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Theodore Presser

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MOTTO:—*Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.* —Horatius.

He who mingles the useful with the agreeable bears away the prize.

THE ETUDE

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE TECHNICAL PART OF THE

Piano Forte.

VOL. 1.]

NOVEMBER, 1883.

[NO. 2.

THEODORE PRESSER,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR,

LYNCHBURG, VA.

(2)

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THE ETUDE,

LYNCHBURG, VA., NOVEMBER 1883.

Issued Monthly in the interest of the technical study of the Piano-forte.

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Specimen Copy sent to any Address for Five Cents.

Extra Copies will be furnished to Teachers at one-half the regular Retail Rates. Postage Free.

All letters should be directed to

THEODORE PRESSER,
1026 Main Street, LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA.

TO OUR READERS.

Our first issue has met with an open-arm reception by the musical public everywhere. The favor it received, especially from the staunch members of the profession, quite overreached the highest expectations of the publisher. With this issue we attain the size and appearance we will hereafter continue, with possibly an exception with the holiday number, which may be somewhat increased in size. It is very gratifying to see teachers ordering THE ETUDE in numbers for their pupils, and colleges and music schools adopting it into their classes.

The offer made in the special circular of last month will be *annulled* with this issue. We most heartily thank our readers for the liberal response. Those who have "filled out" the blank sent out will receive the return agreed upon, and those who only *partly* filled it out will of course expect only a recompense *proportionate*.

With this number we present a premium-list, which will strike every one as being a worthy inducement to subscribe. These offers are not made to take the place of the merit the journal should possess in itself, but, on the contrary, the confidence in the value of the journal warrants us in making these sacrifices. We propose making THE ETUDE so useful and valuable that when once taken it will always be continued, and many extra copies purchased. These premiums may be withdrawn any month. The articles are the *very best in the market*. The handkerchiefs retail from twenty-five to thirty-five cents, the tobacco about the same per package. Lynchburg is a tobacco paradise, and this brand has been expressly manufactured for THE ETUDE from pure Virginia leaf. The Urbach Prize method for the Piano is one of the most appropriate prizes we offer for teachers in search of a reliable and interesting text-book. *Fifteen cents additional must be enclosed to prepay postage*, in order to have letters receive attention. For particulars regarding premiums, see the enclosed blank, and on second page of the cover in this number.

The enclosed blank can be used to facilitate sending your subscription. Let one and all subscribe with this number, as the special inducements may be withdrawn even next month.

When two or more subscriptions are taken by the same person, *only one premium* will be sent.

The Journal, to those who have never seen a copy, will, hereafter, be *five cents, free of postage*.

It is exceedingly pleasant to hear a few words, as many have done, relating to musical matters and teaching. In the next number we expect to begin the "Teachers' Column," which, in a journal of this character, should be an important feature.

Unfortunately, the appearance of the Urbach's Prize Method has been delayed now nearly a month. We ask the indulgence of our patrons a few days longer, when we hope to fill all orders. The demand for the work before it is issued will almost exhaust the first edition.

The Twenty Elementary Etudes, by Alphonse Leduc, of which the first appears in this number, will be continued in succeeding numbers. The editing will be done with the greatest care, and no pains will be spared in making the edition serviceable and valuable for teaching purposes. These exercises are remarkable for their simple and pleasing character, and at the same time serve as useful technical exercises. The author, Leduc, is known by a popular salon piece—the "La Chatelaine;" he is a French composer of some prominence, especially in that which relates to piano-technic; he is also the author of a Piano Method. By examination, these exercises will be found admirable for teaching young pianists.

The publisher will send to any address, for a two cent stamp, to cover postage, a copy of the "Proceedings of the Music Teachers' National Association" for 1880. The pamphlet contains lectures, essays, discussions, etc., which are written by some of the best known teachers, and should be read by every one. The pamphlet also contains all the information relating to the organization. The Association held its last meeting at Providence, R. I., last July, which was the seventh annual meeting of the organization. The Association has been growing in influence and importance ever since its birth; it is now firmly established, and every teacher who desires to maintain his standing among the profession must recognize its existence and inquire into what the Association is doing. At some future time the ETUDE may give its history, from its incipency to the present. It was the editor of the ETUDE who organized the Association, about eight years ago, while teaching in Ohio. When the Association has more fully unfolded its powers, and impressed itself more deeply on the profession, its early history may be of general interest. We have declined several times to detail the early struggle of the organization simply because that time has not yet come—the Association needs to make history rather than the writing of it.

In the present number we begin a valuable arrangement of the scales for practice; they are by one of the leading teachers in the Leipzig Conservatory. The practice of the scales has ever been considered a sure basis on which to build a good piano technic. Beginners may even begin the scales—through one octave—even as soon as the hand has assumed a correct position by the practice of the five-finger position with the hand stationary. The writing of the scale, with the proper fingering, should be commenced by the pupil with the playing.

There is just a bare possibility of overrating the routine practice of scales, the standard works contain very few scale passages, or at least most of classic works are not prepared technically by mechanical scale practice. The calibre that is necessary to fully bring forth the meaning of the heavier piano-forte works, is best gained by a sure command of the

arpeggios and chords, and simple finger action, then by fluency in scale running.

Not every scale in compositions begins with the first letter (key-note) of the scale, hence it is necessary to practice the scale on every degree, with the correct fingering and with a conscious ease, that whenever they occur (in reading *prima vista*), the natural fingering will at once be taken. Only when this can be done is the practice of the scale of any practical value. There are many players who practice the scales only mechanically, following the hearing, but without being conscious of what they are playing; they play, 'tis true, very fluently and sure, but whenever they come across such a scale in a piece they do not recognize it as the same thing, even after playing it over a hundred times.

In this number appears a contribution from Fred C. Hahr, of Richmond, who will contribute to THE ETUDE a series of articles on Technic, which, coming from such high authority, carry with them unusual significance. Mr. Hahr was one of Theo. Kullak's favorite pupils. He is not only a *virtuoso* of unimpeachable stamp, but a practical and pains-taking teacher.

We have cautiously admitted contributions until the character of the journal would be moulded, in order that contributors could present such articles as would conform to the established character of THE ETUDE. In December's number we will present to our readers three or four solid articles, written by some of the most eminent writers in the English language, on the much neglected subject of *The Technique of the Piano-Forte*. These articles are original, and appear in print for the first time in THE ETUDE. They will be relished by every progressive teacher in the land.

Our present edition, (3,000), will be increased to 5,000 with the December number, owing to the increased demand.

UNPROFITABLE STUDY.

The amount of unprofitable and abusive study of the piano-forte is alarming; but just that kind of study keep the wheels of the extensive and powerful musical machinery in motion. Does this vast and varied educational enterprise turn out a sufficient amount of worthy and valuable musical products to justify continuing the business on such a gigantic scale? Viewing it from a commercial standpoint the products would indicate a very loose and trifling management of affairs, with a speedy bringing up at bankruptcy.

The mischievous waste of time, energy, vitality, money and existence in the prosecution of music throughout the land, is beyond all reasonable contemplation. From innocent early childhood to the threshold of womanhood, does the siege continue to get possession of the mysteries the muses have locked up in their bosom—alas, how few are ever permitted to enter *adytum* where the priesthood of the muses hold their worship—but with what persistency do many unsusceptible devotees attack this redoubtable and unconquerable antagonist—music. This at times becomes a sad and painful sight to the beholder. What pleasure or profit to any one, or gain to art, is the incessant, unmusical, stiff, stammering playing of a person, who, from the able instruction, with the favorable surroundings and years of study, should be able to play with taste, ease, grace and elegance? There is no escaping

the torments the average teacher has to suffer from this class of pupils. It is from this very class, however, that the major portion of his patronage comes. They give to the teacher his livelihood. Were only gifted pupils allowed the privilege of instruction the profession of music teaching would barely have an existence. The dull, heavy, untalented pupils are the support of the music teacher, and they should in no wise be ignored. The teacher that expects only talented pupils, will soon close his career as a member of the musical profession. Aside from the fact that a teacher must have some kind of pupils, it does seem like procuring a living by either fair or foul means. The far greater part of the teacher's work is spent in irredeemable drudgery—unprofitable, toilsome labor.

The reward for the teacher's fidelity and exertion, and the pupils' sacrifices, must often be sought for, not in musical progress and attainment, but in those secondary qualities which possess great negative merit, but which were not the end sought for; among them may be mentioned, patience, discipline of mind, judgment, memory and observation. All these receive training along with the study of music, whether or not progress is made in music itself. When progress has ceased and the study has become a hopeless undertaking, a useless warfare, and not seldom an unwanted extravagance, the pupil, very willingly, would quit the study but the over-anxious parents having undying faith in their offspring, oblige the study to be continued though it becomes distasteful and obnoxious to the child. But back of the parent the evil has its root; it lies in our social system. It is deplorable that society almost forces a young lady, who wishes to maintain her place in society, to be accomplished in music. Why has not some other generally attainable accomplishment been made a passport into the fold of society, and not so delicate and subtle an art as music, which nature holds as its rarest gift? The very thought that such an end is to be accomplished is sufficient in itself to drive away all charm in the study. Mendelssohn once failed to obtain the prize offered for the best symphony at Vienna. He said he could not compose with such motives, that it was deadening to all real inspiration. In art, above all things else, our motives must be pure. Then there are others who have begun the attack on the difficulties, and find that nature never intended them for musicians, but an innate pride will not permit them to give up the study. They prosecute a prolonged course of study, and perhaps nominally complete it, but after that everything is dropped; music is then a lost art to them. They were too proud to stop when they discovered that they had gone as far as their talent could take them, but they were determined to reach a nominal degree of attainment so they could honorably step down and out. Others again continue a useless career of music, as teachers, perhaps, knowing, in their innermost souls, they do not possess the required endowments for musicians, but, for reasons best known to themselves, they continue to lead a life that is all unnatural and forced. They would gladly make a change, but, in jumping from one to another, they are afraid they may fall between and be lost.

The study of music may be pursued without being attended by any perceptible improvement, profit or pleasure—at least in a far less degree than is true of any other pursuit, de-

barring, perhaps, poetry. The study of general literature, history and philosophy will reward any one who will put forth the exertion. Painting and graphic arts readily respond with satisfaction and pleasure to a friendly and hearty application. Far better engage in the innocent diversion of fashion, with its graceful modification and ever varying styles, than a fruitless wooing of the muses. A German writer says: "In the first walks of art no one has a right to enter unless he is convinced he has strength and speed for the goal."

Those that often, from the purity and refinement of their natures, with superior intellectual endowments, possess an intense love for music, fail utterly in the study of music; while, on the other hand, the finest musical organizations are found among the coarse and vulgar natures. The contrast between the musician and his music is a question the philosopher cannot reconcile. This beautiful gift is seen to exist amid the meanest surroundings, just as the pure and lovely water-lily lifts its graceful form from out a dirty and slimy pool.

There was made last year, by the combined products of all manufactories in the United States, the enormous number of 35,000 pianos. It is safe to say that about 10,000 of these are used in doing good work for art, while the rest pass with the upholstery for parlor ornaments. The waste of money in this direction reaches upward in the millions annually. Our music schools, female colleges and schools for secondary education are swarming with music pupils; out of this large number scarcely one in a half dozen ever acquire a serviceable knowledge of the piano, and with the majority it were better they never had seen a piano.

It is unfortunate that the piano is made the refuge for all those that dare not venture to enter in any other department of study; and, further, you do not find other branches of music infested with the myriads of drones. The violin is not desecrated by the throng of false and unprofitable devotees. The organ is a horror to the unmusical. The voice is generally not taken into training unless there is some voice there. The public somehow have the wrong impression that all that is necessary to make a player is five fingers, the rest is only practice. It is hoped that the time will come when it will not be considered dishonorable to discontinue the study of music when it has become unprofitable; and in the cases where there is love for it, but where nature left destitute of talent, that the teacher can, with impunity, give his judgment, and when society will not stigmatize a person for being unmusical, but find some other more attainable requisite for the admission into its fold. It takes very little penetration from any one to observe that what I have intimated in this article is substantially the state of affairs.

The following beautiful quotation from the preface of Coleridge's poems might be applicable to the student of music who possesses the correct views in regard to its study. He says:

"I expect neither profit nor fame from my writings, and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without either. My work has been to me its own exceeding great reward; it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude, and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me."

The Wisdom of Maug.

Cheerfulness is the best Divinity.

Discouragement finds its greatest support in impatience.

A kind word costs nothing, and brings its own reward.

Geulius is the nail, but patience is the hammer that drives it home.

Where there is no hope there can be no endeavor.—*Samuel Johnson*.

When and wherever art is fallen it is through the artists.—*Schiller*.

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.—*Confucius*.

Better far pursue a frivolous trade by serious means, than a sublime art frivolously.

Dost thou love life? Then, do not waste time; for that is the stuff life is made of.—*Franklin*.

Nothing is more important than to understand the subject about which you propose to instruct others.

To be a reliable guide for a pupil, one must constantly seek to improve oneself—never stand still mentally.—*Koehler*.

He who pursues art seriously, whether amateur or professor, will not shun any difficulty that leads more rapidly to the goal.

Every person is responsible for all the good within the scope of his abilities, and for no more; and none can tell whose sphere is the largest.—*Grail Hamilton*.

When you are asked, "How does this or that one play or sing?" do not forget what Schumann said: "One voice that blames has the strength of ten that praise."

It is you that play, and not your fingers, which are only the means of it. You must be first taught to command your fingers to play what your mind possesses.—*Blume*.

Some of our young composers must not lose sight of the fact that "the emptiest head thinks it can hide its weakness behind a fugue; but a true fugue is the work of a great master." So says Schumann.

The perfect-work of education cannot be accomplished except in the individual who comes of stock cultivated for generations. Training your pupil you may be training his great grandson. Infinite are the reaches of the teacher.

It is a fine and praiseworthy thing to preserve art, pure and untroubled as the dwelling of the gods, from all error of life, instead of dragging it down to the muddy road and degrading it into a base servant of the passions.—*Schumann*.

A person cannot rise above the standard he contemplates; neither can a teacher produce results with his pupils, without his first having lived over those results in his own mind; nor can a performer expect to raise the feeling in his hearer which he himself does not possess.

As the sun does not wait for prayers and incantations before he rises, but straightway shines forth, and is hailed of all—so do not wait to do good for applause, and noise, and praise, but do it of your own desire; and, like the sun, you will be loved.—*Epictetus*.

One thing we can do, and that is not a little—we can stake our power for the preservation and encouragement of all that is good; for the protection and nursing of all those germs and powers out of which a better future is to grow; and we can oppose ourselves with all our might to that which is corrupt and hurtful.—*Mars*.

Dr. Stainer, in a recent lecture truthfully says: "In teaching music, as in teaching every other subject, there are two ways, the mean and the noble; and the mean, which looks upon work as a nuisance, and the money-reward as a necessary but insufficient reward; the noble, which looks upon work as a privilege, the reward as a blessing."

MORAL COURAGE.—*Sydney Smith*, in his work on moral philosophy, speaks in this wise of what men lose for want of a little moral courage, or independence of mind: "A great deal of talent is lost in the world for the want of a little moral courage. The fact is, that to do anything in this world that is worth doing, we must not stand back shivering, and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can. It will not do to be perpetually calculating tasks, and adjusting nice chances; it did very well before the flood, where a man could consult his friends upon an intended publication for an hundred and fifty years, and the live to see its success afterwards; but at present, a man waits and doubts and hesitates, and consults his brother and his uncle and particular friends, till one fine day he finds that he is sixty years of age; that he has lost so much time in consulting his first cousin and his particular friends, that he has no more time to follow their advice."

20 ELEMENTARY ETUDES

FOR THE
PIANOFORTE.

REVISED BY THEODORE PRESSER.

A. LEDUC. OP. 128.

BOOK 1.

No. 1.

PREPARATORY STUDY.

a. This study offers an opportunity for contrasting two diverse touches, the *legato*, and the *staccato*. They alternate throughout the study in each succeeding measure. By a continual and regular contrast, each is brought out in its true light. A true conception of the *legato*, is no doubt to be obtained through a true conception of the *staccato*, hence in this study, let there be a marked contrast in successive measures.

b. This preparatory study and all the succeeding ones, in the following twenty studies are to be committed to memory. This is to be strictly enforced.

c. In the stretch of an octave, in the scale passages in every other measure, the hand should not open out on the keyboard, but the fingers should be kept strictly in a curved position. Connect well the tones of the octave, and avoid accenting the second note.

d. The *staccato* notes are performed entirely from the wrist.

The musical score for 'No. 1. PREPARATORY STUDY.' is written in 4/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music alternates between legato and staccato passages. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece ends with a double bar line on the eighth staff.

No. 2.

ETUDE I.

The chords throughout this Etude are to be taken from the wrist; the elbow joint must not aid in the movement.

Allegro. $\text{♩} = 100.$

The musical score is written for piano and consists of 16 measures. The tempo is marked *Allegro* with a quarter note equal to 100 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two systems of eight measures each. The first system contains measures 1 through 8, and the second system contains measures 9 through 16. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and chords, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1 through 5. Dynamics like *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte) are used throughout the piece. The score ends with a double bar line in the final measure.

No. 3. PREPARATORY SCALE EXERCISES.

- a. The thumb is held in an outstretched position so that the first joint is on a straight line with the key; the fingers are curved so that the thumb can pass back of them conveniently to the right and left.
 b. As soon as the second finger has struck, the thumb is henceforth brought toward the inner hand, by bending the joint next to the nail; it should be placed over its next key, as far up as the root of the nail.
 c. The hand should be bent slightly inwards toward the body, and must in no wise take part in the movement of the thumb.
 d. The elbow is held farther from the body than usual.

a. Right Hand. b. c.

d. Left Hand. e. f.

g. Both Hands.

RULES FOR THE FINGERING OF SCALES.

A few simple rules relating to the fingering of the scales are here given.

1. The thumb must not be placed on a black key.

2. The second finger never passes over the thumb or the thumb under it, (except, perhaps, at the beginning and close).

In the following scales the exception to the regular fingers at the beginning and close of scales will be marked with a parenthesis, ().

3. The fingers 1, 2, 3, alternate regularly with the fingers 1, 2, 3, 4, throughout every scale.

4. Observe particularly upon which key the fourth finger (the most unmanageable) occurs, since it is used only once in every octave while the others are used twice.

5. Adjacent fingers must always follow each other; never skip a finger except in passing the thumb under or over.

6. The C major scale while it has no black keys, is by no means the easiest, the black keys serve as a certain support, but nevertheless the C major, on account of its simplicity and that nine other scales have similar fingering, is best adapted for practice, not only for beginners, but for the acquiring of facility in scale passages.

7. The fourth finger in the right hand is placed on B flat, in scale of F, B flat, E flat, A flat, (G sharp,) B, (where the same tone is called A sharp,) both in major and minor, and in D flat, and G flat (F sharp), in the major keys.

8. In the left hand in B flat, E flat, A flat, and D flat, ascending, the fourth finger is the one that is placed over the thumb first and not the third, which habit is doubtless formed from the practice of C, and similar scales where the third finger is the first to cross over the thumb.

There are many other valuable rules in fingering of the scales, but to enforce too many, only tend to make the whole matter unclear.

No. 4.

a. This exercise can be played downward one octave after it has been played upwards as written. The figure is not to be reversed, but played similarly to ascending.

b. The thumb passing under the finger offers more difficulty than the finger over the thumb; the former only is practised in this little exercise which is the only merit claimed for it.

c. The connection between the hands must be made with the greatest smoothness and equality, a break there, must be carefully guarded against. Commit to memory, and play until perfect evenness in alternating is attained.

Allegretto.

THE MAJOR SCALES.

G MAJOR.

1. 8

2. 8

3. 8

4. 8

5. 8

6. 8

7. 8

8. 8

9. 8

10. 8

11. 8

12. 8

13. 8

14. 8

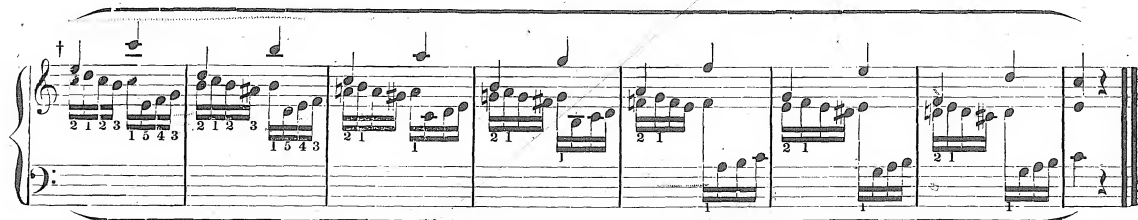
No. 6.

a. This exercise on the "turn" is intended to serve as an introduction to the next number, and as such, the fingering given will be found the most useful. It may, however, be practised ascending with benefit, using the following fingering,—



b. Impress full resonance into the tones of the left hand.

c. In the *ossia*, the hands must bound off from the keyboard with a light springing touch, produced by an action from the wrist; the forearm remaining stationary.



etc.

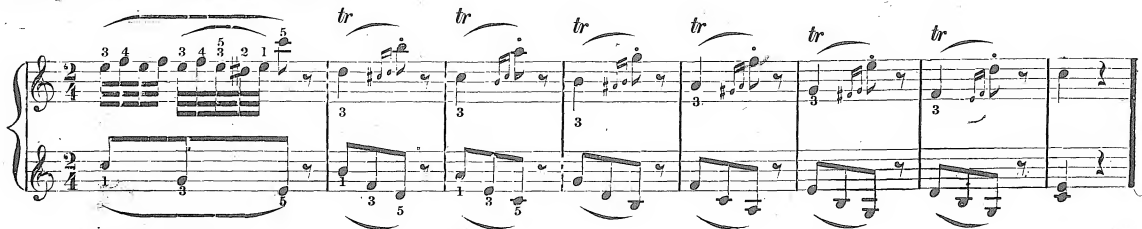


etc.

No. 7.

a. If the *turn* in the left hand is found difficult to play with distinctness and ease, have recourse to the *ossia* in the previous number, and overcome the difficulties it presents first.

b. The principal difficulty of the trill (long or short) consists therein that the *turn* or *close* is blended with the trill in a graceful, distinct, and unconstrained manner, in like, or somewhat faster *tempo*, than the trill itself, and in the right time, so that no break or delay occurs between the last note of the *turn* and the following principal note.



No. 8.

1. Execute the following exercise with a pure finger action, and in a very smooth and connected manner, in the following three tempi; viz:
- Adagio*—*f* = no accents.
 - Andante*—*mf* = accents.
 - Allegro*—*p* = slightly accent.
2. Avoid raising the hand from the keys after the last note of each group in the right hand; a very natural but a very bad thing to do, as it breaks the continuity and easy flow of the upper part, which with the bass, should be perfectly *legato*.
3. To avoid the monotony of repetition, play the first part with a *crescendo*, to the double bar, and then *diminuendo* to the close, after it can be executed *allegro*.

No. 4.

1. Play in a perfectly connected manner, the last and first notes of successive measures.

No. 9. ARPEGGIO ETUDE THROUGH ALL THE MAJOR KEYS.

a. The use of the thumb on black keys is more and more demanded of modern technic. The surest way to learn the use of it is to strike boldly into the upper keys.

b. Begin the exercise with a determined blow,— slow, steady, sure, and strong. Learn to play everything first, correctly, then easily, then quickly.

c. The irresistible flow of the music draws the player onward from key to key, making it advisable to begin this special exercise from the bottom. Many students have formed the habit of studying every thing by sections from the bottom to the top. How often it is that a player finds himself at the end of an exercise or piece before he is conscious of what he has been doing! Mistakes are not overcome by this kind of study.

The musical score is written for piano in 5/4 time, marked *mf* and *sempre legato*. It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The exercise is a continuous arpeggio study through all twelve major keys, starting from C major and moving through the circle of fifths: G major, D major, A major, E major, B major, F# major, C# major, G# major, D# major, A# major, and E# major. Each system contains four measures of music, with fingerings (1-5) indicated above or below the notes. The first measure of each system is marked with a bracket and the number 8, indicating an eighth-note arpeggio. The piece concludes with a final double bar line in the fifth system.

EDITORIAL NOTES AND CURRENT NEWS.

Mr. W. H. Sherwood has declined a flattering offer of the charge of the piano-forte department of the Cincinnati College of Music.

There has very recently been invented, by Vincent, in Czernowitz, a new key-board, whereby the white and black keys alternate regularly, so that between every two white keys there appears, without exception, a black one. The upper keys are arranged into alternate groups of three black and three half white keys. This arrangement possesses, without doubt, a greater regularity among the upper and lower keys. The space between the octave is greatly diminished, since there is placed between the tones "B" and "C" two more upper keys, and in this it has the advantage of our present key-board. Our present system of notation, as well as the whole piano technique, stand opposed to it, and the adoption of this new invention is reserved for the future, whether to remain in the old or enter out new paths. Schiedmayer, of Koenigsberg, Germany, has undertaken to manufacture pianos after this plan. This shortening of the key-board deserves the recognition, as the lengthening of it by an extra third octave deserves, in inverse ratio, the public condemnation.

Samuel Rogers, in his "Table Talk," says: "I recoiled when it was still the fashion for gentlemen to wear swords. I have seen Haydn play at a concert in a tie-wig with a sword to his side."

There were 1,949 pupils enrolled at the New England Conservatory of Music, of Boston, last year; these are taught by a board of instruction of one hundred. This is the largest conservatory in the world.

The proposed convention of the music teachers' of Virginia, at Richmond, during the coming holidays, is enthusiastically received by the profession throughout the State. What a half a dozen letters would not accomplish before these meetings were known, is now done by one postal card. The protection of the music teacher by a certificate of competency, given by a committee appointed by the National Association, which is now receiving so much earnest discussion by the musical press, can never be accomplished until these State organizations are first formed. At these meetings is the proper place to examine candidates for these certificates of excellence.

The Chataqu Musical and Reading Club has made a grand beginning, according to report of the Secretary. Local clubs are being organized throughout the country, from Massachusetts to Texas. The object is to interest lovers of music in the literature of their art; musical history, biography, analysis and criticism are systematically studied by its members.

THE VERTICAL RELATION BETWEEN THE FORE-ARM, WRIST, AND HAND IN PIANO PLAYING.

By FRED C. HARR.

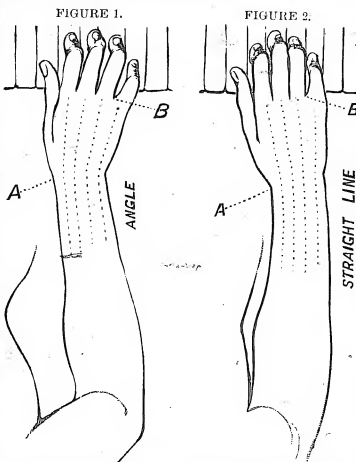
[Written expressly for THE ETUDE.]

In all good Piano Schools and Methods there will always be found rules and advice concerning the correct and established positions of the body, arms, hands, etc. The rules given in these different Methods are generally good and worth observing, and agree, mostly, in the principal points; for instance, that the forearm, wrist and hand ought to be on a level, the fingers bent at the middle joints and raised from the knuckle joints, in order to produce the tone, etc., etc., and the little differences and contradictions, which we sometimes discover when comparing various Piano Schools, arise naturally from the individual experience, method and mode of expression of their respective authors.

There is, however, at least one view of the subject of Technique, which the present writer thinks not sufficiently attended to in the instruction books, if at all, and that is the vertical relation between the forearm, wrist and hand. With the vertical relation, as distinct from the horizontal, I mean the line formed by the arm, wrist and hand, as seen from above; or, in other words, as they appear to the performer when looking down on his or her arms. On this point I wish to offer a few suggestions, hoping that they may be of service to some earnest student who is willing to take some pains and exercise some perseverance in order to improve their technical resources.

All untrained players, and a great many who have had training, allow their forearm and hand to form an angle at the wrist, on the outside, or fifth finger side, this angle being more or less acute in different persons. This false position brings with it, as a natural consequence, another disadvantage, namely, the parting company of the elbow from the rest of the body, and it is my private opinion, and I have no doubt that most pianists and competent teachers will concur in it, that any one who plays in this manner will never attain to really artistic execution or virtuosity, he he never so correct in other respects. As regards the

position of elbows, I would suggest, *en passant*, that the prevalent ungainly fashion among young ladies to walk with their elbows turned out, until their arms appear to have assumed the figure of a diamond, or oblique square, will, in many instances, increase the difficulties of conscientious piano teachers, who are striving to give their pupils a position at the instrument which shall not be merely pleasant to the beholder, but also bring artistic playing within the limits of possibility. A glance at figures 1 and 2 will explain my meaning regarding the vertical position better than words.



When observing the dotted lines representing the tendons of the fingers, it is obvious that the position of figure 2 has the advantage over the other, in that it gives a more direct play to the muscles, especially those of the fourth and fifth fingers, and thereby increases their power, while the position of figure 1 detracts from the strength, or rather adds to the weakness of these naturally weak and awkward members of the hand. This strength giving position is gained by two processes of opposite nature, namely, by drawing the elbow very close to the body and by pushing the wrist as far away from you as possible, the fingers resting on the keys. This need not affect the correct horizontal position, as to the hand, wrist and arm being on a level—although in this connection I am of the opinion that players will sometimes find it advantageous to raise their wrists somewhat above the level, especially when they desire particularly light and transparent tone quality.

To return to the advantages of a correct vertical position, by which you will now understand a nearly straight line from the fifth finger to the elbow touching the wrist—as seen from above, I insist, that it certainly favors the acquiring of velocity in scale-playing, long arpeggios, skips, etc. As to the first two forms of execution, and which no doubt form the principal material, the backbone, as it were, of piano playing, it is only necessary to compare the respective relations of the fingers to the keys in the two drawings. In figure 1 the fingers form angles with the keys; in figure 2 they form straight lines. In referring to the points marked "A" and "B," ("A" marking the point by which the thumb is moved laterally and vertically, and "B" the point where the thumb must be passed under the fourth or third finger in a run, or the fingers over the thumb), common sense will tell you which of the two positions will give the most direct road for these passages of thumb and fingers. Whence come these painful jerks and twists of wrists and elbows of so many would-be performers and amateurs, whenever they have to execute a scale or arpeggio, if not from a false vertical position?

[In connection with another common fault, namely, the hand describing a serpentine line instead of a straight one, parallel with the keys—thus:

KEY-BOARDS.



This remark, however, being outside of the subject under consideration.]

It will be easily understood that the preceding remarks apply to each hand, strictly speaking, only when in their respective and proper domains, i. e., for the right hand from two-lined "C" upwards, and for the left hand from one-lined "C" downwards. When one hand or the other has to overstep these limits, the position must be modified

in some respects. Space forbids me, however, to enter, in this article, more fully on the application of this subject in all its bearings.

In conclusion, let me add, that any pains-taking student who will persist in acquiring the correct vertical position, even though the wrist may feel ill at ease in the first attempts, will be astonished at his or her gain, in a comparatively short time, especially as regards more facility for velocity and more strength in the weaker portion of the hand.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF THE PIANO-FORTE.

Translated from the German for THE ETUDE.

X—DIFFICULT PASSAGES.

Play a right difficult passage, in any given piece, through a hundred or more times in succession, and think complacently that each time is a drop toward filling an empty vessel. He who does and thinks thus without allowing his energies to stagnate may become a virtuoso.

X—MEANS.

If a pupil plays falsely, and cannot understand how that which he is playing is false, write out the passage just as he has been playing it and compare that which is written with the original. What the ear and the fingers failed to catch the eye will now recognize.

X—DANGER.

Faults originate and grow like weeds, under the ground and in invisible germs—fortunate is he whose mind is so sharp as to discern and repress the evil yet in the germ. A fault that has been allowed to spring up, grows and spreads very rapidly, and carries with it the seeds of many other faults, which, in time, will destroy all excellence. Noticeably incorrect playing is already a very grave fault, which is to be removed at once by improvement; for, if incorrectness is a fault, containing it in practice is equivalent to twenty faults, for that number may arise by this thoughtless advancing. To be indulgent with one's own faults is, in every sense, destructive; just as conscious wrong doing affects the moral character, so conscious wrong playing does the artistic. Immediate correction is the only atonement, which, in some measure, removes the evil.

X—PRIVATE PRACTICE.

Many pupils practice much and industriously, and yet make no real progress, even when talent is not wanting. This has its root in a wide-spread evil, namely, the incorrect manner of practicing. That universal weakness of humanity for self-indulgence; in short, that blind partiality for self causes even the matured and educated, how much more then children, to be self-deceived. We know, instinctively, in certain instances, when we are not playing correctly, and at the same time, are perfectly conscious that, to do it right, necessarily involves an exertion of our powers, which to the pampered self, is a very disagreeable thing; but the feelings also know how to lull the reason to sleep, and, in this way, we permit ourselves to be easily and ridiculously self-deceived. We believe, because we want to believe, that it is thus all right. Oh, delusion! Such mischief exercises a perceptible revenge through years of vain, (because misdirected), and often toilsome effort—only an open self-confession can prepare the way for improvement, the right doing must follow. Pupils often sit thus and practice difficulties for dear life a hundred times; the zeal is hot; desire and will all aglow—they grow more and more agitated; they become almost distracted; forget everything; alas! also the right way to practice; for their zeal was blind, their industry only in the fingers, which never do any good if the exacting judgment of the pupil is asleep. The only true way is to press with increased energy toward the particular goal to be reached. It should be strongly impressed on us that rapid progress is cool only when we proceed with watchful mind and the right direction. The more readily we travel in the wrong direction the further we go from the goal—better far to stand still. Accordingly, he who at practice blindly rushes along, will be worse off than he who did nothing, for that which is practiced incorrectly will also be learned incorrectly.

Many have a less injurious way of practice, but, at the same time, not the most advantageous one. They play smoothly through everything with commendable perseverance. That is like dancing on one spot—there is movement, it is true, but no progress. We should practice with watchful zeal, that nothing may surprise us, and give the mind, as well as the fingers, opportunity and time to comprehend and assimilate what is practiced. If the eye, at practice, is bewildered with the notes, and the fingers become perplexed, nothing will in the end sound natural, but, on the contrary, all will be tortured, confused and thus highly uninteresting.

T. Pless

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

[Questions pertaining to the study of the Piano-forte will receive attention, and answers appear, usually, in the following month, if received before the FIFTEENTH of the current month. The writer's name must accompany letter to insure an answer.]

L. L. H.—QUESTION 1.—Will you always have German fingering in connection with the studies in THE ETUDE?

ANSWER.—Either the German or the American must invariably be used; we cannot alternate, nor have an extra set of plates made. We have chosen the German, or foreign, and to that we will hold ourselves. You may find the change, at first, awkward and bewildering, but in time all difficulties will cease, and 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 will be as natural to the fingers as 1, 2, 3, 4. It is advisable for everyone to familiarize himself or herself with the foreign mode, since much of the best part of the piano-forte literature appears only in that form.

2. Is the American fingering used in Europe, and how came it to be invented?

ANSWER.—It is used in Great Britain, hence the name is not absolutely correct, neither is "German," when applied to foreign fingering; for in France and Italy it is the standard fingering. "English" and "foreign" would seem more nearly correct names for the two modes of fingering. The origin of English fingering is said to reach back to the early musical history of England; when the orchestral players were called upon to fingering piano technique, since instruments like the violin, flute, clarinet and horn are held by the thumb, while the other fingers do the manipulating, they naturally applied this method to the piano, and only rarely used the thumb; hence arose the fingers, 1, 2, 3, 4. When the thumb was introduced it necessarily had to receive a distinct mark, and the cross was chosen; in fact the thumb was regarded as of little practical value in playing prior to Bach's period. He instituted the use of the thumb, and, from his time on, it was designated by a 1. Amerbach, the organist, (1571) at Leipzig, states that ascending scales should be played with first and second fingers only, the thumb not being used at all; and, in a very valuable book by Emanuel Bach, John Sebastian's second son, entitled *Vermuth Ueber die Wahre Art Clavier zu Spielen*, we find the following very appropriate passage: "My blessed father related to me that in his youth he had heard great men play that never brought the thumb into use, except where it was necessary in wide stretches. He lived through a period in which the musical taste underwent a very decided transformation, hence it was necessary for him to invent a more complete system of fingering, particularly respecting the use of the thumb." Whether England used its present form of fingering before Bach's time I am not positive, but rather think it was in vogue then and has since been continued.

THE VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC TEACHERS.

A movement to organize a State Music Teacher's Association is now being enthusiastically prosecuted. Many of the leading teachers in the principal cities, colleges, institutes, etc. have signified their hearty support in the matter; throughout the whole state the teachers welcome the birth of such an organization. All is propitious—everything points to a successful and profitable meeting! The subject has been under consideration for some time by a band of teachers, who have zealously entered into the matter, and now invite the music teachers of Virginia and the adjacent States to Richmond, December 26, 27, and 28. The aim and object of the meeting is the promotion and protection of the musical profession in all its phases. Lectures, papers, etc., will be delivered on vital topics pertinent to the art of teaching music. Many States in the North have their annual convocations of music teachers, which have been maintained with success and profit. The Music Teachers' National Association is ever increasing in power and influence for good to the profession, to which these State Associations should be made subsidiary. On the 10th of October the initiator meeting was held at Richmond, which called out some thirty or forty teachers; the meeting was harmonious and enthusiastic. At the meeting an official invitation was given to several men of National reputation to be present and contribute to the interest of the meeting; among them were Mr. W. H. Sherwood, the eminent American pianist; W. S. B. Mathews, one of the ablest writers and critics on music we have, and author of a very valuable volume—*How to Understand Music*; E. M. Bowman, of St. Louis, President of the Music Teachers' National Association, and Clarence Eddy, the great organist of Chicago. It is hoped that these, or some at least, can be persuaded to be with us at Christmas week. The following is taken from the Richmond paper, which gives the names of the committees thus far appointed:

"Last evening quite a pleasant assembly of our music teachers and musical people met at Ramos & Moses', and, after the election of Mr. A. Bergamin as chairman and Prof. Aug. Unkel as secretary, they decided to invite the

music teachers from the entire State to a convention in Richmond during Christmas week. The gentlemen present were quite enthusiastic, and letters were read from teachers throughout the State, all predicting that much good would result from the proposed convention.

Professors Hahr, Ayres, and Chandler, of Richmond, Presser, of Lynchburg, and Miss Lizzie Arbuckle, of Richmond, were appointed an Executive Committee, and Col. Tanner and Messrs. Siegel and Ramos, Committee on Finance. It was agreed to meet again on the 29th instant and appoint other committees."

Let every teacher who hears of this consider the Association, which will soon be a permanent organization, his or her best friend. Since this is the first meeting of the South, it might be called "The Southern Music Teachers' Association." At least teachers from all over the South will be gladly welcomed by their Virginia co-laborers. The meeting in Richmond will be all that it is possible to make it. Let those that can inform the Executive Committee of persons who are adapted and qualified to prepare lectures, do so without delay; the most difficult thing connected with an association of this kind is to present a solid programme. The teachers, when leaving the meeting, should be better prepared for their work. After all, the main idea connected with coming together is—How can I give a better lesson? This point the officers of the Association will keep constantly before their eyes; everything must have a direct or indirect bearing on this one idea. Information regarding the proposed meeting will be cheerfully given by the members of the Executive Committee. All those feeling an interest in the affair will inform others, and thus scatter the news far and near. The Committee are at work on the programme, which will give full information of the meeting; those wishing to aid can send their names to this office, or any member of the Committee. Having now many names, we are exceedingly judiciously scatter. Arrangements for reduced rates on railroads leading into Richmond will be made. Full information will appear in December's ETUDE; in the meantime let every one who feels an interest—and that should be every music teacher in the South—make that fact known to the Committee; preparations are already being made for entertainment, and, from present accounts, there is danger of the good Richmond people over-doing it with their kind hospitality. A comfortable hotel can be made the headquarters, where the teachers can be together, as one family, which is decidedly preferable to having the delegates scattered over the whole city.

We have sounded the pulse of the teachers throughout the State, and find it throbbing for a brotherhood of this kind. We herewith append a few letters received at this office:

AUGUSTA FEMALE COLLEGE,
Staunton, Va., October 24, 1883.

Received your communication of the 21th. The contents of your letter are indeed very welcome to me, and, with all my heart, I shall give all my enthusiasm to further "The Art of Teaching Music," not only in Virginia, but throughout the United States. I have had this object at heart for years—solely for the sake of music. Rely upon my co-operation as long as I am able. I am, yours, very truly,
F. K. WEBB.

C. HINTZ.

Staunton, Va.; October 1st, 1883.

Yours of the 21th came duly to hand, and a press of business has prevented my giving it a really sooner. Thanks for the welcome to "Old Virginia." The Association idea meets with my warmest approval, and shall have all the support I can give it. In fact, I had intended writing to you as soon as I got settled and obtained your address, and conferring with you on what could be done towards forming an association. I have attended the meetings of the Indiana Association for several years past and am an enthusiastic advocate of the whole idea; you may count on all the support I can give it in any way. In regard to a paper, I will get up one, if I can find time; I have a paper which was read at the meeting at Richmond, Indiana, 1881; it is entitled "The Organ in the Service of Church and State," and is worthy of repetition at Logansport, Indiana, in 1882; if you think it would be of interest to the Association I might use it again, and I will try and get up something else. Awaiting your reply,
I am, yours, very truly,
F. K. WEBB.

ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT.

DR. ADOLPH B. MARX.

From the excellent work, "The Universal School of Music," the following striking quotation is taken:

It is our duty especially to warn against that puritan vanity which delights in displaying difficulties overcome, and technical dexterities acquired solely with a view to astonish others. Nothing is more foreign to genuine art, which is given to us from the narrow sphere of personal existence and personal feeling, to the region of universal joy, love and enthusiasm; nothing is more inimical and destructive to all true love for, and enjoyment of, the musical art, than this poisonous mildew which spreads itself over the practice as well as the productions of that art; nothing is surer to drag the mind from the purifying atmosphere of artistic activity down to a close and painfully oppressive region of envy, jealousy and selfishness,

than such an ill-concealed desire to shine; nothing, finally, reveals more clearly to the intelligent observer, the wide gulf that separates vanity from true perception of art, than this mistaking of an external means for a legitimate purpose. And yet, how common are such vain desires and efforts in our concert-rooms and private circles! How seldom is it the real intention of our virtuosi and amateurs to delight their hearers; how much more anxious are they to create astonishment among the less-practised or unartistic crowds, by newly invented sleights of hand, the legendary feats of a Dehler, Henselt, Thalberg, or whatever may be the name of the latest twelve-fingered composer. And how often do we find teachers encouraging such desires, in order to cause their pupils by applause obtained in this manner. The lowest, most unconscious, and merely sensual enjoyment of music, the most superficial delight in a tripping dance tune is more artistic, noble and fruitful than this wide spread abomination; a chaste and feeling performance of the most insignificant ballad, or the lightest waltz, is, to a man of real musical knowledge, a better proof of the abilities both of pupil and master, than those prematurely forced, and after all exceedingly cheap artifices of Vanity.

A proper artistic education, like genuine art itself, does not aim at mere mechanical proficiency, which constitutes the merit of an artisan—nor does it lay great value upon mere external contemplation, which leads away from the living fountain of art to dead abstraction; but is directed towards the soul and essence of the thing. The task which it proposes to itself, is to impart to every individual, or at least to as many individuals in a nation as possible, a proper idea of the real nature and object of art, and to ripen this preception into active life.

This task divides itself into two distinct operations. The first is to discover in the germ the genius of artistic susceptibility and talent, to awaken and animate them, to remove the obstacles tending to obstruct their growth, and to train and foster them, so that they may become living powers. The second is to take from the highest artistic point of view, a survey of all that art is intended to effect, or is capable of effecting, and has already achieved. All this, or as much as each individual is capable of receiving, is now to be imparted to the student. It is not the hand or ear only which it purposes to teach and train; but it aims at penetrating through the medium of the senses to the soul and, by exciting his feelings, awaken his artistic consciousness.

Such is the task of a proper artistic education, sketched in fugitive outlines; the training of the natural abilities, of feeling and understanding, to the highest attainable point of perfection. This is the only means and indispensable condition of a really pure and complete enjoyment of all the blessings which art can bestow; this is also, more or less, the clearly preceived aim of all those who devote their lives and energies wholly or partially to artistic pursuits. This is especially, when due regard be not acknowledged, the undeniable and indispensable duty of every teacher.

THOROUGH PRACTICE.

It is said that one of the most eminent lady American pianists (Mme. Rive King) owes her great command of the resources of the key-board to a somewhat strange and rigorous style of practice. The system seems to be also well calculated to help most pianists out of their slough of despond, and to enable the ambitious to acquire the needed self-control in playing before a company of listeners. In taking up a new work, most piano players go through it several times in as many different ways as they repeat it, giving each performance a different meaning, and introducing different notes.

But the system of an artist alluded to is very different. She first goes through the piece very slowly, sounding forth each note with great precision and distinctness, with apparently little regard for the composer's meaning, but really analyzing every phrase, and, above all, bringing out clearly every note, just as the composer has written it, without adding or taking away in the slightest degree. The more rapid the passages in the work, the slower the practice of them. This practice is kept up for hours at a stretch, gradually increasing the tempo as the fingers become more familiar with the windings of the labyrinthine passages and massive chords.

By this system of practice, the sensation of feeling the keys, no matter how rapidly the fingers may be required to glide over them, is acquired. And this desirable and very comfortable sensation is a certain guarantee of the successful performance of very trying productions, as all pianists know. It is the sensation of security, of success itself, so to speak, and is absolutely necessary to public performers. Without it the best efforts of the composer may be lost, and the entire performance fall flat.

The aim of all practice is, after all, to bring the forces down to automatism. The pianist who cannot go through a piece twice alike, cannot hope to acquire much mastery of the key-board, and can never expect to be able to commit to memory anything worthy of public performance; and, without the latter ability, the needed presence of mind is all but impossible.