

like their ensample, both fond, and fencelesse; to witt, that they might *Character* the *Sounds* in what forme it pleased them, and needed not to be bound to follow the *Laws* and *Rules* of *Art*, which they found were herein wholly against them.

(¹) Morley lib.
1. fol. 15.

THE *Lesse Diminution*, (which is vulgarly call'd (¹) *Diminution of Diminution*, or the *Double Diminution* of the *Perfect Prolation*) is the swiftest *Motion* that any *Tune* is *Composed* of vnder this *Measure*, as *Country Daunces*, *Bransls*, *Volros*, *Courantos*, & such like: And it likewise we find character'd, to signifie the *Tact* of it, with the *Ternary Number*, which is yet of all the rest the greatest *Absurdity*: For herein there are *sixe Notes Measured* to one *Tact*, (whereas afore but 3.) and Their *Ternary Number* is made to signifie no lesse then *Perfect Prolation*, *Great Diminution*, & *Lesse Diminution*, and all vpon the bare and groundlesse warrant of *Common Practise*, which say they, hath so receiu'd it, & therefore they vse it.

But what a confusion will this be when they haue a *Song* or *Tune* composed of all these *Tacts*, (as diuers there are in vse for *Masks* and *Reuells*) and shall finde but onely one *Character* to expresse all *Motions*? how can that worke be perform'd in his proper nature, except the *Composer* shall either *Demonstrate* by a *Canon* what his meaning is, or himselfe personally be there to explaine his *Forme* intended? Therefore the *Authors* of our *Art*, foreseeing the *Diuersties* (and there by the *Absurdities*) which heerein would be inuented concerning the *Diminutions* of the *Tact*, agreed vpon certaine *Rules* and *Characters* together, to *Demonstrate* euery particular *Motion* by, of what kinde of *Diuisiō* locuer the *Tact* was. But now inregard that those *Canons* and *Proportionate Rules* are out of vse, I see no reason why wee should vse their *Characters*, but rather be led by that *Rule*, whereof now in these dayes our practice