

MUSICAL EXERCISES

for the
PIANOFORTE

Composed by
WALTER CARROLL

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Forsyth Brothers, Ltd

34, Berners Street,
London, W. 1

126 & 128, Deansgate,
Manchester

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MUSICAL EXERCISES FOR PIANOFORTE

Beauty of Tone and Looseness of Arm

WALTER CARROLL

1

Right arm $\text{♩} = 72$

Left arm

Graceful movement, Arm-over-Arm

Very smooth $\text{♩} = 72$

2

mf

p

EXERCISES are bits of music which help us to play better. Singers have short exercises too. A good exercise always has one chief object. We must find out (1) what is it for; (2) how to get it.

Exercise I is for beautiful tone—tone which is not very loud, but sweet and rich. Sitting easily, and not too near the piano, we raise the arm from the shoulder—as if someone were measuring it for a sleeve. The hand hangs loosely. We then lower and raise the arm for each sound we play, using the middle finger for every sound. The right pedal is down for two bars at a time. It must be pressed down, not struck. The lovely sounds

we get make what we call "the Chord of C," or "the Arpeggio of C."

Exercise II. The piano gives us what we *deserve to get*. If we touch it gently it gives us a nice, gentle tone. If we hit it roughly it gives us a nasty, rough tone. In Exercise II we again use the arm from the shoulder, and by letting its weight go through the fingers into the keys, with a kind and gentle pressure, we get a kindly answer from the piano strings. This time more fingers are used, but we must think mostly of sweet, rich tone, and loose, floating arms.

The note marked - will be played, very clearly, with the *lefthand*.

Arms

Beauty of Tone and Looseness of Arm

Peaceful ♩ = 80

3

Graceful movement in Broken Chords

Leisurely ♩ = 76

4

EXERCISE III reminds us of Exercise I. It is again for loose arms, working easily from the shoulder with nice gentle curves. For practice we may allow the arms to move very freely—more movement than we should want in a piece. When once the notes are learnt we must study the pedal, taking care to lower it, and raise it, at the right moment. It will be good to study “Thirds,” and to notice how they sound and how they look. All the thirds are played with thumb and middle finger in this exercise.

Exercise IV. We shall get a nice effect by playing slowly and quietly, but with the Right Pedal properly used. This piece tells us how stupid people are to call the “Right Pedal” the “Loud Pedal.” It is so lovely when used, as here, for *soft* sounds. We may study Chords; how they are sometimes “broken,”—the sounds coming one after another instead of all together. The arms must move freely and be quite loose; the fingers should lower the keys gently, letting the weight of the arm really do the work.

Freedom of Arm in Chord Playing

Light and elastic ♩ = 126

5

mf *p* *pp*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

1 2

p cresc. *f* *mf* *p*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Balance of Arm in Phrasing

With free movement ♩ = 136

6

p

1 2

5 3 1 4 3

pp

5 3 1 4 3

EXERCISE V continues the work begun in I and III. In each case our object is to get a rich tone by playing with a loose arm, which falls and rises freely from the shoulder. Like all Exercises it must be learned from memory quickly, and then played without copy. In the chord-playing of V plenty of freedom is desirable—more arm movement than we might like to use in a piece. The use of the right pedal helps in getting looseness because a loose tone seems to encourage a loose arm.

Exercise VI is for the practice of Phrasing. This word is not easy to understand. Perhaps we get its meaning best if we read

a passage from a book in two ways: (1) all in one kind of voice, without rise or fall of tone, and not noticing commas or stops; (2) with tone changed to suit the words, the voice taken off a little at commas, and still more at stops. The second way makes more sense and sounds nicer. Phrasing in music is like the stops, commas and rise and fall in speech. We play the sounds of the "phrase" smoothly; we take off its last sound neatly; we vary the tone within the phrase, < > and we think a lot about the next strong accent (which the music seems to want to get to). A restful effect should finally prevail.

J. P. ...

J. P. ...

Legato for Two Fingers—right hand

Evenly ♩ = 96

7 *mf*

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

Legato for Two Fingers—left hand

Evenly ♩ = 96

8 *mf*

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

AFTER freedom of arm has been made easy, and simple chords can be played with looseness and comfort, we may begin to give attention to finger-work. This part of our training is very important because so much music is written in what we call "legato style." Many pieces about birds, bees, spinning wheels, and other quickly moving things, have legato trills like those in the above exercises, so we must prepare by practising them well beforehand. It will be a good plan to learn the left-hand part of VII before the right; and the right-hand

part of VIII before the left. This will help us to feel really loose, because it is arm-work, led up to by all the previous exercises. When the skippy part (with pedal used as directed) is quite familiar and tuneful, we may start the trill and use both hands. The hand and arm for the trill will not move about much, but must feel as loose as the other hand and arm. This will be the case if we do not stiffen, and if we listen for evenness. Any worry about the other part would spoil the trill, so we had better memorise that when we first learn it.

Quiet movement in Broken Sixths

9

With ease $\text{♩} = 88$

p *cresc.*

dim. *p* *pp*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Arm Chords, with full tone

10

Loud and resonant $\text{♩} = 76$

ff

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

* Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

ONE of the first qualities a player has to secure is ease in moving about the keyboard. Exercises have already been given for this, and IX and X are to carry us still further. In IX the arms should be floating—nicely poised on the chords and ready to allow of an easy “side-to-side” movement at the triplet figure. Arms and hands must always be alive and awake. They are probably being used rightly if they feel happy and comfortable in their work. The first sound in each bar, left hand, should be made quite distinct. A sound which is thus heard over and over again in the bass is called a Pedal Point.

Exercise X is to encourage the greatest possible freedom of movement. The arm will fall and rise from the shoulder (as in Study III) with plenty of buoyancy in the rise, and weight combined with looseness in the fall. For once in a way a very loud tone is wanted, and loud tone need not be ugly; it can be rich and good. Music is often, in itself, much simpler than it looks in the copy. Exercise X is really quite reasonable, though its photograph makes it look fearsome. It can be learnt and played from memory in one practice, after which the speed may gradually be increased.

Melody and Accompaniment

Rich in tone $\text{♩} = 120$

11

Legato for Three Fingers

Bright and rippling $\text{♩} = 112$

12

IN Exercise XI there is practice in what is called *cantabile* playing. Many compositions for piano are like a song-melody, with an accompaniment; it is, therefore, necessary to learn how to obtain a *cantabile* (singing) tone. In the lower part a rich tone will be got by letting the weight of the arm free, the finger—as it were—clinging to the key, and the player listening carefully for a beautiful sound. The upper part will need the floating arm, the fingers being kept near (or upon) the key surface.

Exercise XII is for finger-touch combined with a very free arm. Two definite thoughts will guide the player: (a) a light, floating, ready-to-move arm; (b) an extremely alive, almost electric, feeling in the fingers, which are now to do their very best and most active work. They are not to sit down and *slide* along; they are to work crisply and neatly, without stiffness and without laziness. Fingers 1 2 3 at first; then 2 3 4; then 3 4 5. In this way equality of touch is secured.

Chopin

Accuracy and confidence in Attack

13 With ample movement ♩ = 132

p

mf

p

Finger Staccato

Scarlatti

14 Nimble ♩ = 72

mf

f

cresc.

f

mf

p

WE have in Exercise XIII another opportunity for large movements of the arms. This time a very important feature is added—accuracy of aim in playing a distant bass. The first low sound in every bar, as in a waltz, is the foundation of the harmony which follows. By a wide, arched motion of the left arm, the little finger must reach the key with looseness, but with *certainly*. For practice, and to encourage confidence, the fall of the arm must be from a good height.

Exercise XIV is for neat, clean finger-work. No unnecessary arm or hand movement should be used, but the fingers must be full of life, vigorous and supple. The whole, when played crisply, will suggest a kind of musical fretwork in which everything is distinct, but light and "open." Exercises prepare the player for the performance of fine music. The works of two great composers will specially benefit by the practice of this page. Which two composers?

4

Tone Values in Part Playing

As for four voices ♩ = 126

15

p *cresc.*

31.3.43

Evenness of Touch in Scales

Neatly ♩ = 88

16

mf *f* *p* *cresc.* *p*

I NSTRUMENTAL music is sometimes written as if it were meant for voices. Some pieces, as in Exercise XV, have clear lines of melody right through. Each line is a "part," complete in itself, and has its own special stems and rests. Just as it is clearly *written*, so must it be clearly *played*, every sound having its true value. Each part must mind its own business. Composition of this kind is found in Fugues, and, less fully, in other works. It came from still older music written for choirs, and that is why the parts are often called "voices," even in piano music.

Exercise XVI prepares the way for music built upon scale passages. Some pupils—and some teachers too—are apt to think that scales are easy. Not very long ago a scale was taught in the very first lesson! People now know better; they have found out that a scale is a very difficult thing to play *well*. It is difficult because the player has to be alert in so many ways at once. At least six good qualities must be secured before a scale can be considered perfect. It will be interesting to think them out and to notice how they affect the result in playing music similar to the above.

Pedalling for Legato Chords

17

Slow ♩ = 66

Freedom and Legato in Arpeggio Playing

18

Lively ♩ = 120

WHEN Mother Nature made hands she had no idea they would ever be used for such strange purposes as playing on a violin or a piano, so we cannot be surprised that the keyboard presents great difficulties. One of these is the playing of chords, in succession, *legato*. Here the pedal is useful to link

up the harmonies. In Exercise XVII we may count four to each beat. At *one* the pedal is raised, at *two* it is lowered, and kept down until *one* comes again. The pedal is also used in blending all the sounds of a single chord, as in XVIII, where they are played in succession.

Handwritten notes: DAVIS

Suppleness and Forearm Rotation

Lithely $\text{♩} = 112$

19

4
7.4.43

Neat and alert $\text{♩} = 160$

Legato for Four Fingers

20

OUR joints are all loose until we are stupid and stiffen them. If we hold the top of the right arm firmly with the left hand, and then turn the forearm to right and left, we find a good, well-oiled hinge at the elbow. The hand turns with the arm (it cannot turn by itself). This turning is called Rotation. In Exercise XIX the right forearm will rotate if we leave it free to do so, and in this way we get a better tone.

Exercise XX, like No. XII, is a mixture of floating arms and frisky fingers. We must have *both*. The little figure of four notes needs fingers that are really alive. Like the horses in the old coach-and-four, they must run well and not tumble down nor bump into each other; they must be under firm control—in the one case by reins, in the other by brains. The last sound in each group is the climax, but each one must be clean and true.

Increase of Stretch and Firmness of Grip

Firmly ♩ = 116

21

The Passing of the Thumb in Arpeggios

Fluently ♩ = 136

22

MANY people think "if only every black and white key were just a *shade* narrower, I could reach everything quite well." And so we could; and we do right to wonder why that half-inch in the octave cannot be given to us. However, the hand is very elastic, so we must try gradually to stretch it. Of course, *extra* care is needed, in Exercise XXI, to avoid stiffening. Firmness need not cause stiffness. We walk firmly, but our muscles are not stiff. It is well for each hand to rest in turn.

In Exercise XXII we have the problem of the thumb again, a special feature of piano work. It is good for us to make sure we know where the business-joint of the thumb really is. Lots of people play for years with stiff thumbs before they find out that the "hip-joint" is right back at the wrist. This gives freedom of movement down, up, right and left. A great teacher, known to the writer, always regarded the thumb-joint as next in importance to the shoulder-joint.

4
10.3.03

10.3.03

Practice in the Trill

Without hurry ♩ = 108

23

21.4.43

Legato for Five Fingers

Sharp and clean ♩ = 120

24

CLASSICAL music—that is, music so good and strong in itself that it has won the love and respect of intelligent people—often contains a certain ornamental figure known as the Trill or Shake. Exercise XXIII is purposely made in the Mozart or early Beethoven manner to prepare the way for many similar passages which the learner will find in the music of those, and other, Masters. The first quaver following the shake is the climax point.

The last Exercise of the series gives special practice in the playing of a five-finger scale passage. It is one of the hardest things to do really well, and yet nearly all music teachers used to give it in the first lesson! No wonder people stiffened up in those days! Here, again, we do well to think of the sound which follows the semiquavers, but in doing so we must not forget to make every sound a real living thing. The fingers should feel alive and nimble.

THE MUSIC OF WALTER CARROLL

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