Music in the French Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

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Music in the French Literature
Of the Seventeenth and
Eighteenth Centuries

By

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>A Brief History of Music from Early Ages Through the Eighteenth Century</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Music and Its Significance in the Literature of the Outstanding French Writers of the Seventeenth Century:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malherbe</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Descartes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corneille</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>la Fontaine</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pascal</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Molière</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madame de Sévigné</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bossuet</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boileau</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Racine</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>la Bruyère</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fénelon</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Music and Its Significance in the Works of the Outstanding Literary Men of the Eighteenth Century:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Montesquieu</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voltaire</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rousseau</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter V

Conclusions .............................. 52
Bibliography .............................. 56
CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

In the present study, it is the aim of the writer to find, through the works obtainable of outstanding French writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the importance of music and the frequency of its mention. To accomplish this, the writer will briefly outline the conditions that existed in France, especially in Paris, which was the seat of government and the center of interest during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In the seventeenth century, particularly during the reign of Louis XIV, France held literary form in high esteem. This was the epoch of the popularization of literary principles; the age of the purification of the language, when foreign words were excluded and only words of purely French derivation were included. This was the period when interest centered around the court and its influence was felt by the society that surrounded it. Paris became the year-round residence of nobles and men of fortune and they looked to the court for amusement. Literary genii were encouraged to take their writings to the court and as a result, the best literature was found there. Due to Louis XIV's interest in music and dancing, musicians were encouraged and excellent music was composed, played, and sung. With the growing interest for more varied entertainment, playwrights, poets, and authors realized the need for music in their writings.
During the eighteenth century the court continued to be the center of interest and social life. Louis XV, like his predecessor, encouraged literary men and musicians. The romantic golden age of literature evolved into an age of equal importance, the classic age.

Some of the literary men of genius were also musicians who showed their appreciation of music in their writings and comic-opera composers played an important part in the great movement which was rejuvenating the art of music.
CHAPTER II
MUSIC
FROM EARLY AGES THROUGH THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In order to evaluate the music found in the French literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the writer here endeavors to outline the history of music from early ages to the end of this period. This survey will portray the important part and effect that music plays in the lives of mankind. In France we find that the first real development and growth of music began in the court of Louis XIV and that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries court life took an active and important part in this development.

Music dates back to the beginnings of man for even primitive man had music.

Music like his language is an innate power in man through which by some mysterious power he is constrained to try to express and communicate to his kind his thoughts.

Ancient peoples believed that music was a gift of the Gods. Asia commonly called "the cradle of human culture" (48:3) developed the art of music early. From the Egyptian bas-reliefs, that have been preserved, we have learned that music must have occupied an important place in culture. The Bible tells us that the Hebrews cultivated and held music and poetry in high esteem. The Hebrew music was of a religious type and was used in divine
worship. The melancholy Arabian music reflected the nature of the people.

Greek music became an independent art. It ceased to be the expression of the sentiments and emotions of the people. This music was developed according to physical and harmonic laws.

Then came the Christian era when music became best adapted to express the indefinable sentiments and aspirations which moved the minds of believers, their sorrows and their hopes. While the first Christian martyrs were being persecuted, stoned, and thrown as food to wild beasts by the pagans, the faithful gathered in the Catacombs of Rome to pray and offer up songs to the true God. The universal opinion of music historians is that this Christian music was based upon the Hebrew Chants, although it was probably modified by the influence of Greek and Roman music.

The church in the Middle Ages played an important part in the development of music which ranked first among the arts. The Gregorian chant named after the organizer, Pope Gregory I, was first sung in the church in a primitive manner, in free rhythm, without time measure and without accompaniment. By the thirteenth century the chant had developed from one voice movement to that of four voices, constructed on a given theme of the Gregorian chant. This was called polyphonic music. In contrast to this music it was during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that the trouvères and the troubadours of France and the meistersingers and minnesingers of Germany appeared with a popular type
of music. They were the poets who wrote in the "langue d'oil" or the "langue d'oc" lyric pieces meant to be sung. (23:21). These nobles or burghers composed songs about the people, their work, their joys, and sorrows, and their experiences. Sometimes they sang their own compositions. Jongleurs, who were wandering minstrels, went from castle to castle singing their songs, in quest of a generous patron with an open purse. This popular music was directly opposite to the early chants of the church. The music was unrestrained always, adapting itself to the rhythm of the prose or poetry.

Dating from the fifteenth century, the Renaissance breathed new life into all the musical form created by the Middle Ages. The Italians, Germans, Flamands, and the French had many outstanding composers who developed new musical forms during this period. Among these new forms were the "mass", the "motet", and the "chanson" (23:30). The French Chanson, the scientific contrapuntal song was not the popular song of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries although it borrowed its themes from the popular song.

The Renaissance marks the beginning of modern French music. During this period instrumental music developed. Up to this time the instrument was used as an accompaniment to the voice, but at this time instrumental music developed independently of the voice, as a solo instrument.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century and during the reign of Louis XIV, French music developed national
characteristics under the influences of Lulli who created the opera at Paris; Francis Couperin, the first great French composer; and Rameau who made music a new art. Poetry which in polyphony had lost all importance was reclaimed; music became its companion and together they formed the lyric drama. Two important composers of ballets for vocal part singing during the first half of this century were Pierre Guérdon, the king's valet-de-chambre, and Antoine Boesset. Then came the poet, Isaac de Benserade, who made the ballet a literary form. Lulli was the principal composer of the Court ballets. The ballets beginning with 1640 were preceded by an overture. Lulli adopted these overtures as preludes to his operas. This type endured until the middle of the eighteenth century. The French, of their own account would probably not have turned to opera but for Cardinal Mazarin who introduced the opera into France from Italy. An Italian company sang the first opera in Paris.

The first attempt at national opera was made by Pietro Perrin, a facile rhymster, and Robert Cambert who composed the music. It was a dramatic performance entitled "Pastorale". This was the first French comedy in music.

It was then that Perrin, with the Marquis de Bourdeauc's assistance and the king's permission, built an opera house in Paris. At its inauguration, Perrin and Cambert gave an opera entitled "Pomone" which has been considered the first national French opera. This performance was a conglomeration of airs, intermezzos, and ballets, quite disconnected. However, it was
a great success and it played for many months.

Nevertheless, Perrin and Cambert were not the ones to assure the destiny of French Opera. Disputes and financial troubles put an end to their fame. At this point Jean Baptiste Lulli stepped into the breach and obtained from the king the grant of their privilege to the monopoly of theatrical representations and musical academies. This was the beginning of his long career as the master of French opera. Lulli was a genius and understood his times which were favorable to classic tragedy as revived by Corneille and Racine. He collaborated with Molière and played comedy parts in the intermezzos. In Molière's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme", he played an excellent "Mufti". In the court ballets, he took principal roles because he danced so well, and thus he won the favor of Louis XIV. Lulli trained the poet Quinault to work with him in his operas. Besides operas, he composed and excelled in descriptive music. He also plays a notable role in the history of instrumental music. For fifteen years he directed the "Académie de Musique" and there he presented fifteen operas. Composers who flourished side by side with Lulli were Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Campra and Clerambault whose graceful melodies Jean-Jacques Rousseau admired.

It was during the seventeenth century that the oratorio, a contemporary of the opera, and the church cantata were originated. The oratorio was narrative and dramatic in character and assumed the form of a dialogue. Later the recitative style appeared in this music. The oratorio now illustrat-
ed, through music, the religious reunions or conferences that were held. Marc-Antoine Charpentier took Carissimi of Italy as his model and wrote church cantatas for France.

Instrumental music during the seventeenth century established its complete independence and masterpieces were produced. In France it was Clavecin music. The Couperin family supplied France with music for two centuries. François Couperin published four books of "Pièces de clavecin", "l'art de toucher le clavecin", "les Goûts réunis", and "l'apothéose de l'incomparable Lulli". He composed the "Trios for two viols and bass" and the "Lecons de ténèbres". He also wrote such character pieces as "Soeur Monique", the "Bavolet flottant", the "Moucheron", the "Barricades mystérieuses", the "Vieux galants", and the "Trésorières surannées". Couperin played an important part in the history of music. He prepared the "Classic Age" a half century ahead of time by contributing to music that simple language, clear, effortless, and clean-cut, which was that of all masters by the end of the eighteenth century (23:75).

Couperin was one of the miracles in the French spirit in music.

France also had a brilliant school of organists. The clavecinists were also organists. Jean Titelouze was the founder of the French organ school.

Wind instruments found their places in the court festivals of Louis XIV. The "musique de la grande écurie du Roi" supplied the musical numbers for all the carousels, processions, balls, and ballets. Trumpets, fifes, drums, large oboes,
cromornes, oboes and Poitou bag-pipes were used to make up this band.

Vocal music flourished at this time too. Individual singers claimed attention as soloists, although up to this time the chorus was the important feature.

After Lulli's death the French opera declined and it might even have ceased to exist had not a new genius arrived to bring it his masterworks. This man was Jean-Philippe Rameau who was one of the outstanding geniuses of the eighteenth century. He wrote several books among which were "Pièces de Clavecin", "Traité de l'harmonie réduite à ses principes naturels", a "Nouveau système de musique théorique", and a second book of the "Pièces de Clavecin". Le Riche de la Pouplinière, a great patron of the arts and a noble of the court of Louis XV, invited Rameau to be his master of music and organist of his choir. He also placed his two homes, his orchestra and his theatre at Rameau's disposal. La Pouplinière asked a fashionable librettist to write an opera poem for Rameau. The Librettist, Abbé Pellegrin, wrote an arrangement of Racine's "Phèdre" which he named "Hippolyte et Aricie". Rameau wrote some of his finest musical numbers for this opera which was first performed in la Pouplinière's home. Later it was played at the "Académie national de musique". Besides publishing several works on the fundamentals of harmony, Rameau wrote thirty-six operas. Music in the eyes of Rameau, as in those of Lulli, was an imitation of nature, of the sounds of spring or the wind, the song of birds, the
language of man, the movements of the dance, the gestures of passion. Rameau wrote by preference for instruments. In his ballets, his symphonies and his clavecin pieces he excelled.

The Opéra-comique, the French comic opera came into existence at the beginning of the eighteenth century of popular origin. The first audiences were the crowds at the fairs. At first the comic opera was a combination of comedy and farce, mingled with couplets and songs. The musicians who wrote for the fairs were Jean-Claude Gilliears and Jean-Joseph Mouret.

The opéra-comique was combined with the Comédie-Italienne in 1762. This type of opera was very successful. Dialogue regained all its rights and it was the only thing that was allowed to the exclusion of the recitative. Philidor and Monsigny were the first composers of the masterworks of French comic-opera.

Gretry was the musical theoretician of the eighteenth century and was the author of "Memoirs ou Essai sur la musique" in three volumes. He became acquainted with Mlle. Clarion and noted "her intonations, her intervals and her accents in music" (23:120). Diderot engaged him to persevere in this line. He wrote "Le Huron", "Lucile" with its famous quartet, the "Tableau parlant", the "Fausse magie", and "Richard Coeur de Lion". He dreamed of a people's stage, of national plays.

Under the influence of the ideas of the time, the comic opera toward the end of the eighteenth century took on a more serious character. The comedy played a more restricted and
sentimental part in it. During this period of national revolution and change, Rouget de Lisle composed that glorious French hymn, the Marseillaise.

From this survey, we find that the seventeenth century was a highly creative age in both music and literature and that the character of music as well as literature was influenced greatly by the trend of court and political life. A climax was reached in the development of the arts during the peak of the reign of Louis XIV, while the decline of his political career brought about a resulting decline in literature and music. From the impoverished, affected character of the late seventeenth century, there was a gradual refinement leading up to the classical age in the eighteenth century.
CHAPTER III

MUSIC and ITS SIGNIFICANCE

in the LITERATURE of the

OUTSTANDING FRENCH WRITERS

Of the SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:

Malherbe, Descartes, Corneille, la Fontaine, Pascal, Molière, Madame de Sévigné, Bossuet, Boileau, Racine, la Bruyère, and Fenelon.

In the preceding chapter the writer has shown the importance of music in the lives of the people from early ages to the end of the eighteenth century. The present chapter will cover the findings of music as they are found in some of the works of outstanding French writers of the seventeenth century.

The outstanding writers of French literature in the seventeenth century were Francois de Malherbe, Alphonse Louis du Plessis Richelieu, René Descartes, Pierre Corneille, Jean de la Fontaine, Blaise Pascal, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (Molière), Marie de Sévigné, Jacques Benigne Bossuet, Nicholas Boileau, Jean Racine, Jean de la Bruyère, and Francois de la Mothe Fenelon.

Malherbe is said to have given the death blow to romantic verse for nearly two hundred years. He is also said to have lacked inspiration, yet he insisted upon clearness and good taste in the choice of words. These would indicate that music which depends upon romanticism and inspiration would be lacking in his works. However, the writer found references to
music in his "Oeuvres de Malherbe".

Ode

Apollon n'a point de mystère,
Et sont profanes ses chansons
Ou, devant que le Sagittaire
Deux fois ramene les glacons, (31:24).

Ode 2

Et les agréables chansons
Par qui leurs doctes nourrissons
savant charmer les destinées, (31:41).

Ode 3

Quand le sang bouillant en mes veines
Me donnait de jeunes désirs,
Tantot vous soupirez mes peines
Tantot vous chantez mes plaisirs, (30:54:v.3).

Ma reine est un but à ma lyre
Plus juste que nulles amours; (31:54:v.4).

Aussi bien, chanter d'autre chose
Ayant chanté de sa grandeur, (31:54:v.5).

Stances

Aussi dans nos maisons, en nos places publiques,
Ce sont que festins, ce ne sont que musiques
de peuples rejouis; (31:128:v.4).

In spite of the fact that Descartes was a philosopher
and a mathematician, and the writer did not expect to find any
music in his writings, the following reference to music is found
in the "Discourse on Method, Meditations":

... I should not be less astonished if
they succeeded on the first attempt than
if a person were in one day to become an
accomplished performer on the guitar by
merely having excellent sheets of music
set up before him (49:75).

Corneille was the great tragic writer of the seven-
teenth century. One of his tragedies "Polyeucte" contains the following mention of music:

... Polyeucte having before she arrived, fortified his soul for the conflict with her tears, by singing, in his solitude, a song of high resolve and of anticipative triumph over his temptation (53:122).

The opera "Psyche", another important work containing music was a collaboration of Corneille, Molière, and Quinault. The greatest tragic dramatist, the greatest comic dramatist, and the greatest opera librettist joined their forces to make this opera the most remarkable of its time.

La Fontaine was the fable writer of the seventeenth century. These little dramas in verse were written with the purpose of ridiculing vice and human weaknesses as a falsification of nature. He also wrote the words of an operetta composed by Lulli. When the piece was nearly finished, Lulli wanted so many changes made that La Fontaine grew tired of trying to please him and Lulli accepted the work of another author for his music. Although he did not write the words of any more operas for Lulli, he did write prologues which were more in his line.

Madame de Sévigné, who enjoyed La Fontaine's fables, wrote to a friend telling her how much she would like to write a fable especially for him.

... to make him understand how wretched it is for him to try to force his genius out of its proper sphere, and how this foolish attempt to sing in all keys makes bad music (12:68).
In the fable of "The Musicians and the Fishes" are the following musical citations:

Young Thyrsis had a lute and voice
So deftly tuned that, when he sang
To woo the maiden of his choice,
So sweet th' harmonious music
The dead might wake to hear (12:97).

One day, down in a flowery glade
He sat and sang, . . .
. . . . . . . . . .
The shepherd, whose enchanting song
Might move the hardest breast, (12:98).

And the shepherd sings fourteen lines - to the fish.

The fable of the "Cobbler and the Banker" is full of song. The cobbler, who was a very happy man, sang from morning until night. His neighbor, a banker, through worry over his gold, combined with the disturbance of the cobbler's singing, could not sleep. Finally he could stand the singing no longer and he paid the cobbler in gold to stop his singing. The cobbler did without singing and without sleep in consequence until he grew so wretched that he could bear it no longer, and he returned the gold to the banker and demanded his carols and his sleep.

The following is from a letter that la Fontaine wrote:

. . . There was nothing wanting, procession, holy water, hymns and the rest.
. . . , and a lawyer who never stopped singing, and sang very badly, - he was carrying home four volumes of songs (4:119).

Pascal was a philosopher and a metaphysist and

His mind was like one of those great modern organs, with their various keyboards, their sets of stops and pedals,
which seem an orchestra rather than an instrument; with one hand he pressed the clavier of physical science, while the other pulled out the "Celestial voice"; (17:28).

Molière is known as the greatest comedy writer or comic dramatist of the seventeenth century. He was the King's Entertainer and since that king was Louis XIV who loved music and dancing, Molière produced plays which contained them.

Molière always kept the play in the premiere position with music and dancing subsidiary to it. While he did not appreciate the new genre opera, because his common sense revolted against the spectacle of bourgeois singing their passions, he gradually made dancing and singing an integral part of the comedy-ballet and not merely interludes (3:132).


The following excerpts are from some of Molière's plays in which there is music:

La Princesse d'Élide.
Act III, Scene 2.

Euryalus tells Moron of the Princesse's charms:
... The sweetness of her voice made itself evident in that perfectly delightful air she deigned to sing, her wonderful tones penetrated the very depths of my soul and held all my senses enraptured (51:3).

Act IV, Scene 6.

The Princesse soliloquizes:

Oh you dear people, who by the sweetness of your songs, have the art to soothe the most wretched misery, come here, I pray you, and seek to charm away my sorrow by your music (51:3).

Act V, Scene 4.

Phyllis: - Seigneur, the Goddess Venus has proclaimed everywhere the change in heart of the Princesse. All the shepherds and the shepherdesses show their participation in this joy by dances and songs (51:3).

"L'Amour Médecin" has comedy, music, and ballet through the entire play. In Act III, Scene 7, Clitandre says:

I have brought as well singers and instruments to celebrate the wedding and to make merry. Let them come in. They are people I take about with me, of whom I daily make use to pacify the troubles of the mind by their harmony (51:4).

In the first act and the ninth scene of "Monsieur de Pourceaugnac" are two Italian musicians and eight mummers who, accompanied by musical instruments, sing words to a symphony. The two musicians sing a verse together. Then each sings a verse alone. After this the two musicians accompanied by the mummers and instruments, dance round Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and, stop before him, singing:
Take it quickly,
Seigneur Monsieur, etc. (51:6).

The remainder of the play is equally rich in music.
The entire first scene of act one of "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" is a conversation about music and dancing. In this scene too an overture is played by several instruments and a pupil composes a serenade. Besides these there are three singers, two violin players, four dancers, a music master and a dancing master.

In scene two of the first act are a music master, a dancing master, a pupil of the music master, three singers, and a dancer. Music and dancing are discussed and executed through the whole scene.

Act two, scene one is a discussion of dancing to music, concerts, and musical instruments.

Act two, scene three is a series of arguments between the fencing, dancing, and music masters over the importance of their professions.

Act two, scene four is a continuation of the argument. A master of philosophy enters and argues with the others.

In scene one of act four are three singers who sing a drinking song at the banquet.

Lulli composed the music for scenes nine, ten, eleven, twelve, and thirteen of act four.

"Psyché" a tragedy-ballet collaborated by Corneille, Moliere, and Quinault, the musician, is rich in music. In the
prologue of scene one, Flora sings to Venus. Vertumnus, Palemon, and divinities join Flora in the second verse. This is followed by a ballet. After the ballet, Vertumnus and Palemon sing a dialogue. Flora answers the dialogue by singing a minuet while other divinities join their dances to the song. Then divinities of earth and stream unite in songs and continue their dances to show joy at the approach of Venus and her son Cupid.

The first interlude of scene seven, act one shows a band of afflicted people bewailing Psyche's death with mournful lays.

"La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas", a play written in scenes, gives a picture of the provincial thoughts, habits and manners of the seventeenth century. Lulli wrote the music for this play.

Scene XX:

Viscount - It is important for you to observe that this comedy was made only to unite the different pieces of music and dancing which compose the entertainment . . .
(The violins begin an overture) (50:3).

Moliere represented the provincials as clumsy imitators of Parisian society in his play, "Les Precieuses Ridicules".

Act I, Scene 10 - Mascarille says: As for myself . . . and you will find in circulation in the fashionable assemblies of Paris two hundred songs of my making, as many sonnets, . . . and more than a thousand madrigals -
Magdelon: - Madrigals are pretty when neatly turned.
Mascarille: . . . . I am engaged in turning the whole Roman history into madrigals.
Mascarille: I will hum you the air I made for it (50: vol.3).
Excerpts from "L'Amour Peintre" or The Sicilian:

Act III - Scene 2.

Adraste: - Have you your musicians here?
Adraste: - Tell them to come in. I will make them sing here till daybreak, to see whether their music will not bring any lover to one of the windows.

Hali: - Here they are. What shall they sing?
Hali: - They must sing a trio which they sang to me the other day.
Hali: - ... it is in a fine natural key. I am fond of the natural key.
Hali: - ... without the natural key there is no salvation in harmony. Just listen to this harmony.

Adraste: - No, I want something tender and impassioned; something that will lull me to pleasant dreams.

Hali: - I quite see that you prefer a minor key ... They shall sing you a certain scene of a little comedy I have had them practice. Two shepherds in love, languid swains, tell their sorrows separately in the minor key ...; then a jovial shepherd comes to them and jeers at their weakness, in an admirable natural key (51:vol.6).

Molière and his comedies continued to be popular at the Court of Louis XIV until his collaborator, Lulli, the musician, gained favor with the king and obtained the exclusive right to produce plays containing music and dancing. This, Lulli gained under the guise of a Royal Academy of Music. On account of this exclusive right, Molière had to reduce the size of his orchestra and chorus and in his "La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas" he had to use Lulli's music in place of his own. "The King's Entertainer had a dangerous rival who had already taken from him an
important part of his work" (3:176).

Marie de Sévigné, or Madam de Sévigné, was said to be one of the greatest celebrities of the age of French letters. She was called the "beau ideal" of the court of Louis XIV. Through her letters, that she wrote as naturally as she talked, her fame was established. Most of these letters were written to her daughter about affairs at court, comments on French literature of the day, new plays, or just every-day experiences. If she had no news, she went out and picked up the gossip of the day from her friends. In one of her letters to her daughter she tells her that the king was always listening to music and that music produced a wonderful effect upon him. Madame de Sévigné was fond of music also and it was she who said "the first cradle-songs of modern society were French songs" (8:10).

The following excerpts are from a few of the many letters that Madame de Sévigné wrote or received and in which music is mentioned:

... but his vexation was brief and he consoled himself in his usual way with songs:

"Fortune, thou hast given me words,
But has not been ruthless to me" (8:75).

... What is more singular is, that the husband was also amused by this, and that he took pleasure in noting the progress and vicissitudes of each, and in celebrating them in his songs:-

"Brancas flees Tetu, priest pursued;
La Trousse by some charm is subdued,
He alone fulfils all her desires."
Her husband quires,
Tetu from Brancas takes the palm,
La Trousse is subdued by some charm" (8:78).

... After this crowd had been fed it must be amused; accordingly all kinds of entertainment were furnished, - even opera; and some pride was taken in the rendition of Lulli's must recent airs (8:172).

... I have also sent you some beautiful airs till I can get the other music. Do not neglect either your voice or your fine figure (2:189).

... the noise it made silenced the violins, hautbois and trumpets. ... I am sure you would have been enchanted with Locmaria's dancing, the violins and passe-pied at Court are absurd in comparison; (2:234).

... Marie de Chantal also learned dancing, ..., and her voice was so well trained, that besides taking an intelligent interest in music, she sang little Italian songs, which she loved for their passionate fervour ..., she composed little chansons; (2:15).

... No woman has been so praised or sung since Helen of Troy. ... all the minor poets ... were inspired to write chansons or madrigals on the fair Julie (2:40).

Bossuet was one of the pulpit orators of the seventeenth century and he was particularly famous for his funeral orations although it has been said that his greatness came as the result of an article he wrote on the French national creed. Music was not found of any great importance in his writings, although he must have enjoyed and approved of music as the following quotations would indicate:

..., and he particularly like the chant of the psalms there (8:343).
He was gifted with a fine voice, deep and harmonious, soft and flexible, but grave, dignified and suited to the majesty of religion (8:345).

and abbot arrived to the knowledge of the Gospel, had burnt all his titles, and during six years had not suffered Mass to be sung in the abbey (9:22: vol.2).

Boileau was called the dean of French writers and a fine classicist of the seventeenth century. In his "Lutrin" the following musical citations can be found:

Arms and the Priest I sing, whose Martial Soul
No Toil cou'd terrify, no Fear controul (34:1).

Muse, let the Holy Warriors Rage be sung; (34:2).

Prelate arise, quit this inglorious Down,
Or the proud "Chanter" will thy Power disown:
He sings "Oremus" (34:7)

And that no Fraud may their great Hopes Destroy
On a Choice, they call a Singing Boy: (34:16).

Howlet exalts his Voice,
Sadening the tuneful Neighbours with his Joys: (34:30).

The Master of the Choir, averse to Jest

An Ebon Stick he held, . . . ,
He runs, he flies, and reaches first the choir
Oh Thou who guided by the Delphic God

(Phoebus to Thee his Double Blessing gives;
Thy Music Charms us, . . . . (34:43)

Yes, let us cease our inharmonious Pray'rs,
No longer offer Music to the Spheres, (34:44).

Can two weak Chanters' Voices e'er perform
What is a Work for Thunder or a Storm? (34:46).

When Zephyrs blow, and Birds disus'd to sing
Essay their Notes to welcome in the Spring: (34:48).

Thus, Themis spoke. Her sister's ravished Ears
Blest the sweet Music that allay'd her Fears: (34:81).
It was Racine, a great dramatic writer of the seventeenth century who introduced the chorus in his plays of which "Berenice", "Britannicus", "Esther" and "Athalie" were examples. The modern stage had fallen into decay and the revival of the chorus seemed the only solution to restoring it to its ancient simplicity and purity. The following are musical mentions from "Athalia", "Berenice", and "Britannicus":

First, in specimen of the choral feature of the drama, we content ourselves with giving a single chorus from "Athalia" (53:131).

The play "Athalia" is rich in music. In act one, scene three, Jehosheba tells the Daughters of Levi to praise the Lord by singing. Scene four of the same act is all singing by soloists assisted by a chorus. Act two and scene nine contains one solo and chorus singing. In act three, scene seven, the chorus sings to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Scene six of act four is also one of chorus and solo singing.

And in the streets the crown, singing your virtues, (35:192).

Narcissus:
To make himself a spectacle in Rome, Performing in the theatre and singing Songs he hopes the rabble will admire (22:236).

La Bruyère published one book, the "Characters" in which were a number of detached thoughts and observations on varied subjects and recognized as the most finished product of its kind. The following musical citation was noted in this work:

... Then, just as a vocalist sings or as a lute-player touches his instrument in a company where it has been expected, (46:181).
Fenelon, besides being an archbishop of some note, was an equally noteworthy writer. He observed the signs of the times and in referring to the decline of Louis XIV, he said:

Here and there, already in the poetry, the prose and especially in the private correspondence of those times, a chime rings out, a peal of haunting bells, different from the official music of fife and trumpet (17:105).

The following was said of friends of Fenelon:

Beauvilliers and Chevreuse, unlike and inseparable, dwelt together in harmony, the solid regularity of the one forming, as it were, a musical bass for the dreamy arpeggios and cadences of the other (17:122).

Fenelon's letters, sermons, notes, publications, and private jottings were likened to the orchestration of a piece of music in that each part was so perfectly balanced as to be harmonious and pleasing to the ear. The following mention of music is found in "Fenelon's Letters to Men":

... Then we shall sing a psalm of joy and gratitude for the events over which we have wept here below (25:134).

... you come to our feast, you join our hymn of praise, ... You have joined in the Feast, you have sung the hymn, (25:134).

"Telemachus" was one of Fenelon's outstanding works; but "the elegance and grace which predominated in Fenelon's Telemachus did not lessen the severity with which the Bishop of Meaux criticized it" (5:337).

... He wished that Sainteul should conccrate his admirable talents to singing, in the temples the omnipotence of the Creator and the wonders of religion (5:337).
Fe\^nelon composed a fable for the Duke of Burgundy.

In this fable is the following musical citation:

"Who is the young hero," says the songstress of the groves . . . ? "He seems pleased with our songs; he loves poetry;" (10:55).

In a letter that Fe\^nelon wrote to the Duke of Beauvilliers about his banishment from the church, he says, "I am happy to be at a distance, and sing the canticle of deliverance (10:191).

And in his "Education of a Daughter", Fe\^nelon says:

...: it was by the pleasures of poetry and music, that the principal sciences, the maxims of virtue, politeness and good manners were introduced among the Hebrews, Egyptians and Greeks (19:49).

Poetry and music, if we take from them all that does not tend to a right end, might be employed very usefully to excite to the soul sublime and lively sentiments of virtue (19:177).

... We have seen how powerful music has been amongst the Pagans, to raise the soul above vulgar sentiments. ... Sacred music and poetry would be the best of all means to give a disgust of profane pleasures; ..., how many charms we find in music, without going out of pious subjects. If she have a voice, and a genius for the beauty of music; we cannot hope to keep her always ignorant of it. (This Fenelon said of any young girl) (19:178).

These litt\^erateurs contributed greatly toward the success of this most important age; an age where the social and intellectual life and activity was centered around the court of Louis XIV at Paris and Versailles; where men of fortune sought pleasure and gathered to enjoy all that was rich and
splendid. Then dramatists, poets, playwrights, novelists, philosophers, dancers, and musicians both vocal and instrumental were called in to afford amusement for the court.

Since amusement was the goal of the society of this period, literary salons were opened too where writers could assemble to read and hear others read. It was in the salons that an affected language developed, but it was a language of short duration.

The French Academy was founded at this time for the purpose of improving the French language. Also the Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Incriptions and Belles Lettres were founded and the Academy of Music was established. Theatres and opera houses were built and the writers and musicians who wished to gain distinction, made their first appearances in the theatre. It was in the theatre that Corneille, Racine, and Molière gained fame. Music held an important place in the plays of Racine and Molière for they realized that the modern stage was fast falling into decay and the only way to restore it to its ancient simplicity and purity was to revive the chorus. While Racine and Molière were making music an important part of the plays in the theatre, La Fontaine's musical importance was gained through his fables, which were said to exquisite little songs. Madame de Sévigné saw music in nature for she alludes to the singing of the nightingale, the cuckoo, the warbler, the music of fountains or falling waters and the singing woods in her letters. Also in her letters she told of the music at court and the music that
she heard in town and in the country.

And finally, the two great men of the pulpit, Bossuet and Fénelon, were musicians of great worth. The one had a fine voice that was suited to the delivery of his excellent sermons - it was deep and harmonious, yet soft, flexible and musical. The writings of the other were said to be so harmonious and so perfectly balanced that they were compared to the orchestration of a piece of music.

This golden age of literature, this age of affected and flattering language of society, this age of fine manners, dress, pleasure, and amusement, was also a golden age of music in that it held such a place of importance in the number of times that it is mentioned and used in the literature.
CHAPTER IV

MUSIC AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

in the Works of the

OUTSTANDING LITERARY MEN OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau,
Diderot, Beaumarchais, and Chénier.

In the preceding chapter, the writer has discussed and cited instances of music that were procured through research among obtainable writings of the outstanding French Litterateurs of the Seventeenth Century. The study now continues with the musical findings in the French literature of the Eighteenth Century.

Among the outstanding litterateurs of the eighteenth Century, into whose works music was embodied, were Charles de Secondat de Montesquieu, Francois-Marie Arouet, also called Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais and André Chénier. In order to cite the music in some of the works of these men, the writer will discuss the literary men in the order of their mention.

Montesquieu who was kindly by nature, interested in the well-being of mankind and a critic of religious and political questions, also believed in moderation in political and religious tolerance. His writings, of great worth, radiate these qualities. Representative of his works in which musical references are found in numbers are "The Spirit of Laws" and "The
Persian Letters".

From his book "The Spirit of Laws" are the following musical references:

That judicious writer, Polybus informs us that Music was necessary to soften the manners of the Arcadians, who lived in a cold, gloomy country; that the inhabitants of Cynete, who slighted music were the cruellest of all the Greeks, and that no other town was so immersed in luxury or debauchery. Plato is not afraid to affirm that there is no possibility of making a change in music without alternating the frame of government. Aristotle, who seems to have written his "Politics" only in order to contradict Plato, agrees with him in regard to the power and influence of music over the manners of the people. This was also the opinion of Theophrastus, of Plutarch, and of all the ancients . . . .

For this purpose, music which influences the mind by means of the corporeal organs, was extremely proper. It is a kind of medium between manly exercises which harden the body and speculative sciences which are apt to render us unsociable and sour. It cannot be said that music inspired virtue . . . ; but it prevented the effects of a savage institution, and enabled the soul to have such a share in the education as it could never have had without the assistance of harmony.

. . . . But if they happen to imbibe a taste for music, we should quickly perceive a sensible difference in their customs and manners . . . . But music excites all these; and is likewise able to inspire the soul with a sense of pity, lenity, tenderness, and love. Our moral writers, who declaim so vehemently against the stage, sufficiently demonstrate the power of music over the mind.

If the society above mentioned were to have no other music than that of drums and the sound of the trumpet, would it not be more difficult to accomplish this end than by the more melting tones to soften harmony . . . .

But some will ask, why should music be pitched upon as preferable to any other entertainment (39: Bk.IV: part 8: vol.1).
In the same book he also says, "The rich employed their money in festivals, musical choruses, . . . ." (39:bk.IV: part 3: vol.1).

Montesquieu discusses laws in relation to the nature of the climate in his book "The Spirit of Laws". He tells of being at the opera in England and in Italy. He has seen the same pieces and the same performances and yet he noticed what different effects the same music had upon the people of these two nations. The English were so cold and phlegmatic in their reactions; the Italians were so lively and enraptured, that it seemed almost inconceivable to him.

He tells us too that the savages of warmer climates are passionately fond of music and dancing, while the Indians of colder countries, having little time for leisure have therefore less time for music, dancing, and festivals.

Montesquieu's "Persian Letters" have many mentions of music. A letter from Usbek to the Chief Black Eunuch, at his Seraglio in Ispahan says, "... entertain them with music, dancing, . . . ." (16: Letter 2).

One letter is from Usbeck to Mirza at Ispahan:

They established feasts in honor of the Gods. Young men and maidens, . . . . worshipped them with dances and rural minstrelsy . . . . During a frugal meal, they sang of the crimes of the first Troglodites, . . . . (16:Letter12).

A letter from Usbek to . . . :

I have six couplets . . . . I have chosen some admirably clear voices, which issuing
from the cavity of certain powerful chests, will move the people wonderfully. They are set to an air which has hitherto produced quite a peculiar effect. . . . Since our defeat, our songs about original sin has annoyed him so much, . . . (16:Letter 112).

Montesquieu likened the literature of the period to music when he said that nothing could be more unified, more characteristic and consistent than the French literature in the reign of Louis XIV which was in nearly perfect harmony. The instruments were of few kinds as those of an orchestra in Haydn's day. With the exception of one discordant note, shallowness, the music was refined and well concerted.

"Voltaire" was the greatest name in the eighteenth century. He was a philosopher, controversialist, historian, poet, dramatist, and letter writer, as well as an advocate of tolerance and justice. Writing with precision and simplicity, he covered every field of human knowledge. His influence extended not only throughout the eighteenth century, but even to our day.

Music is particularly predominant in his philosophical dictionary; there are numerous references to vocal and instrumental music.

The text of Voltaire's tragedies was more like an opera libretto, the purpose of which was to provide a theme for the ingenious virtuosity of actors, musicians, and all those who cooperated to make a grand dramatic spectacle.

The operas, comedies, and miscellaneous dramatic pieces of Voltaire were said to be quite unimportant; yet the
operas were enjoyable performances, with fiddlers, gorgeous decorations, and costumes. Voltaire is weak in presenting the solemn and serious parts of his opera "Samson and Delilah"; but he is excellent in light songs of love, wine, and jest. He particularly excels in such light pieces as "La Fete de Belebat" which has in it the amusing song of the cure de Courdimanche. He called the court operas "La Princesse de Navarre" and "Le Temple de la Gloire", "farces de la foire".

Among the novels and pamphlets that he wrote "Zadig" stands out as important for musical citations. It contains that famous verse which the king forced a courtier to sing every day in order that he might be cured of his conceit. The following is the verse he sang:

Que son merite est extreme!
Que de graces! gue de grandeur!
Ah! combien monseigneur
Doit etre content de lui-meme (1:Chap.17:part 2).

Also in "Zadig" is the following mention of music:

Musicians were placed in an adjoining room and all prepared for the dance . . .; the king ordered the band to play and the dance to begin. The king replied with agreeable music, and chanted forth prayers and invocations to heaven with much sweetness and melody (7:vol.1).

Another work of Voltaire's, the "Princess of Babylon" contains the following mention of music:

. . .; and opposite the buffet, on other steps, were seated a number of musicians. The music, which continued during the repast, . . . .

All the musicians were struck motionless, and their instruments afforded harmony no longer (7:vol.2: part 3).
...; one hundred shepherds and shepherdesses warbled a concert in two different choirs; the nightingales, thistledinches, linnets, chaffinches, sung the higher notes with the shepherdesses, and the shepherds sung the tenor and bass...; but whilst this consolatory and voluptuous music was playing, ... (7:vol.2:part4).

They were charmed with a species of music that reached the heart without astonishing the ears. The representation here consisted of agreeable verses, delightful songs, ... It was called an opera. A female singer, in particular charmed them by her melodious voice (7:vol.2:part 9).

If he here and there heard a peasant sing, it was a doleful ditty.
The king's musicians performed during the repast, that celebrated air which has since been called "The Follies of Spain" (7: vol.2: part 10).

The well known "White Bull" contains the following reference to music:

Amphibion assembled hewn stones by the sound of his violin. To build a city, he had only to play a rigadoon and a minuet (7: vol.2: part 8).

... the second was distractedly fond of music ..., and you shall continually hear most heavenly music.

The prophet king of Persia began his reign by an Italian opera, whose choruses were sung by fifteen hundred eunuchs. Their voices penetrated his soul even to the very marrow of the bones, ... To this opera succeeded another and to the second a third, without interruption. (7:vol.2: part 9).

..., preceded by a hundred girls, playing upon the sacred sistrams.
All the priests sang in chorus, with a harmony which ravished the soul, ... And at every pause was heard the sound of the sistrams, of cymbals, of tabors, of psalteries, of bagpipes, harps and sackbuts. (7: vol.2: part 10).
"Candide" another famous work of Voltaire is rich with music:

...; while each of the two kings were causing "Te Deum" - glory to God - to be sung in their respective camps, ... (7: vol.3: part 3).

...; followed by fine music on a squeaky organ ... Candide was whipped on the back in cadence while they were singing; ... (7: vol.3: part 4).

...; the king, and the heads of each family, sing their songs of thanksgiving each morning, accompanied by five or six thousand musicians. (7: vol.3: part 17).

...; between two rows of musicians, consisting of a thousand each, according to the custom of the country (7: vol.3: part 18).

"But look at those gondoliers," said Candide, "are they not perpetually singing?" (7: vol.3: part 24).

...; Pococurante entertained them with a concert; Candide was quite charmed with the music. "This noise," said Pococurante, "might divert one for half an hour or so; ... "Music is now-a-days, nothing else but the art of executing difficulties;

I might perhaps take more pleasure in the opera, ... Let those go that will to see wrecked tragedies set to music, where the scenes are composed for no other end than to lug in by the head and ears two or three ridiculous songs, in order to show off the throat of an actress to advantage.

Let who will, or can, swoon away with pleasure, at hearing an eunuch trill out the part of Cæsar and Cato, while strutting about on the stage with a ridiculous air. (7: vol.3: part 25).

Evidently Voltaire did not think much of the opera to put such words into the mouth of Pococurante.

The following references to music are in "Memnon the Philosopher."
Andre des Touches at Siam

Andre des Touches was a very agreeable musician, in the reign of Louis XIV, before the science of music was perfected by Rameau, and before it was corrupted by those who prefer the art to surmounting difficulties to nature and the real graces of composition.

"What does it signify that our neighbors, who live beyond our mountains, have better music than we have, . . . ."

Des Touches - "Tell me, I beseech you, sir, if at Siam you divide the tone major into two commas; and if the progress of the fundamental sounds are made by one, three and nine?"

Des Touches - "Music is everything. It was at the foundation of all the politics of the Greeks."

Des Touches - "If you had good music, you might call your nation the happiest in the world" (7: vol.5).

The following is said of the blind in "The Blind Pensioners at Quinze Vingt":

A deaf man, reading this little history, allowed that these people being blind, were to blame in pretending to judge colors; but he remained steady to his own opinion, that those persons who were deaf were the only proper judges of music (7: vol.5).

In "Jeannot and Colin":

Nature, which does all, had given him a talent . . .; it was that of singing ballads agreeably. . . .; and having his head full of songs, he composed some for his mistress. He stole from the song "Bacchus and Love" in one ballad; from that of "Night and Day" in another; and from that of "Charms and Alarms" in a third. But as there were always in his verses some superfluous feet, or not enough, he had them corrected for twenty louis-d'ors a song (7: vol.5).

The following reference to music is in "Ancient Faith and Fable":
Another proposed to lay the only tax upon songs and laughing, in consideration that we were the merriest nation under the sun, and that a song was a relief and comfort for everything. But the minister observed, that of late there were hardly any songs of pleasantry. (7: vol.6: part 4).

Voltaire in his story "Of the Greeks" says that fine architecture, perfect sculpture, good music and genuine poetry were transmitted to other nations by the Greeks. (7: vol.7: part 21)

The following references to music are found in the philosophical dictionary that Voltaire wrote:

A - The letters served as ciphers, and to express musical notes.

A B C or Alphabet.
... just as the throat of the rudest boor is made like that of the finest opera singer, the difference which makes of one a rough, discordant insupportable bass, and of the other a voice sweeter than the nightingale's, ... The language of the Phoenician people was rude and gross. ... enough to terrify a songstress from the opera of Naples (37: vol.5).

Able - Ability.
A mere player of an instrument is able; a composer must be more than able; he must have genius. (37: vol.5).

Academy.
The word academy became so celebrated that when Lulli who was a sort of favorite, obtained the establishment of his Opera in 1692, he had interest enough to get inserted in the patent, that it was a Royal Academy of Music, in which ladies and gentlemen might sing without demeaning themselves (37: vol.5).

Adoration.
... the God of the universe is addressed in the same terms as an opera singer.
Throughout the East, songs and dances and torches formed part of the ceremonies essential in all sacred feasts. No sacredotal
institution existed among the Greeks without songs and dances. The Hebrews borrowed this custom from their neighbors for David sang songs and danced before the ark.

St. Matthew speaks of a canticle sung by Jesus Christ Himself and by His Apostles after their passover. This canticle, which is not admitted into the authorized books, is to be found in fragments in the 237th letter of St. Augustine to Bishop Chretius, and whatever disputes there may have been about its authenticity, it is certain that singing was employed in all religious ceremonies. Mohomet found this a settled mode of worship among the Arabs; it is also established in India, but does not appear to be in use among lettered men of China (37: vol.5).

Ancients and Moderns.

What has become of the charms of music, which so often enchanted men and beasts, birds and serpents, and even changed their nature? This enemy to his own times believed implicitly in the fable of Orpheus, and, . . ., had never heard of the fine music of Italy, nor even of that of France, which do not charm serpents, . . ., but which do charm the ears of the connoisseur (37: vol.5).

Anecdotes.

The same book says that Louis XIV was so much pleased with the opera of Isis that he ordered a decree to be passed in council by which men of rank were permitted to sing at the opera, . . . .

It is true that Lulli obtained in 1672, long before the opera of Isis was performed, letters permitting him to establish his opera, in which letters he got it inserted that "ladies and gentlemen might sing in the theater without degradation (37: vol.5).

Whether the Greeks and the Romans Admitted the Existence of Angels. Section III.

Pope Gregory I has reduced to nine choirs - to nine hierarchies or orders the ten choirs of angels acknowledged by the Jews (37: vol.5).

Aristotle

. . . . A man who has a good ear and voice may
sing well without musical rules but it is better
to know them (37: vol.6: 36).

Arot and Marot

... St. Augustine, in his Christian Doctrine
says that the sense of hearing will enjoy the
pleasures of singing and speech.

One of our great Italian theologians named
Piazza, in his "Dissertation on Paradise",
informs us that the elect will forever sing
and play the guitar (37: vol.6: 62).

Assassin - Assassination

Section I

Sweet music charms them as they trip along:
And every feathered warbler adds his song (37:vol.6.91).

Calends

... on St. Stephen's Day there was sung a
hymn of the ass, which was called the Prose
of Fools; and that on St. John's Day another
was sung, called the Prose of the Ox. ...;
it was sung by two choirs, who imitated at
intervals and as the burden of the song, the
braying of that animal (37: vol.6: 315).

... Not content with singing licentious
songs in the choir, (37: vol.6: 316).

And to conclude the register of St. Stephen,
at dijon ... ... the vicars ran about
the streets with drums, fifes, and other
instruments, (37: vol.6: 317).

Enthusiasm

Of all the modern odes that which abounds with
noblest enthusiasm, an enthusiasm that never
abates, that never falls into the bombastic
or the ridiculous, is "Timotheus", or "Alex-
ander's Feast", by Dryden. ... The ode
was sung, set to music, and if the musician
had been worthy of the poet it would have
been the masterpiece of lyric poesy (37:vol.8:243).

Section VI

... he was on his knees with his wife, his
five sons and five daughters, his kinsmen
and servants; and all were singing the praises
of God, (said Logomachos to Dondinac) ... .
Come tell me what you are singing in your
barbarous Scythian jargon? "All tongues are alike to the ears of God, answered the Scythian; we are singing his praises (37:vol.8:248).

Religion

... A set of amateurs may give a concert of refined and scientific music, but let them beware of performing such a concert before the ignorant and brutal vulgar, lest their instruments be broken over their heads (37:vol.13:61).

Rhyme

Rhyme was probably invented to assist the memory, and to regulate at the same time the song and the dance (37:vol.13:88).

... Those rhymes were a guide at once to the singer and the dancer; they indicated the measure.

... for after all, it is possible that verses and songs might be addressed by man to his mistress before they were addressed by him to his deities (37:vol.13:89).

Samson

... he divided the Apocalypse into five acts, and inserted choruses worthy of the elegance and fine nature of the piece (37:vol.13:165).

In 1732, it was wished to represent at the Opera of Paris, a tragedy of Samson, set to music by the celebrated Rameau; but it was not permitted. ... Yet at that time they performed the opera of Jepthah, (37:vol.13:166).

Singing

Questions on Singing, Music, Modulation, Gesticulation -

Could a Turk conceive that we have one kind of singing for the first of our mysteries when we celebrate it in music, another kind which we call motetts in the same temple, a third kind at the opera, and a fourth at the theatre?

In like manner, can we imagine how the ancients blew their flutes.

Law was promulgated in Athens nearly as in Paris we sing an air on the Pont Neuf.

It is very probable that the melopee or modulation, . . ., was an even, simple chant like that which we call the preface to mass, which in my opinion is the Gregorian chant, and not the Ambrosian, and which is a true melopee.

When the Italians revived tragedy in the sixteenth century the recitative was a melopee which could not be written; for who can write inflections of the voice which are octaves and sixths of tone. They were learnt by heart. This custom was received in France when the French began to form a theatre, more than a century after the Italians (37: vol.13:209).

This modulation resembled the declamation of the present day much less than our modern recitative resembles the manner of reading the newspaper.

I cannot better compare this kind of singing, this modulation, than to the admirable recitative of Lulli,

. . ., I say that Andronicus being hoarse while singing in the interludes, got another to sing for him while he executed the dance; and thence came the custom of dividing interludes between dancers and singers:

. . . . The song is expressed by the dance (37: vol.13: 210).

Socrates

Socrates in speaking of the Divine Architect of the World says that he used the lyre of Apollo and the flute of Pan.

Soul

The musical-instrument maker places and shifts forward or backward, the soul of a violin, under the bridge, in the interior of the instrument: a sorry bit of wood more or less gives it or takes from it a harmonious soul (37: vol.13: 265).

Rousseau's importance came at the beginning of the Romantic period. He was a great expounder and believer in nature. Music was a special hobby of his; naturally then his writ-
ings are full of music. Rousseau who lived to denounce the theatre, wrote a short operetta "Le devin du village", which was said to have considerable merit.


In the story of Rousseau's life, Thomas Davidson, the author says:

In turning his face to Paris, Rousseau meant to win distinction and fortune as a musician. "I reached Paris", he says, "in the autumn of 1741 with my musical project as my sole resources". His musical project, which was nothing less than a new system of musical notation, was presented to the Academy of Sciences, but failed to meet with the recognition he had expected.

So he toiled away at musical composition, and tried, through his friends, to bring his work before the public, but without success. (15:54).

Rousseau was recognized as a rising genius in music as well as in literature. He wrote the article on music for the "Encyclopedie" and his opera "Le devin du village" was played with great success before the king at Versailles.

Among his many theories about musical instruments, was the use of the Keyless instrument which he said dulled the touch. He thought that the ideal instrument was the piano, which he knew from the experience of playing it.

From his book "Emile" we learn that the deaf might be taught to hear music through the vibrations of the strings of an
instrument as they touch them. He also says that girls should learn to sing and dance to their hearts' content; they must be taught to sing professionally but simply and naturally; and that they may learn to play accompaniments without being able to sing a single note.

The following incident was related in "The Confessions of Rousseau". Rousseau was having difficulty establishing himself in a profession. He knew just enough about music to get him into trouble. So he took the name and profession of his friend Venture. Venture was a very creditable musician and singing master. He was presented one day to a Monsieur de Freytorens who loved music and who gave many concerts in his home. Rousseau having told Monsieur that he was a composer, had to prove his talent, by composing a piece for his host's next concert. The orchestra assembled to play his composition. Rousseau, with a baton made of paper, attempted to beat time for this orchestra. He had no conception of the tune, not having previously heard it, nor could he tell by looking at it, because he knew nothing about chords or harmony. The musicians laughed at the discordant sounds of the composition and the audience was aghast. Yet this was the beginning of Rousseau's musical success.

These "Confessions of Rousseau" which occupy better than one thousand pages are numerous with musical reference. Scarcely a page is turned without several mentions of music. However, Rousseau being a musician of some merit would naturally write about music.
Diderot lacked the steadiness and finish that other writers had, yet he was an outstanding literary man of the period. His works: "The New Spirit", "Memoirs and Correspondence of Baron de Grimm and Diderot", "Dialogues by Denis Diderot", "Diderot's Philosophical Works", and "Diderot and English Thought" are particularly representative of the importance of music in the eighteenth century.

The following reference to music appears in the conclusion of his work "The New Spirit":

In music, the most indefinite and profound mysteries of the soul are revealed and placed outside us as a gracious and marvelous orb; the very secret of the soul is brought forth and set in the audible world. That is why no other art smites us with so powerfully religious an appeal as music; no other art tells us such old forgotten secrets about ourselves. It is the mightiest of all instincts, the primitive sexual traditions of the races before man was, that music is rooted (18: Conclusion).

At the time Diderot and Baron de Grimm were corresponding and writing their Memoirs, Paris was in a great turmoil over music and the opera. The people were divided into two strong parties; one party was loyal to Rameau and French music; the other supported the Buffa performers and Italian music. The subject absorbed the attention of the people to the exclusion of all other matters of importance.

Diderot said of Rousseau:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva . . . , has just set all Paris aflame by a "Letter Upon Music", in which he endeavors to prove that it is impossible to adapt music to French
words, that the language is altogether unadapted to musical sounds, that the French never have had any national music and never can have any. It is singular enough to see this opinion maintained by a man who has himself composed a great deal of music to French words, and has recently brought out "Le devin du village", a very pleasing interlude, which has had the greatest success, both at Fontainbleau and Paris. . . .; whereas "The Citizen" (Rousseau) reasons and overthrows with mighty strokes of the hatchet all the altars which had been raised with so much respect to the Genius of French Music (18: vol.1: part 1).

This pamphlet on music created such a furor among the musicians that musicians of the orchestra at the opera and those who considered themselves authorities on the subject of music burned Rousseau in effigy. They took offense at being charged with ignorance and emb responsibility.

It is the opinion of the writer that had Rousseau believed that it was impossible to adapt music to French words, or that the language was unadapted to musical sound, or that the French had not had or never would have national music, he would not have tried to write music himself. Such a belief might have occurred after one of his discouraging adventures with his own music; or he may have thought that the Italian influence would overshadow French musical endeavor to such an extent that the results would appear more Italian than French.

Diderot continues to discuss the music of Rousseau. He says that he became interested in Italian Music to the extent that he sang the Operas of Lulli with delight. He composed the
the opera "Les Muses Galantes" in the French style; however, the critics did not judge it of sufficient merit to produce it on the stage. Some years later, he was so disgusted with the stage that he denied in print that there was such a thing as music in France. He was indeed a man of contradictions.

In a letter dated January 1766, Monsieur Nöel and His Musical Instrument, the Pantaleon, are discussed:

M. Nöel, the musician at the Court of Brunswick is come to Paris with an instrument which he calls the Pantaleon, ... This instrument is a sort of tympanum which was two hundred seventy-six chords and is played with two sticks. It is said that hitherto only two men have been found in Europe able to play it - since it is undoubtedly the most difficult instrument existing. M. Nöel executes his performances in a very superior manner; with two sticks he does things that would reflect honour upon a very skillful player on the harpsichord using his ten fingers. The great difficulty is to draw melody from an instrument played with sticks, the touch of which is naturally dry and harsh; and this secret M. Nöel seems to possess in an eminent degree.

The Pantaleon was brought into France at its first invention, as we learn from the "Dialogue upon the Music of the Ancients", to which this instrument gave occasion (18:vol.2).

Rousseau and his music must have been extremely popular topics of discussion for more mention of them is found in a letter to a German Princess:

His propensity to satire found a fine field on which to indulge itself, in the quarrel of the buffons, which produced the "Letter Upon Music" ... It states very clearly the defects of our music, but it adds that we cannot have any. At the same time he composed the "Devin du village", the music which is full of grace, and perfectly melodious. Since that time, the composition of
Duni, of Philador, of Montigny, and above all, the enchanting music of Gretry—music which has been performed all over Europe, where before, nothing was known of French music but the airs that accompanied their dances—the performances of these composers have, it must be allowed, fully refuted Rousseau (18: vol.2).

The references to music in "The Memoirs and Correspondence of Baron de Grimm and Diderot" are too numerous to list here. It would appear, from the observance of the writer, that the interest in music held the major interest of these two great men of letters. Yet these memoirs are said not to be so much a treatise on the art of music as they are a history of Diderot's life, his works, and his successes. He had a natural instinct for music, consequently he was very fond of music. His father played the first violin in the Cathedral at Liege. Diderot sang in the Choir of this church as a boy. His interest in music was so great that at the age of fourteen he was composing music. Among his compositions were masses and psalms, music for "Huron", and interludes. He also wrote essays of vocal and instrumental music.

"Diderot's Early Philosophical Works" and the book "Diderot and English Thought" are equally rich with references of music.

Beaumarchais was a man of many accomplishments, one of which was music. Not only was he a song writer and a musician, he played the harp very well and taught the daughters of Louis XV and other ladies of the court to play the harp. He also organized groups for concerts, always making himself the star per-
former. Particularly important among his musical works were "The Barber of Seville" and the "Marriage of Figaro".

Music was cultivated to a great extent in the Caron home for the children showed talent for all kinds of instruments. Julie, a sister of Beaumarchais, had talent for the harp and the violincello. She also composed verses and music for a number of songs which she improvised on every possible occasion. Jeanne Marguerite, another sister, was an excellent musician; she had a charming voice and also played the harp. Beaumarchais' passion for music made him neglect his profession as a watch maker and his father, disgusted, excluded him from the home until he promised to let music alone until working hours were over; then he was allowed to play the violin and the flute if he did not disturb the tranquility of the neighbors or his father. Little did his father realize that one day his son's passion for music would be far more profitable to him than watchmaking.

The following references to music are found in Lomenie's "Beaumarchais and his Times".

The reader has not forgotten that, from his youth, he had a passion for music; he sang with taste, and was a good performer on the flute and harp. This latter instrument, which was then but little known in France, was beginning to be much in vogue. Beaumarchais gave himself up to the study of the harp; he even introduced an improvement in the arrangement of the pedals, .... The reputation which he had obtained as a harpist in several drawing rooms at the court and in the city, soon reach the ears of "Mesdames de France", the daughters of Louis XV (27: vol.1: 119).
In Diderot's letter to Mademoiselle Volland, dated 176-, we read the following: - "I had been invited last week, by Count Oginski to hear him play the harp. I was not acquainted with this instrument, but it must be one of the first invented by man. I like the harp but still it is less pathetic than the mandore" (27: vol.1: 119, footnote).

A letter written to Beaumarchais' father tells about some seguedillas which he had written:

... I might send you some verses composed by your servant, on Spanish seguedillas, which are very pretty vaudevilles; the words however of which are generally worthless. The people say here, as in Italy, the words are nothing, the music is everything. I got in a passion when I heard such an absurdity. I chose the most popular air, a soft, touching, charming melody, and wrote words to it in an analogous strain (27:vol.1:173).

..., this pretty seguedilla, and the accompaniment for the guitar, which I have composed (in a country where everyone plays it, and yet cannot accompany my seguedilla like myself, who, out of compliment to the country, throw off something from time to time, for their favourite instrument), you would sing away at it, until at last, perhaps, you would render it perfectly. You shall have the air, then and the accompaniment I promise you (27: vol.1:173).

The following gives an account of the originality and background for the "Barber of Seville".

... The originality of the "Barber of Seville" in its first form, consisted principally in the fact, that the author of the words was at the same time the composer, or at least the arranger of the music. ..., while expressing a marked disdain for the Spanish Theatre in general, Beaumarchais entertained a very lively enthusiasm for the Spanish music, and above all for the interludes sung under the name of tonadillas or saynetes. The recollection of the tonadillas appears to have given rise to the
"Barber of Seville". It was first written, in order to introduce some Spanish airs, which the author had brought from Madrid, and was arranging in the French style.

"I compose," he writes at this epoch, "airs to my words and words to my airs." (27: vol.2: 234).

The "Barber of Seville" as we hear it today is not as it was when Beaumarchais composed it. "It was reserved for two great composers, Mozart and Rossini, to add the charm of music to the inspirations of Beaumarchais. (27: vol.2:236).

Among the writings of Chénier which contain music are a "Hymne" written for the triumphal entry of the mutinous soldiers whom Collot d'Herbois wished to honor; and "The Young Captive" in which are the following lines:

More swift, more joyous,
through the summer sky
Philomet soars and sings. (46:272).

These rhymes shall make some
Lover of my lays
Seek the maid I have sung. (46:273).

La Fontaine, a writer of the seventeenth century, was the model of the eighteenth century poets of lighter verse.

Music lent itself especially to this type of verse.

The opera subdivided itself into many classes, from the dignified opera of the Comédie Française and the Comédie Italienne to the vaudeville and operas of the "Théâtre de la Foire" or the opera of the country fairs.

To the Revolution is credited two songs that are famous in French literature. One is the "Ca Ira" and the other is the "Marseillaise" written by Rouget de Lisle.
From the survey of the works of these outstanding literary writers, it appears that music held an important place in their writings. Of course, Rousseau, Diderot, and Beaumarchais were musicians as well as littérateurs and naturally their writings would be influenced to a certain extent by their musical interests. But the writings of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Chénier also indicate the influence of music. Inasmuch as the court was the center of all the arts, and the artists gathered there to vie with each other in importance, they would influence each other and their works would be likewise influenced. Then too the music of Italy and Spain was growing in importance and the influence was felt at the court of France. As a result, the literature and the arts were influenced. The musical geniuses, Rameau, Charpentier, Philidor, Monsigny, and Gretry, living in this classic eighteenth century too must have greatly influenced the literature.
CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding chapters the writer has endeavored to show the importance of music in the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The following observations were made from the survey of the literature of some of the outstanding writers of these two periods and of the history of music from early ages through the eighteenth century:

Music played an important part in the lives of all people as was found through a survey of the history of early peoples before the seventeenth century. Through music they expressed their sentiments and emotions. Being a part of their language, music occupied an important place in their culture.

Later their sentiments and emotions began to be expressed in their literature and finally the lyric pieces composed by the noble burgers of France and the meistersingers of Germany in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were stories in song about the life and customs of the people.

As music and literature were important arts in the age of Louis XIV and this was an age of artistic development; as the court was the center of these arts as well as the center of life and culture; and as the king was fond of music; it would follow that music and literature would be combined for the purpose of entertainment at court. Thus poetry and music were combined into the lyric drama that surpassed that of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.
At the time of the Renaissance, modern French music was developed. The writers of the opera and the lyric drama realized the need for instrumental as well as vocal music. Up to this time the instrument was used only as an accompaniment to the voice. Now instrumental music was written and played independently of the voice as a solo instrument. Instruments played for the prologues to the opera and for the divertissements between acts and scenes as well as being accompaniment for the singers. Examples of this are found in the plays "Psyche" collaborated by Molière, Corneille, and Quinault, "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" and "La Comtesse d' Escarbagnas", collaborated by Molière and Lulli, "Les Facheux, "La Princesse d' Elide", "Les Precieuses Ridicules", "L'Amour Peintre", and "Monsieur de Pourceaugnac" which were written by Molière alone.

La Fontaine's prologues to Lulli's operas, Racine's use of the chorus in some of his plays, examples of which are "Berenice", "Esther", "Athalie", and "Britannicus", Fenelon's writings and Madame de Sévigné's letters, rich in references to music, are also examples of the importance that music held in the literature of the period.

While the seventeenth century was one of artistic perfection and order, the eighteenth century followed with an eventful period of change and upheaval, whose writers were largely responsible for the Revolution. Consequently the literature and music would be resultingly reactive to the sentiments and emotions of the people. The writers of this period wrote for
a more cosmopolitan audience than for an audience of the brilliant court of the previous century.

An early writer of this period who expressed the importance of music was Montesquieu in his "Spirit of Laws". He also compared the literature of the eighteenth century to music in that they were in nearly perfect harmony to each other.

Music is predominant in Voltaire's philosophical dictionary and his tragedies are said to be like an opera in that they provide a theme for the genius of actors, musicians, and all who cooperated to make the play a success. Examples of music in literature are also found in other of his works as "La Fête de Bélébat", "Zadig", "Candide", and the "Princess of Babylon".

Another genius of literature and music was Rousseau. Examples of music in literature are: his article on music in the "Encyclopedie", his opera "Le devin du village", his many theories written about musical instruments, his "Confessions", a story of his life which is rich in reference to music, and his "Émile" in which he mentions music and its importance for the deaf and the importance of musical training for girls.

Still another writer of this period was Diderot who had a natural instinct for music. He was a church singer and composed music for it. In the "Memoirs and Correspondence of Baron de Grimm and Diderot", the references to music are frequent.

A song writer, a singer, an instrumental player of the violin, flute, and harp, and a literary writer of this century was Beaumarchais who composed the "Barber of Seville" a brilliant
example of music in literature.

Other examples of music in the literature of this period were Chénier's "Hymne" and Rouget de Lisle's "Marseillaise" composed as results of political and national disturbances.

In the history of early peoples music was an outlet to their sentiments and emotions, just as the outstanding literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries expressed the political intrigues, emotions, and characteristics of that period. Reference to music is so frequent and varied that it holds an invaluable place in the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
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Joseph Le Blanc, Ph.D. 
March, 1939

Helen L. May, Ph.D. 
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