,

Composing of Musick in Parts.

By a most familiar and easie Rule.

In Three several TREATISES.

- I. *Of making Four Parts in Counterpoint.*
 - II. *A necessary Discourse of the several Keyes, and their proper Closes.*
 - III. *The Allowed Passages of all Concords, Perfect and Imperfect.*
-

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With *Annotations* thereon, by Mr. Chr. Simpson.



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Of the Cords and Discords.

THere are Nine Concords of Musick, as followeth :

A *Unison*, *Third*, *Fifth*, *Sixth*, *Eighth*, *Tenth*, *Twelfth*, *Thirteenth*, and *Fifteenth*; whereof five are called *perfect*, and four *imperfect*.

The five perfect, are *Unison*, *Fifth*, *Eighth*, *Twelfth*, and *fifteenth*: Of these, you may not take two of one sort together, neither rising or falling, as two *Fifths*, or two *Eighths*.

Of the other four, called imperfect, you may take two or three together of one sort, rising or falling, which are a *Third*, *Sixth*, *Tenth*, and *Thirteenth*.

These Nine Concords are comprehended in four, *viz.*

<i>Unison</i> ,	}	are accounted as one, for every <i>Eighth</i> is the same.
<i>Eighth</i> ,		
<i>Fifteenth</i> ,		

<i>Third</i> ,	}	likewise.
<i>Tenth</i> ,		

<i>Fifth</i> ,	}	likewise.
<i>Twelfth</i> ,		

<i>Sixth</i> ,	}	in like sort.
<i>Thirteenth</i> ,		

}

So that in effect there are but four Concords.

The Discords are, a *Second*, *Fourth*, and *Seventh*, with their *Eighths*; which being sometime mixt with Concords, make the best Musick, being orderly taken.



THE
ART of DESCANT:
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I. Of *Counterpoint.

THE parts of *Musick* are in all but four, howsoever some skilful Musicians have Composed Songs of twenty, thirty, and forty parts; for be the parts never so many, they are but one of these four in nature. The names of those four parts are these: The *Bass*, which is the lowest part and foundation of the whole Song; the *Tenor*, placed next above the *Bass*; next above the *Tenor*, the *Mean* or *Counter-Tenor*; and in the highest

*Counterpoint, in Latin Contra punctum, was the old manner of Composing parts together, by setting Points or Pricks one against another (as Minims and Semibreves are set in this following Treatise) the measure of which Points or Pricks were sung according to the quantity of the Words or Syllables to which they were applied. (For these Figures □ □ O were not as yet invented.) And, because in Plain-song Musick we set Note against Note, as they did point against point, thence it is that this kind of Musick doth still retain the name of Counterpoint.

place, the *Treble*. These four Parts by the Learned are said to resemble the four Elements; the *Bass* expresseth the true nature of the Earth, who being the gravest and lowest of all the Elements, is as a foundation to the rest; the *Tenor* is likened to the Water, the *Mean* to the Air, and the *Treble* to the Fire: Moreover, by how much the Water is more light than the Earth, by so much the Air is lighter than the Water, and Fire than Air. They have also in their native property every one place above the other; the lighter uppermost, the weightiest in the bottom. Having now demonstrated that there are in all but four parts, and that the *Bass* is the foundation of the other three, I assume that the true sight and judgment of the upper three must proceed from the lowest, which is the *Bass*; and also I conclude, that every part in nature doth affect his proper and natural place, as the Elements do.

True it is, that the ancient Musicians, who intended their Musick only for the Church, took their sight from the *Tenor*, which was rather done out of necessity than any respect to the true nature of Musick; for it was usual with them to have a *Tenor* as a *Theam*, to which they were compelled to adapt their other

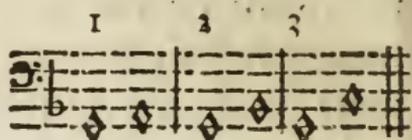
other parts : but I will plainly convince by demonstration that contrary to some opinions, the *Bass* contains in it both the Ayr and true judgment of the Key , expressing how any man at first sight may view in it all the other parts in their original essence.

In respect of the variety in Musick which is attained to by farther proceeding in the Art , as when Notes are shifted out of their native places, the *Bass* above the *Tenor*, or the *Tenor* above the *Mean*, and the *Mean* above the *Treble* ; this kind of *Counterpoint*, which I promise, may appear simple and only fit for young Beginners, (as indeed chiefly it is) yet the right speculation may give much satisfaction, even to the most skilful, laying open unto them, how manifest and certain are the first grounds of *Counterpoint*.

First, it is in this case requisite that a formal *Bass*, or at least part thereof be framed , the Notes rising and falling according to the nature of that Part, not so much by degrees, as by leaps of a third, fourth, or fifth, or eighth, a sixth being seldom, a seventh never used , and neither of both without the discretion of a skilful Composer. Next we must consider whether the *Bass* doth rise or fall, for in that consists the mystery : That rising

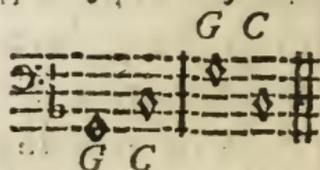
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or that falling doth never exceed a fourth, (a) for a fourth above, is the same that a fifth is underneath, and a fourth underneath is as a fifth above; for Example, if a *Bass* should rise thus :



The first rising is said to be by degrees, because there is no Note between the two Notes; the second rising is by leaps, for *G* skips over *A* to *B*, and so leaps into a third; the third example also leaps two Notes into a fourth. Now for this fourth, if the *Bass* had descended from *G* above to *C* underneath, that descending fifth in sight and use had been all one with the fourth, as here you may discern, for they both begin and end in the same Keys :

thus,



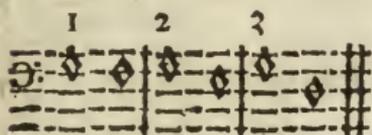
This Rule likewise holds, if the Notes descend a second, (b) third, or fourth; for the

(a) If the *Bass* do rise more than a fourth, it must be called falling: and likewise, if it fall any distance more than a fourth, that falling must be called rising.

(b) If your *Bass* should fall a seventh, it is but the same as if it did rise a second; or a sixth falling; is but the same of a third rising: and so on the contrary if the *Bass* do rise a seventh or sixth, it is the same as though it did fall a second or third.

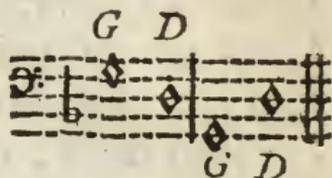
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fifth ascending, is all one with the fourth descending. Example of the first Notes.



The third two Notes which make the distance of a fourth, are all one with this fifth following.

But let us make our approach yet nearer: if the *Bass* shall ascend either a second, third, or fourth,



that part which stands in the third or tenth above the *Bass*, shall fall into an eighth, that which is a fifth shall pass into a third, and that which is an eighth shall remove into a fifth.

But that all this may appear more plain and easie, I have drawn it all into these six figures.

8	3	5
3	5	8

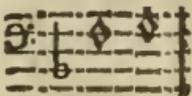
Though you find here only mentioned and figured a third, fifth, and eighth, yet not only these single Concords are meant, but by them also their (*c*) Compounds, as a tenth, a twelfth, a fifteenth, and so upwards; and also the unison as well as the eighth.

This being granted, I will give you an Example of those figures prefixed: When the

(*c*) By their Compounds is meant their Octaves, as a third and its eights, a fifth and its eights, &c.

Bass

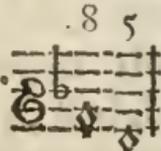
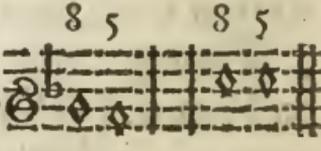
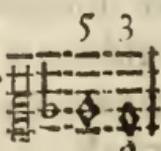
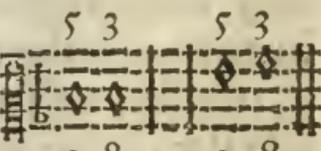
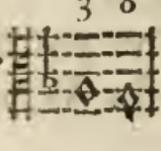
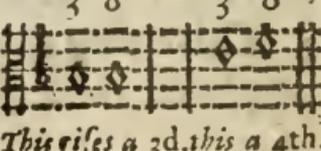
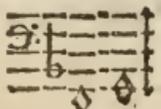
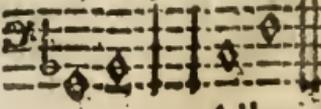
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Bass riseth, beginning from the lowest figure, and rising to the upper ; as if the *Bass* should rise a second, in this  manner :

Then if you begin with your third, you must set your *Note* in *A la mi re*, which is a third to *F fa vt*, and so look upward, and that *Cord* which you see next above it use, and that is an eight in *G sol re vt*.

After that, if you will take a fifth to the first *Note*, you must look upward and take the third you find there for the second *Note*. Last-ly, if you take an eighth for the first *Note*, you must take for the second *Note* the *Cord* above it, which is the fifth.

Example of all the three Parts added to the Bass.

<p><i>Treble.</i></p> 	<p>What parts arise out of the rising of the second ; the same an- swer in the rising of the 3d and 4th, thus :</p>	<p><i>Treble.</i></p> 
<p><i>Mean.</i></p> 	<p>the same an- swer in the rising of the 3d and 4th, thus :</p>	<p><i>Mean.</i></p> 
<p><i>Tenor.</i></p> 	<p>the same an- swer in the rising of the 3d and 4th, thus :</p>	<p><i>Tenor.</i></p> 
<p><i>Bass.</i></p> 	<p>thus :</p>	<p><i>Bass.</i></p> 

This rises a 3d, this a 4th.

Albert

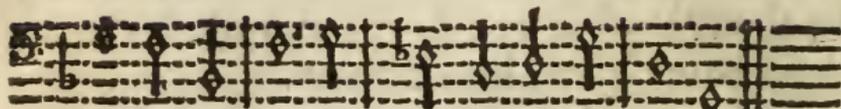
Albeit any man by the rising of parts, might of himself conceive the same reason in the falling of them; yet that nothing may be thought obscure, I will also illustrate the descending Notes by example.

If the *Bass* descends or falls a second, third, or fourth, or riseth a fifth (which is all one as if it had fallen a fourth, as hath been shewed before) then look upon the six figures, where in the first place you shall find the eighth which descends into the third, in the second place the third descending into the fifth, and in the third and last place the fifth which hath under it an eighth.

	8 3 8 3 8 3
Treble.	
	5 8 5 8 5 8
Mean.	
	3 5 3 5 3 5
Tenor.	
	8 3 8 3 8 3
Bass.	

Thus much for the rising and falling of the *Bass* in several: Now I will give you a brief example of both of them mixed together in the plainest fashion, let this following strain serve for the *Bass*:

Example.

Example.

The two first Notes fall a second, the second and third Notes fall a fifth, which you must call rising a fourth; the third and fourth Notes fall a fifth, which you must name the fourth falling; the fourth and fifth Notes rise a second, the fifth and sixth Notes rise a third, the sixth and seventh Notes also fall a third, the seventh and eighth rise a second, the eighth and ninth Notes rise a fourth, the tenth and eleventh Notes fall a fifth, which you must reckon rising a fourth.

Being thus prepared, you may chuse whether you will begin with an eighth, or fifth, or a third; for as soon as you have taken any one of them, all the other Notes necessarily without respect of the rest of the parts, and every one orderly without mixing, keeps his proper place above the other, as you may easily discern in the following Example.

Example.

Example.

8 3 8 3 8 3 5 3 8 3 8

Treble.

5 8 5 8 5 8 3 8 5 8 5

Mean.

3 5 3 5 3 5 8 5 3 5 3

Tenor.

Bass.

Let us examine onely one of the parts, and let that be the *Tenor*, because it stands next to the *Bass*. The first Note in *B* is a third to the *Bass*, which descends to the second Note of the *Bass*: Now look among the six figures, and when you have found the third in the upper place, you shall find under it a fifth, then take that fifth which is *C* next from *F* to *B* below, is a fifth descending, for which say ascending, and so you shall look for the fifth in the lowest row of the figures, above which stands a third, which

is to be taken ; that third stands in *D* ; then from *B* to *F* the *Bass* rises a fifth, but you must say falling, because a fifth rising and a fourth falling is all one, as hath been often declared before ; now a third when the *Bass* falls requires a fifth to follow it : (*d*) But what needs farther demonstration, when as he that knows his *Cords*, cannot but conceive the necessity of consequence in all these, with help of those six figures.

— But let them that have not proceeded so far, take this Note with them, concerning the placing of the parts ; if the upper part or *Treble* be an eight, the *Mean* must take the next *Cord* under it, which is a fifth, and the *Tenor* the next *Cord* under that, which is a 3^d. But if the *Treble* be a third, then the *Mean* must take the eighth, and the *Tenor* the fifth. Again, if the uppermost part stands in the fifth or twelfth, (for in respect of the Learners Ear, in the simple Concord I conclude

(2) When you have made a formal *Bass*, and would joyn other three parts to it, set the first Note of your *Tenor* either a third, fifth, or eighth, above your *Bass*, (which of them you please) which done, place your *Mean* in the next *Cord* you find above your *Tenor*, and your *Treble* in the next *Cord* above your *Mean*, then follows the Rule of your figures, according to the rising or falling of your *Bass*, and the other Notes will follow in their due order.

all his compounds) then the *Mean* must be a tenth, and the *Tenor* a fifth. Moreover, all these Cords are to be seen in the *Bass*, and such Cords as stand above the *Notes* of the *Bass* are easily known, but such as in sight are found (e) under it, trouble the young beginner; let him therefore know, that a third under the *Bass*, is a sixth above it, and if it be a greater third, it yields a lesser sixth above; if the lesser third, the greater sixth. A fourth underneath the *Bass* is a fifth above, and a fifth under the *Bass*, is a fourth above it. A sixth beneath the *Bass* is a third above, and if it be the lesser sixth, then is the third above the greater third, and if the greater sixth underneath, then is it the lesser third above; and thus far I have digressed for the Scholars sake.

(e) If this Discourse of Cords under the *Bass* do trouble the young beginner, let him think no more upon them (for it is not intended that he should place any *Notes* below the *Bass*) but let him look for his Cords, reckoning always from his *Bass* upward; which that he may more easily perform, let him draw eleven lines (which is the whole compass of the *Scale*) and set the three used *Cliffs* in their proper places; this done, he may prick his *Bass* in the lowest five lines, and then set the other three parts in their orderly distances above the *Bass*, Note against Note, as you see in this following Example.

Which



Which being prick'd in several parts, appeareth thus :

3 8 3 5 3 8 3 5 3

Treble.

8 5 8 3 8 5 8 3 8

Mean.

5 3 5 8 5 3 5 8 5

Tenor.

Bas.

I have propos'd the former Example of the eleven lines, to lead the young beginner to a true knowledge of the Scale, without which nothing can be effected ; but having once got that knowledge, let him then compose his Musick in several parts, as he seeth in this second Example.

Here I think it not amiss to aduertise the young Beginner, that so often as the Bass doth fall a fifth, or rise a fourth (which is all one, as hath been said) that part which is a third to the Bass

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Bass in the antecedent Note, that third I say must always be the sharp or greater third, as was apparent in the last example of four Parts, in the first Notes of the second Bar in the Mean Part, and likewise in the last Note but one of the same Part; in both which places there is a ♯ set to make it the greater third. The same is to be observ'd in what Part soever this third shall happen.

If I should discover no more than this already deciphered of *Counterpoint*, wherein the native order of four parts with use of the *Concords*, is demonstratively expressed, might I be my own Judge, I had effected more in *Counterpoint*, than any man before me hath ever attempted, but I will yet proceed a little further. And that you may perceive how cunning and how certain nature is in all her operations, know that what Cords have held good in this ascending and descending of the *Bass*, answer in the contrary by the very same rule, though not so formally as the other; yet so, that much use is, and may be made of this sort of *Counterpoint*. To keep the figures in your memory, I will here place them again, and under them plain Examples.

8		3		5
3		5		8

8 5 8 5 8 5 5 8 5 8 5 8

5 3 5 3 5 3 3 5 3 5 3 5

3 8 3 8 3 8 8 3 8 3 8 3

In these last Examples you may see what variety Nature offers of her self; for if in the first Rule the Notes follow not in expected formality, this second way be-

ing quite contrary to the other, affords us sufficient supply: the first and last two Notes arising and falling by degrees, are not so formal as the rest, yet thus they may be mollified, by breaking two of the first Notes.

8 5 5 8

5 3 3 5

3 8 8 3

How both the ways may be mix'd together you may perceive by this example, where in the black Notes distinguish the second way from the first.

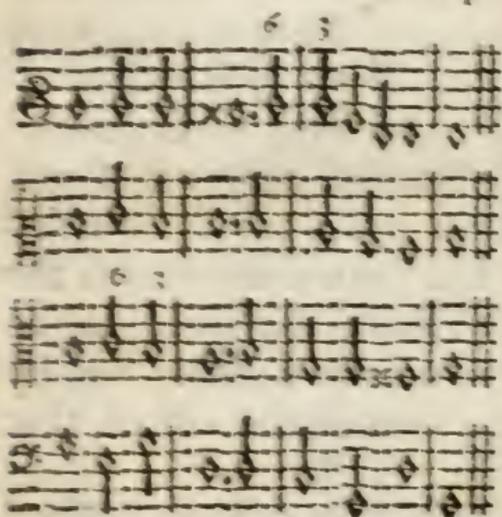
In this example the fifth and sixth Notes of the three upper Parts are after the second way, for from the fourth Note of the *Bass*, which is in from *G*, and goeth to *B*, is a third rising, so that according

to the first Rule, the eighth shall pass into the fifth, the fifth into a third, the third into an eighth. But here contrariwise the eighth goes into a third, the fifth into an eighth, and the third into a fifth; and by these Notes you may censure the rest of that kind. (f)

Though I may now seem to have finished all that belongs to this sort of *Counterpoint*, yet ther remains one scruple, that is, how the sixth may take place here, which I will

(f) When your *Bass* standeth still (that is to say, hath two or more Notes together in one and the same place) you may chuse whether you will make your Parts do so too, or change them, as you see our Author hath done in the second Note of this present example. If you change them, you may do it either by the Rule of descending or ascending, which you please, so you do but observe formality.

also declare. Know that whensoever a sixth is requisite, as in *F*, or in *E*, or *A*, the Key being in *Cantus*, you may take the sixth instead of the fifth, and use the same Cord following, which you would have taken if the former Cord had been a fifth.

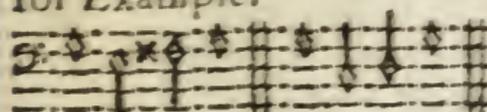
Example.

The sixth in both places (the *Bass* rising) passes into third, as it should have done if the sixth had been a fifth.

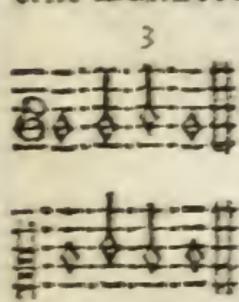
Moreover, if the *Bass* shall use a sharp, as in *F* sharp; then must we take the sixth of necessity, but the eighth to the *Bass* may not be used; so that exception is to be taken against our Rule of *Counterpoint*: To which I answer thus; first, such *Basses* are not (g) true *Basses*, for where a

(g) He doth not mean, that such *Basses* are bad, false, or defective, but that they have (perhaps for elegance or variety) assumed the nature of some part for a Note or two, and so want the full latitude of a *Bass* in those Notes.

sixth is to be taken either in *F* sharp, or in *E* sharp, or in *B*, or in *A*, the true *Bass* is a third lower, *F* sharp in *D*, *E* in *C*, *B* in *G*, *A* in *F*; as for Example.

 In the first *Bass* two sixths are to be taken, by reason of the imperfection of the *Bass* wanting due latitude, the one in *E*, the other in *F* sharp; but in the second *Bass* the sixths are removed away, and the Musick is fuller.

Nevertheless, if any be pleased to use the *Bass* sharp, then instead of the eighth to the *Bass*, he may take the third to the *Bass*, in this manner.

 Here the *Treble* in the third Note, when it should have past in the sharp eighth in *F* takes for it a third to the *Bass* in *A*, which causeth the *Bass* and *Treble* to rise two thirds, whereof we will speak hereafter.

Note also that when the *Bass* stands in *E* flat, and the part that is an eighth to it must pass into a sharp, or greater third, that this passage from the flat to the sharp would be unformal; and there-

fore it may be thus with small alteration avoided, by removing the latter part of the Note into the third above, which though it meets in Unison with the upper part, yet it is right good, because it jumps not with the whole, but only with the last half of it.

Example.

Treble. 1 2

Mean. 8 3

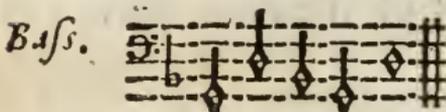
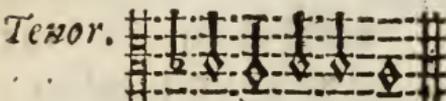
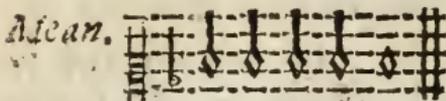
Tenor.

Bass.

For the second Example look hereafter in the rule of thirds, but for the first Example here, if in the *Mean* Part the third Note that is divided, had stood till a *Minimum* (as by rule it should) and so had past in *F* sharp, as it must of force be made sharp at a close, it had been then passing unformal. But if the same *Bass* had been set in the sharp Key, the rest of the part would have fallen out formal of themselves without any help, as thus :

Treble.

One other Observation more I will handle, that doth arise out of this Example, which according to the first Rule may hold thus :



Herein are two errors; first, in the second Notes of the *Basse* and *Treble*, where the third to the *Bass* ought to have been sharp; secondly, in the second and third Notes of the same Parts, where the third being a lesser third, holds while the *Bass* falls into a fifth, which is unëlegant, (*b*) but if the upper third had been the greater third, the fifth had fitly follow'd, as you may see in the third and fourth Notes of the *Tenor* and the *Bass*.

(*b*) But that scruple may be taken away by making the second Note of the *Treble* sharp, and instead of a fifth by removing the third Note into a sixth.

When any informality doth occur, the Scholar need not keep himself to the first rules of the *Bass* rising or falling, but may take such Cords as his Genius shall prompt him to, (having a care that he take not two eighths or fifths together) rising or falling betwixt any two Parts whatsoever: 'Tis true, our Author did invent this Rule of the Figures, as the easiest way to lead.

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lead the young Beginner to this kind of Composition, in which he hath done more than any that I have ever seen upon this subject; but this he did to shew the smoothest way, and not to tie his Scholar to keep strictly that way, when a block or stone should happen to lye in it, but that he may in such a case step out of this way for a Note or two, and then return again into it.

There may yet be more variety afforded the *Bass*, by ordering the fourth Notes of the upper Parts, according to the second Rule, thus:

Example.



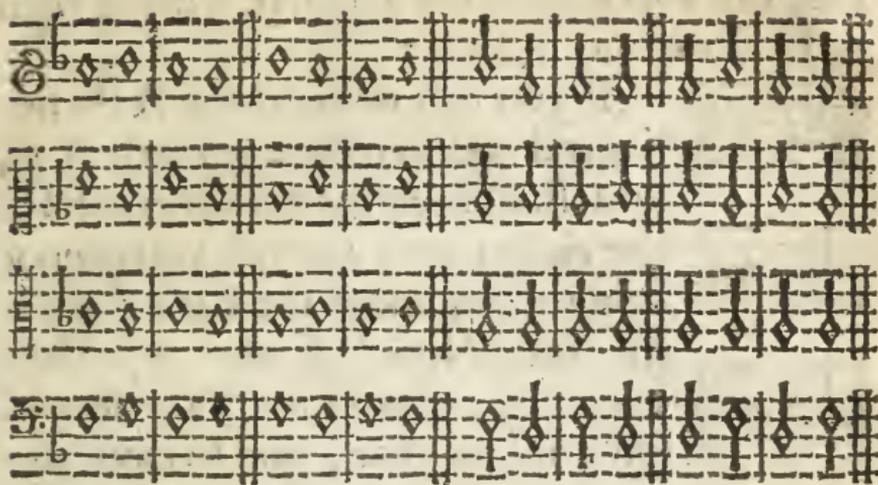
But that I may (as near a I can) leave nothing untouch'd concerning this kind of *Counterpoint*, let us now consider how two *Thirds* being taken together between the

Treble

Treble and the *Bass*, may stand with our Rule. For sixths are not in this case to be mentioned, being distances so large that they can produce no formality: Besides, the sixth is of it self very imperfect, being compounded of a third, which is an imperfect Concord; and of a fourth, which is a Discord: and this the cause is, that the sixths produce so many fourths in the Inner Parts. As for the third, it being the least distance of any Concord, is therefore easily to be reduced into good order. For if the *Bass* and *Treble* do rise together in thirds, then the first Note of the *Treble* is regular with the other Part, but the second of it is irregular; for by rule instead of the rising third, it should fall into the eighth. In like sort, if the *Bass* and *Treble* do fall two thirds, the first Note of the *Treble* is irregular, and is to be brought into rule by being put into the eighth, but the second Note is of it self regular. Yet whether those thirds be reduced into eights or no, you shall by supposition thereof find out the other parts, which never vary from the rule but in the sharp *Bass*. But let me explain my self by Example.

Example.

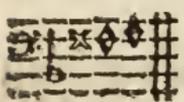
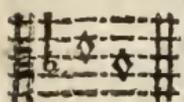
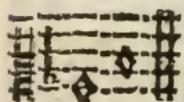
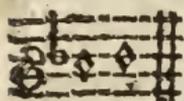
Example.



The first two Notes of the *Treble* are both thirds to the *Bass*, but in the second stroke the first Note of the *Treble* is a third, and the second, which was before a third, is made an eight, only to shew how you may find out the right Parts which are to be used when you take two thirds between the *Treble* and the *Bass*: For according to the former rule, if the *Bass* descends, the third then in the *Treble* is to pass into the eight, and the *Mean* must first take an eight, then a fifth; and the *Tenor* a fifth, then a third; and these are also the right and proper parts, if you return the eight of the *Treble* into a third again, as may appear in the first example of the *Bass* falling, and consequently in all the rest.

But

But let us proceed yet further, and suppose that the *Bass* should use a sharp, what is then to be done? as if thus :



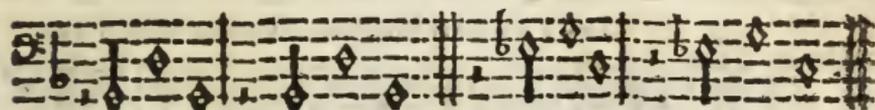
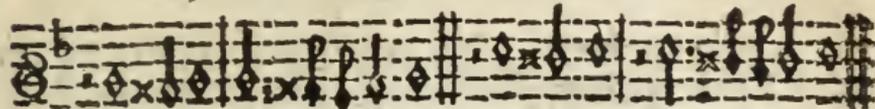
If you call to mind the Rule delivered concerning the sharp *Bass*, you shall here by help thereof see the right parts, though you cannot bring them under the Rule : for if the first Note of the *Bass* had been flat, the *Mean* Part should have taken that, and so have descended to the fifth ; but being Sharp, you take for it (according to the former observation) the third to the *Bass*, and so rise up into the fifth. The *Tenor* that should take a fifth, and so fall by degrees into a third, is here forced by reason of the sharp *Bass*, for a fifth to take a sixth, and so leap downward into the thirds. And so much for the thirds.

Lastly, in favour of young beginners let me also add this, that the *Bass* intends a close as often as it riseth a fifth, third, or second, and then immediately either falls a fifth, or riseth a fourth. In like manner, if the *Bass* falls a fourth or second, and after falls a fifth, the *Bass* insinuates a close, and in all these cases the part must hold, that in holding can use

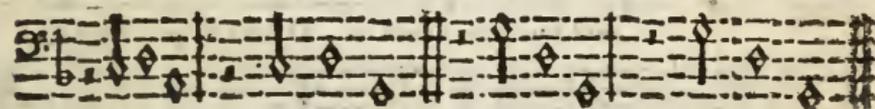
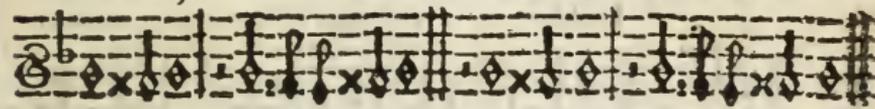
Composing of Musick in Parts. 23

use the fourth or eleventh, and so pass either in the third or tenth.

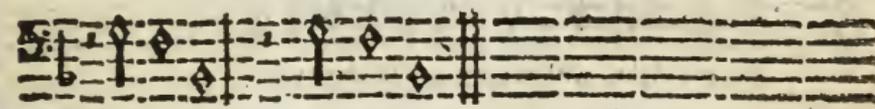
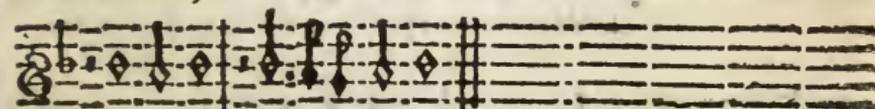
Thus, or thus. Thus, or thus.



Thus, or thus. Thus, or thus.



Thus, or thus.



In the Examples before set down I left out the Closes, of purpose that the Cords might the better appear in their proper places, but this short admonition will direct any young beginner to help that want at his pleasure. And thus I end my Treatise of *Counterpoint*, both brief and certain, such as will open an easie way to them, that without help of a skilful Teacher endeavour to acquire the first grounds of this Art. A

24 *The Art of Descant : Or, &c.*

A short Hymn, Composed after this form of Counterpoint, to shew how well it will become any Divine or Grave Subject.

Lord have mercy upon me, O hear my prayers both

Lord have mercy upon me, O hear my prayers both

Lord have mercy upon me, O hear my prayers both

Lord have mercy upon me, O hear my prayers both

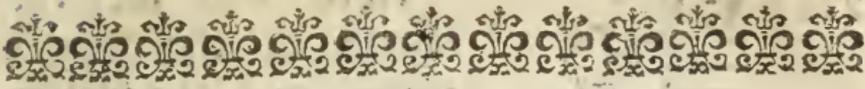
day and night, with tears pour'd forth to thee.

day and night, with tears pour'd forth to thee.

day and night, with tears pour'd forth to thee.

day and night, with tears pour'd forth to thee.

THE



T H E
ART of DESCANT:
 O R,
Composing Musick in Parts.

PART II.

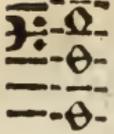
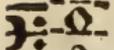
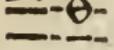
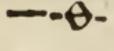
Of Tones of Musick.

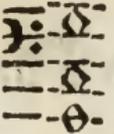
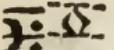
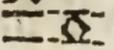
OF all things that belong to the making up of a Musician, the most necessary and useful one for him is the true knowledge of the Key or Mood, or Tone, for all signifie the same thing, with the Closes belonging unto it, for there is no Tune that can have any grace or sweetness, unless it be bounded within a proper Key, without running into strange Keys, which have no affinity with the Ayr of the Song. I have therefore thought good in an easie and brief discourse to endeavour to express that which many in large and obscure *Volumes* have made fearful to the *rare Reader*.

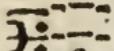
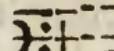
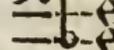
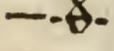
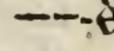
The first thing herem to be considered is the eight, which is equally divided into a fourth, and a fifth, as thus:

The

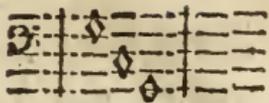
26 *The Art of Descant : Or,*

The 8  Here you see the
 The 4. fourth in the upper
 place, and the fifth in
 The 5. the lower place, which
is called *Modus Authentus* : but contrary
thus :

The 8  This is called *Modus*
 The 5. *Plagalii*, but howsoever
 The 4. the fourth in the eighth
is placed, we must have
our eye on the fifth, for that only discovers
the Key, and all the Closes pertaining pro-
perly thereunto : This fifth is also divided
into two thirds, sometimes the lesser third
hath the upper place, and the greater third
supports it below, sometimes the greater
third is higher, and the lesser third rests in the
lowest place : as for Example :

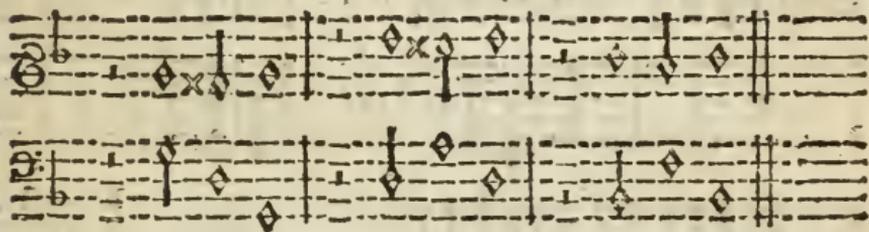
		
 The lesser 3.		 The greater 3.
 The greater 3.		 The lesser 3.

The lowest Note of this fifth bears the name of the Key, as if the eighth be from G to G, the fifth from G beneath to D above, G being the lowest Note of the fifth, shews that G is the Key ; and if one should demand in what Key your Song is set, you must answer in *Gam-ut*, or *G sol re ut*, that is, in G. If

If the compass of your Song  should fall out thus :

Respect not the fourth below, but look to your fifth above, and the lowest Note of that fifth assume for your Key, which is C, then divide that fifth into its two 3ds, and so you shall find out all the closes that belong to that Key.

The main and fundamental close is in the Key it self, the second is in the upper Note of this fifth, the third is in the upper Note of the lowest third, if it be the lesser third ; as for example, if the Key be in G, with B flat, you may close in these three places.



The first close is that which maintains the ayre of the Key, and may be used often, the second is next to be prefer'd, and third last.

But if the Key should be in G with B sharp, then the last close being to be made in the greater or sharp third, is unproper, and therefore for variety sometime the next Key above is joyned with it, which is A, and sometimes the fourth Key, which is C. But these

28 *The Art of Descant : Or,*

changes of Keys, must be done with judgement, yet I have aptly closed in the upper Note of the lowest third of the Key, the Key being in *F*, and the upper Note of the third standing in *A*, as you may perceive in this Ayre.

In this Air the first close is in the upper Note of the fifth, which from *F* is *C*, the second close is in the upper Note of the great third, which from *F* is *A*.

But the last and final close is in the Key it self, which is *F*, as it must ever be, wherefo-
 ever

ever your Key shall stand, either in *G*, or *C*, or *F*, or elsewhere, the same rule of the fifth is perpetual, being divided into thirds, which can be but two ways, that is, either when the upper third is less by half an Note than the lower, or when the lower third contains the half Note, which is *Mi Fa*, or *La Fa*.

If the lower third contains the half Note, it hath it either above, as *La Mi Fa*; *La Mi* being the whole Note, and *Mi Fa* but half so much, that is the half Note; or else when the half Note is underneath, as *Mi Fa Sol*; *Mi Fa* is the half Note, and *Fa Sol* is the whole Note; but whether the half Note be uppermost or lowermost, if the lowest third of the fifth be the lesser third, that Key yields familiarly three closes; example of the half Note, standing in the upper place was shewed before, now I will set down the other:



But for the other Keys that divide the fifth, so that it hath the less third above, and the greater underneath, they can challenge

but two proper closes, one in the lowest Note of the fifth, which is the fundamental Key, and the other in the uppermost Note of the same, wherein also you may close at pleasure. True it is, that the Key next above hath a great affinity with the right Key, and may therefore, as I said before, be used, as also the fourth Key above the final Key.

Examples of both in two beginnings of Songs.

The image contains two musical examples, labeled '1' and '2'. Each example consists of two staves of music. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The notes are represented by vertical stems with diamond-shaped heads. Example 1 shows a descant in the fifth (G) and the first (C) keys. Example 2 shows a descant in the first (C) and the fifth (G) keys. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

In the first Example *A* is mixt with *G*, and in the second *C* is joyned with *G*, as you may understand by the second closes of both.

To make the Key known is most necessary in the beginning of a Song, and it is best express'd by the often using of his proper fifth, and fourth, and third, rising or falling.

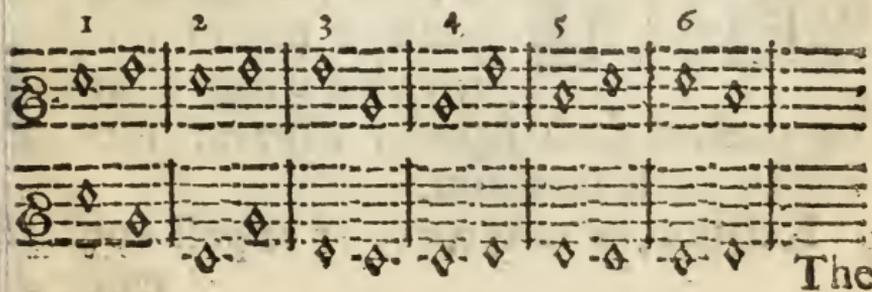


T H E
A R T of **D E S C A N T** :
 O R,
Composing Musick in Parts.

P A R T I I I .

*Of the taking all Concords, Perfect
 and Imperfect.*

THe consecution of perfect Concords among themselves is easie, for who knows not that two eighths or two fifths are not to be taken rising or falling together, but a fifth may either way pass into an eight, or an eight into a fift, yet most conveniently when the one of them moves by degrees, and the other by leaps, for when both skip together the passage is less pleasant: the ways by degrees are these.

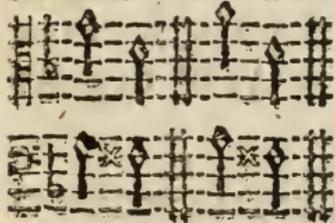


The fourth way is only excepted against, where the fifth riseth into the eighth, and in few parts it cannot well be admitted, but in Songs of many Voices it is oftentimes necessary.

The passage also of perfect Concords into imperfect, either rising or falling, by degrees or leaps, is easie, and so an unison may pass into a lesser third, or a greater third; also into the lesser sixth, but seldom into the greater sixth. A fifth passeth into the greater sixth, and into the lesser sixth; as also into the greater or lesser third; and so you must judge of their eights, for *de octavis idem est judicium*; and therefore when you read an unison, or a fifth, or a third, or a sixth, know that by the simple Concords the Compounds are also meant.

Note here, that it is not good to fall with the *Bass*, being sharp in *F*, from an eight unto a sixth.

As thus : Or thus.



But concerning imperfect Cords, because they observe not all one way in their passages, we will speak of them severally, first declaring what not harmonical doth signifie, whereof mention will be made hereafter.

Relation, or reference, or respect not harmonical,

monical, is *Mi* against *Fa* in a cross form, and it is in four Notes, when the one being considered cross with the other, doth produce in the Musick a strange discord; Example will yield it more plain.

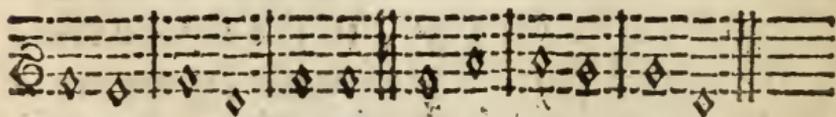


The first Note of the upper parts in *E la mi* sharp, which being considered, or referred to the second Note of the lower part, which is *E la mi*, made flat by the cromatick flat sign, begets a false second, which is a harsh discord; and though these Notes sound not both together, yet in few parts they leave an offence in the ear. The second Example is the same descending; the third is from *E la mi* sharp in the first Note of the lower part, to the second Note in the upper part, it being flat by reason of the flat sign, and so between them they mix in the Musick a false fifth; the same doth the fourth Example; but the fifth yields a false fourth, and the sixth a false fifth.

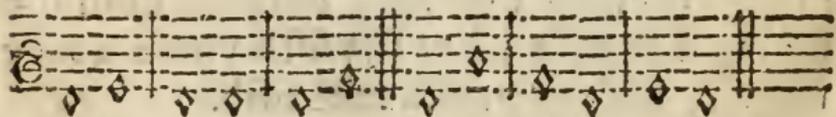
There are two kinds of imperfect Con-
cords, thirds or sixts, and the sixts wholly par-
ticipate of the nature of the thirds; for to
the lesser third, which consists but of a whole
Note and half, add a fourth, and you have
the lesser sixth; in like manner to the greater
third that consists of two whole Notes, add
a fourth, and it makes up the greater sixth;
so that all the difference is still in the half
Note, according to that only saying, *Mi & Fa
sunt tota Musica.* Of these four we will now
discourse, proceeding in order from the lesser
to the greater.

Of the lesser or imperfect Third.

The lesser third passeth into an unison, first
by degrees, when both parts meet, then by
leaps, ascending or descending when one of
the parts stand still, but when both the parts
leap or fall together, the passage is not al-
lowed.



Lesser 3 d into the unison. Passages not allowed.



Secondly,

Secondly, the lesser third passeth into a fifth, first in degrees, when they are separated by contrary motions; then by leaps, when the lower part riseth by degrees, and the upper part descends by degrees, and thus the lesser tenth may pass into a fifth. Lastly, both parts leaping, the lesser third may pass into a fifth, so that the upper part doth descend by leap the distance of a lesser third. Any other way the passage of a lesser third into a fifth, is disallowed.



In the last disallowance, which is when the upper part stands, and the lower part falls from a lesser third to a fifth, many have been deceived, their ears not finding the absurdity of it; but as this way is immusical, so is the fall of the greater third in the former manner into a fifth, passing harmonious; insomuch that it is elegantly, and with much grace taken in one part of a short Ayr four times, whereas had the fifth been half so often taken with the lesser third falling, it would have yielded a most unpleasant harmony. He

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'The Art of Descant'. It consists of six systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/8. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first system has a '3' above the first measure. The second system has an '1' above the first measure. The third system has a 'c' above the fifth measure. The fourth system has an 'x' above the second measure and an 'x' above the eighth measure. The fifth system has an 'x' above the second measure and an 'x' above the eighth measure. The sixth system has a '3' above the first measure and a '4' above the second measure. The piece ends with a double bar line and a fermata.

He that will be diligent to know, and careful to observe the true allowances, may be bold in his Composition, and shall prove quickly ready in his sight, doing that safely and resolutely which others attempt timorously and uncertainly. But now let us proceed in the passages of the lesser third.

Thirdly, the lesser third passeth into an eight, the lower part descending by degrees, and the upper part by leaps: but very seldom when the upper part riseth by degrees, and the lower part falls by a leap.

Fourthly,

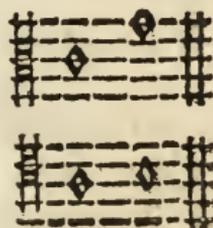


Fourthly, the lesser third passeth into other Concords, as when it is continued, as in degrees it may be, but not in leaps. Also

it may pass into the greater third, both by degrees and leaps, as also in the lesser sixth, if one of the parts stand still, into the great sixth it sometimes passeth, but very rarely.



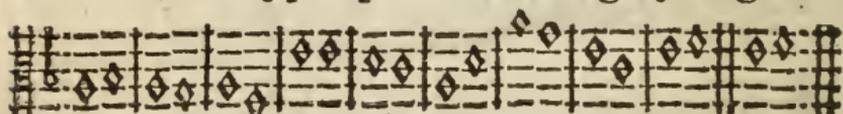
Lastly, add unto the rest this passage of the lesser third into the lesser sixth, as when the lower part riseth by degrees, and the upper part by leaps.



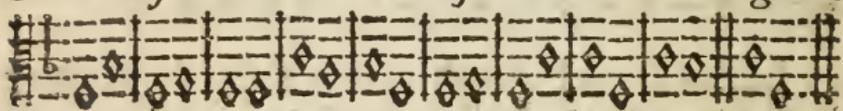
Of the greater or perfect Third.

The greater or perfect third being to pass into perfect Concords, first takes the unison, when the parts ascend together, the higher by degree, the lower by leap; or when they meet together in a contrary motion, or when one of the parts stand still. Secondly, it passeth

passeth into a fifth when one of the parts rests; as hath been declared before; or else when the parts ascend or descend together, one by degrees, the other by leaps; and so the greater tenth may pass into a fifth; seldom when both parts leap together, or when they separate themselves by degrees; and this in regard of the relation not harmonical which falls in between the parts. Thirdly, the greater third passeth into the eighth by contrary motions, the upper part ascending by degrees.



The Unison. The Fifth. The Eighth.

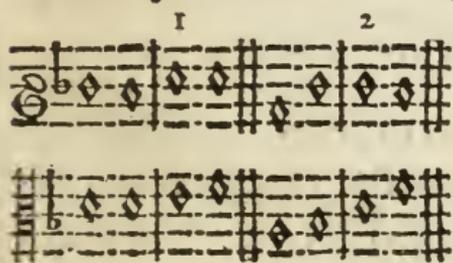


The greater third may also pass into other Concords, and first into a lesser third, when the parts ascend or descend by degrees, or by the lesser leaps. Secondly, it is continued but rarely, because it falls into relation not harmonical, thereby making the harmony less pleasing. Thirdly, into a lesser sixth, when the parts part asunder, the one by degree, the other by leap. Fourthly, into a great sixth, one of the parts standing, or else the upper part falling by degree, and the lower by leap.



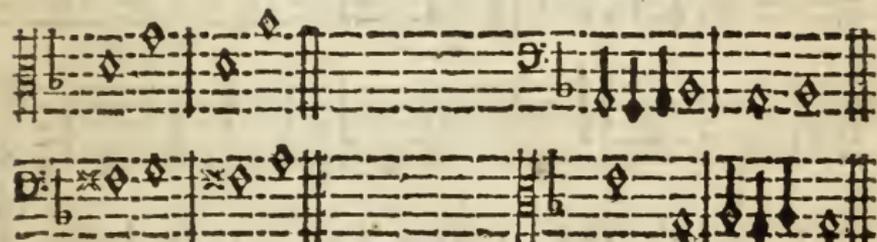
Of the lesser Sixth.

The lesser sixt, regularly goes into the fift, one of the parts holding his place ; rarely into an eight, and first when the parts ascend or descend together, and one of them proceeds by the half Note, the other by leap.



Howsoever the ways of rising and falling from the lesser sixth into the eighth in the former example may pass,

I am sure that if the *Bass* be sharp in *F fa ut*, it is not tolerable to rise from a sixth to an eighth.



Lastly, the lesser sixt may pass into an eight in *Crotchets*, for they are easily tolerated.

It

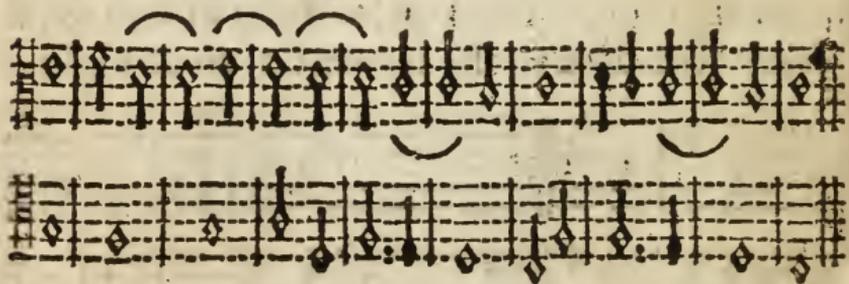
40 *The Art of Descant : Or,*

It passeth likewise into other Concords, as into a greater sixt, the parts rising or falling by degrees, as also in a greater or lesser third, the one part proceeding by degree, the other by leap; or when one of the parts stands. It self cannot follow, by reason of the falling in of the Relation not harmonical.



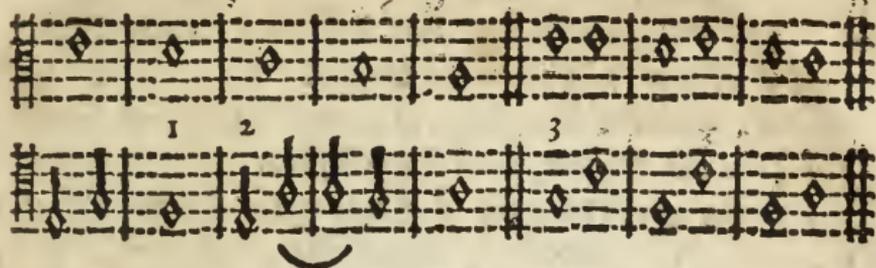
Of the greater Sixth.

The greater sixt in proceeding affects the eight, but it will hardly pass into the fift, unless it be in binding-wise, or when way is prepared for a Close.



Finally, the greater sixt may in degrees be continued, or pass into a lesser sixt, as also into a greater third, or a lesser third.

These



These are the principal observations belonging to the passages of *Concords*, *Perfect* and *Imperfect*, in few parts; and yet in those few, for fuge and formality sake, some dispensation may be granted. But in many parts necessity enforcing, if any thing be committed contrary to rule, it may the more easily be excused, because the multitude of parts will drown any small inconvenience.

F I N I S.

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