

**STUDIES IN
MUSICAL GRACES**

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Studies in Musical Graces by Ernest Fowles

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ERNEST FOWLES

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ERNEST FOWLES

AUTHOR OF "STUDIES IN PART-PLAYING"

A key to the exercises in this book (price .50) may be obtained upon
application to the publishers

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PREFACE.

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THE issue of this little book is due wholly to the desire to place before the student a guide, sufficiently concise and at the same time adequately comprehensive, to the clearer understanding of musical graces. The author can present no claim to the merit of originality, either in the sectional arrangement of the ornaments or in the enunciation of the rules which regulate their performance. Such merit must inevitably accrue to the writers of the excellent works upon the subject already in existence. Nevertheless, a new feature—as far as the author is aware—may be discerned in the following pages. Each Section is accompanied by a series of questions and exercises upon the matter immediately in hand, the latter being intended for practical, as well as for the customary method of exemplification. It is almost unnecessary to reiterate the fundamental fact, that, a permanent grasp of elementary principles depends upon the means adopted in the earlier stages to test the knowledge of the student. The material hitherto presented for this purpose in connection with the particular subject of this book has been singularly wanting in breadth of aim and perspicuity of detail. Consequently, the student, if not led away by the temptation to generalize, has sought refuge in the study of details of no account in modern music or has been content to use a treatise as an ever-ready referee in just those cases when knowledge, properly acquired and assimilated, should have been his only guide.

It is evident that, to be thorough and stimulating, exemplification should bear directly upon the practice of those masters

whose works contain examples of indicated graces. This is the course here adopted and the student who approaches the subject in this manner will not only discover that constant exemplification will bring executive freedom, but that a strong and profitable element of interest will arise from the attendant contemplation of ornamentation as a whole. The source of the musical grace, its development and its ultimate absorption in the later phases of melodic figuration will be observed in a new light and another influence be added to those which make for intelligent musicianship.

It is often urged as a reason against the detailed study of ornamentation, that the excellent annotation frequently to be found in modern editions renders such study inoperative and that, in consequence, the student might be more profitably engaged in other and possibly more fruitful directions. This can scarcely be regarded as a convincing reason for omitting a study which brings the student into closer touch with the atmosphere of Bach. Indeed, nothing can be considered as lying outside the sphere of minute investigation which, in however small a degree, elucidates and illuminates the work of that divinest of masters. It is true that we have travelled far since his day; that music has taken to itself a new measure of significance; that, in brief, the early promise of an individual life and language — at once forcibly intellectual and fervidly emotional — has been more than fulfilled by the latest phases of the art. These felicitous results of a natural evolution, however, but cast increased lustre upon the name and work of Bach. His inimitable and directly personal style, the prophetic nature of his harmonic colorings and — regarded from the point of view immediately concerned — the delicacy and figurative significance of his embellishments must, to the cultured musician, for ever remain a subject of earnest and reverent study.

The glossary has been added for the sake of those who, perceiving the historic bearing and æsthetic significance of the divisions, runs and trills of an earlier day, desire to know more of the nature of the influence such forms of melodic movement have exerted upon the development of music. In enquiry of this kind,

the possession of a handy compendium of terms — simply explained and adequately illustrated — will prove of no small assistance.

A more utilitarian argument for the detailed study of musical graces may be advanced in the minute attention bestowed upon them in the examination papers of to-day. That the exercises given in this book may be of service to the student in the necessary task of preparation, and that the text throughout may prove at once easy of comprehension and suggestively illuminative is the earnest hope of the writer.

106 Palace Road, Tulse Hill, London, S.W.
Midsummer, 1906.

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PRELIMINARY.

The term *Grace* (Fr. *agrement*. *ornement*. Ger. *Manier*. It. *floritura*. *abbellimento*.) — as employed in connection with music — is obviously capable of extensive application. For instance, it may be justly applied to any device which elaborates the harmonic framework of a musical progression; or, to the æsthetic principles which govern performance generally. In a more restricted sense, however, the words — *embellishment*, *ornament* or *grace* are concerned with the decorative treatment of the sounds of a melody.

A musical grace may therefore be defined as a sound or a series of sounds — essential or not to the prevailing harmony — the occurrence of which disturbs the rhythmic regularity of a melody primarily and necessarily formed upon the even beats of time. The following passage, for example, is entirely devoid of such ornamentation.



We may proceed to embellish this melody in diverse ways.

Six lines of musical notation, each showing a variation of the original melody with different embellishments. Each variation is labeled with a letter (a-f) above the first measure.
a. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the first measure.
b. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the second measure.
c. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the third measure.
d. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the fourth measure.
e. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the fifth measure.
f. The original melody with a grace note (G4) on the second beat of the sixth measure.