ARTISTIC PIANO-PLAYING

AS TAUGHT BY

LUDWIG DEPPE

TOGETHER WITH

PRACTICAL ADVICE ON QUESTIONS OF TECHNIC

BY

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AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION BY

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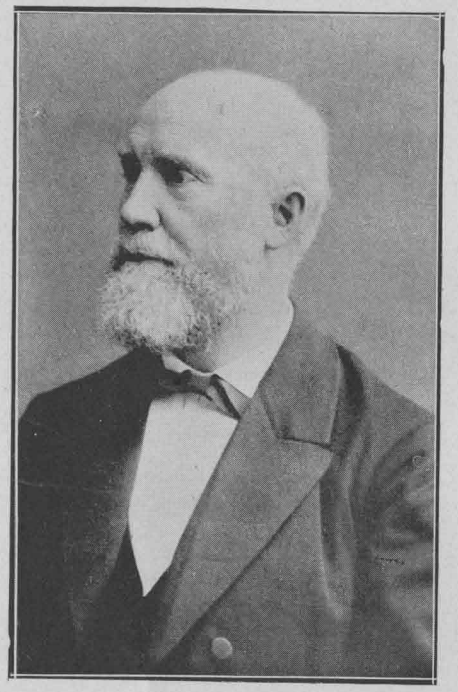
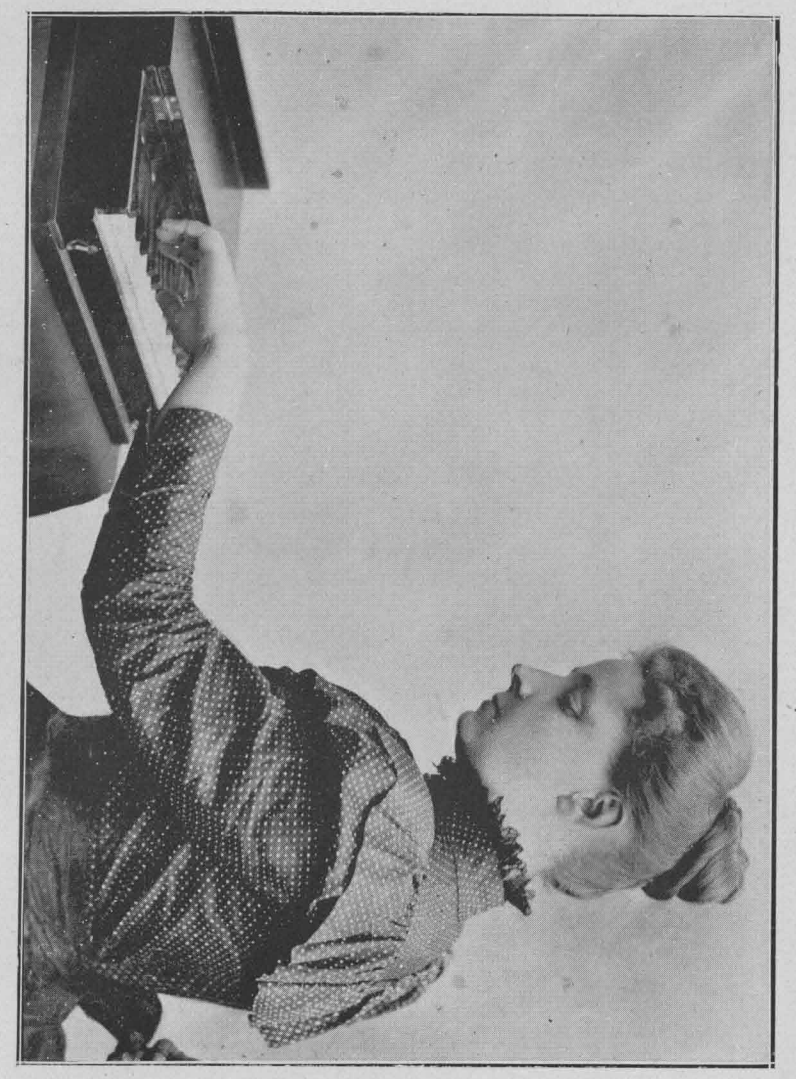


LUDWIG DEPPE



FRL. ELISABETH CALAND

PART I.

Artistic Piano Playing

AS TAUGHT BY

LUDWIG DEPPE

—BY—

Fräulein Elisabeth Caland

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION BY

Evelyn Sutherland Stevenson

"The freedom which is rightly considered to be the very essence of beauty is not lawlessness, but the harmony of laws; it is not caprice, but a supreme and intrinsic necessity; it is not a limitation, on the contrary it is infinity."—Schiller.

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PREFACE.

"A knowledge of the thing to be achieved—a clear idea of what constitutes a beauty and what a blemish—cannot fail to be of service."—*Herbert Spencer.*

"Piano-playing is mainly a matter of the mind, and not primarily of the muscles."—*W. S. B. Mathews.*

ANIMATED by recollections of Miss Amy Fay's "*Music Study in Germany*," I started for Berlin in the summer of 1899 with pleasant anticipations of possible music-study under the direction of Ludwig Deppe; therefore it was proportionately disconcerting to find, on arriving at that city, that it was too late, by some nine years, to avail myself of the coveted instruction. But the name continued to hold a fascination for me, and it was doubtless for this reason that, when glancing idly in a music-store window, my eye was caught by a little book bearing the title, "*Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels.*" It proved to be tolerably stiff reading for a novice in German, but, nevertheless, I extracted therefrom quite enough to stimulate my already vivid interest in the subject, and to induce me to seek out the writer of the book, upon whose shoulders it seemed the mantle of Deppe had fallen. Then followed eight months of earnest study, under the artistic control of Frl. Caland, who, truly endowed with "a double portion" of her master's spirit, imparted to me the guiding principles of his system with a delightful enthusiasm which could not fail of its object. Therein I proved the truth of Goethe's assertion that "the instruction which the true artist gives us opens the mind; for, where words fail him, deeds speak." And it is in grateful recognition of the inspiration and uplift which came to me through the teachings of those months that I now present the accompanying translation to English readers.

If it be true that "genius is a kind of god-like insanity," then Deppe was no genius. But an eminently artistic teacher

of the piano he certainly was, for, possessing in the highest degree that characteristic which, according to Mr. W. S. B. Mathews, "distinguishes the artistic teacher from the pedagogue," his chief concern was always to awaken a keen sense of tonal beauty in the minds of his pupils, and to train them to apply the test of *tonal result* to all their work. Tone was to Deppe the guiding star whose vivifying rays must illumine all technic, and no technic measured up to his standard unless it worked for—not against—the production of a broad, pure and noble tone. That a tone of this description could ever result from mere "finger-hitting" was to him an unthinkable proposition, for in such case no dexterity nor fluency of execution can ever disguise the superficial origin of the tone. But, when hand and fingers are sustained and reinforced by free movements of the arm, and by the co-operative working of the powerful muscles of upper-arm and back, then not only is the tone-quality rendered far more intense and vital, but there occurs also a wholesome distribution of effort over every part of the playing apparatus from shoulder to finger-tips; scarcely less important is the fact that the player thereby acquires, in a remarkably short space of time, a well-defined feeling of *mastery of the keyboard.**

It may be thought by some, that too much is made in this book of the *carrying of the hand by the arm*, but this insistence is justified when one reflects on the consequences entailed by neglect of this one simple rule. Take, for instance, a player who has what is called a "logy" touch. In the majority of cases it will be found that he not only expects his fingers to produce the necessary tones, but also to sustain the greater part of the weight of the arm, and to drag that member over the keyboard. Now, when the fingers are forced to work under such hampering conditions is it at all surprising that the tone-quality should be rough and uneven, the passage-work heavy and lifeless, and scale-performance punctuated by a series of unlovely jerks? A hesitating and incoherent style of

*It is said that the free and graceful arm-movements of violin players gave Deppe his first conception of the unnecessary limitations in this regard which had heretofore been imposed upon pianists.

playing, blurred chords, unsteady performance of scales and runs, touching of wrong keys, faulty tempo and rhythm—all of these may doubtless originate in the imperfect musical sense, or the erroneous mental conception of the performer, yet none the less is it true that the very same faults frequently arise from no other cause than the *failure of the arm to carry the hand* from point to point with sufficient freedom and steadiness of movement to insure certainty of touch. And because this carrying movement of the arm is ever a curvilinear one, hand and fingers are thereby enabled to descend *vertically* on any desired keys instead of in a slanting direction. The advantages herein involved are too obvious to need emphasis. But it should never be forgotten that clear and definite mental work must precede the physical; if the *mind* dictates the curves which arm and hand shall describe in the performance of any tonal form, then it is tolerably certain that the movements will realize Deppe's ideal concerning them, and that they will truly be "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

As to the Deppean five-finger exercises, their apparent simplicity is but a "delusion and a snare," as anyone may prove by practical test. To depress a single key, and at the same time to control the non-playing fingers so completely that the ivory on which they are poised does not even tremble, is a task requiring physical and mental tension of no ordinary kind, and it will be found that these exercises, when properly performed, exact all the patience and concentration of mind which the player can command. And as their twofold object is mental control of the fingers, and the *conscious* production of a perfect tone, it follows that there must not be a moment's inattention, nor a single automatic movement. But fortunately the reward is commensurate to the effort involved, for the fingers thereby develop independence and *equality of power* in a marvelous degree. Particularly noticeable is the ability of a player so trained to give prominence to any voice of a chord at will—an ability which is as essential to the adequate performance of Brahms' music as to that of Bach.

Just here seems a favorable opportunity to refute the prevalent notion that the sphere of Deppean playing is so circumscribed as to take in only the classical masters, with Mozart at their head, and to exclude the majority of the modern school of composers. That this is a most mistaken idea I can prove from personal experience, for the works used in connection with my own study of Deppe's principles were by the following composers only: Bach, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Grieg, Rubenstein and Brahms.

It has been well said that "Art has no fatherland, and all that is beautiful ought to be prized by us, no matter what region or clime has produced it;" therefore whatever may be the differences of opinion as to the value of Deppe's contribution to the art and science of piano-playing, let it at least be remembered how much he did to promote *musical playing*—being really a pioneer in this line among his German *confreres*—and how wholesome has been his influence in bringing about more natural and spontaneous methods of practice. And, while no one can truthfully assert that the present advancement of piano technic is due to any single musician, yet assuredly the link which Deppe forged in the ever-lengthening chain lacks neither beauty nor significance. This fact gives rise to a hope that this modest volume may prove a not unwelcome addition to our very meagre literature on the subject of tone-production, for, though truth is but one, its expressions are many.

As for the imperfections and shortcomings of this little work, visit them on the inadequate pen of the tyro in the art of translating; but "if there be any virtue, if there be any praise," let these fall to the share of Elisabeth Caland, the gifted artist who is so successfully continuing the work of Ludwig Deppe in the imperial city of Berlin. E. S. S.

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn., March, 1903.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GERMAN EDITION.

"What is good is effective, generative; makes for itself room, food, and allies."—*Emerson.*

TO PLAY good music, and at the same time study the piano very badly—such is the fate of the average pianist." So wrote Frederick Wieck, that old pedagogue of the piano, in his little book, entitled "Piano and Song;" and his shrewd observation has lost little of its truth or force with the passing years. That it carries weight even now can hardly be gainsaid, in view of the all-too-prevalent virtuosity, which, taking technic as its main object, effectually removes it from its true sphere as a servant of art. The majority of modern pianists concentrate their attention in large measure upon the exterior means of execution, the result being that rapidity and brilliancy, dash and *bravura,* have been developed and elaborated to an extraordinary degree. On the other hand, the cultivation of a thoughtful, sincere, and reflective style of playing—so essential if one would render the imperishable works of the old masters in their original integrity and purity—has suffered from proportionate neglect. This state of affairs brings to mind a saying of Hans von Buelow, as quoted by Pfeiffer: "Mozart is terribly difficult; a time will come—and perhaps very soon—when a Mozart sonata will find more favor in the concert hall than Liszt's *Rigoletto Fantasia.*"*

And so it has come to pass that many pianists, who can dash off the most difficult concert pieces with flourishing facility, are yet destitute of the power to draw from the keys a simple and perfect legato. This fact takes on added significance when it is at the same time borne in mind that the piano, by reason of its present state of perfection in character and calibre, can justly claim from the pianist the finest gradations of touch, and the utmost conceivable delicacy of manipulation. This opinion is

*Studien bei Hans von Buelow; p. 96.

also advanced by Klose, in his little work, *"Die Deppe'sche Lehre."*

But about this very matter of tone-production there exists, strange to say, no unity of method whatever. Proof of this, if proof be needed, is amply afforded by a glance at the widely-divergent theories advocated by the different conservatories and schools of music—a diversity which clearly demonstrates that, as regards this important factor in piano study, "discord rules supreme." An explanation of this circumstance may, perhaps, be found in that fundamental difference in construction which separates the piano from wind-and-stringed instruments, as well as from the human voice. A vocalist, or a performer on most orchestral instruments, does not find his tones ready-made for him, but must *learn* how to find and produce them for himself. But when he turns to the piano, there are the keys lying ready to his hand, and a tone of some sort may be had, with deceptive ease, through the mere depression of a key. And this unique characteristic of the piano was precisely what the acute and experienced musician, Deppe, had in mind when he affirmed: "For piano playing alone there remains something more to be done." And it is this same characteristic which, in a certain sense, renders the piano better adapted than any other instrument to form an artist.

Ludwig Deppe was born on November 7, 1828, at Alverdissen, Lippe-Detmold, Germany. Cradled in poverty, he was compelled to shape his own artistic career with labor and pains. That his efforts were not unattended with success is sufficiently indicated by the fact that his compositions—notably a *Symphony in F Major, an Overture to Zriny,* and an *Overture to Don Carlos*—were received with much approbation in different cities.

The city of Hamburg saw the beginning of his artistic career, and it was there also that he gave his first lessons in music. In 1862 he founded a Vocal Academy, which he managed until 1866. As distinguished musician and leader of the orchestra, he directed the Silesian Musical Festivals in masterly style. Later, removing from Hamburg to Berlin, he continued to

elaborate the system of piano study which he had formulated, and strove with all the intensity of his nature to propagate it.

In 1887 came his appointment to the post of Royal Capellmeister, in which capacity he directed the Royal Opera during the two following years. He accepted this position solely that he "might aid in the accomplishment of the personal wishes and artistic designs of Count Hochberg." (See *Zwei Jahre Capellmeister,* by Ludwig Deppe.) Yet, in spite of the varied and taxing demands on his time and strength, his "passion" to impart true piano instruction knew not the slightest abatement. His pupils, also, permeated by the high ideals of their master, and animated by a wish to help him in their realization, followed his teachings with most earnest fidelity.

It was on the 5th of September, 1890, that Deppe died. His comparatively early removal was a hard blow to his pupils, who had cherished the hope of receiving, through long years yet to come, the inspiring teachings of one who had revealed to them heights and depths of musical science of which they had not dreamed.

A concise article, relative to Deppe's theory of tone-production, was published in 1885, under the title, *Affections of the Arm in Piano Players.* Therein the author announced his intention of publishing his piano studies in one large work; and he adds, "besides some few finger exercises, I hope, also, to give various movements for the strengthening of the shoulder and arm muscles, which movements shall have special reference to the anatomy of the upper part of the body." It is probable that the detailed descriptions and clear explanations so indispensable in a printed treatise—but not demanded to the same degree in oral instruction—may have seemed too dry and tedious a task to one endowed with Deppe's ideal power of comprehension. At all events, the projected work never appeared, though he himself showed me materials in readiness for it.

When listening to the playing of great artists we are enraptured by their unique and wonderful gifts, while, at the same time, we derive an additional delight from the natural grace and unassuming simplicity with which they render the hardest

and most involved passages. From these premises Deppe argued that, if certain laws underlying this beauty of execution could only be discovered and systematized, then less-favored musicians, with ordinary, normal talents, might at least hope to attain to the production of a beautiful tone, and to artistic interpretation of a composition—although the results thus attained must, naturally, fall short of those arising from the intuition of genius.

To find out these laws, then, was the task which Deppe set himself. Closely observing the playing of all the great pianists of his day, he came to the following conclusion: Tones produced in accordance with certain exact laws of beauty must of necessity be themselves also beautiful. He said: "Gifted mortals play by the grace of God; nevertheless, any one may, by my system, acquire a mastery of technic."

Deppe was very urgent in his desire that I should reduce his system to writing, and thus render it permanent. It was my wish to arrange and complete his notes and records immediately after his death; the pressure of circumstances, however, has delayed the fulfillment of my intention until now, some seven years later. And if, by virtue of the veneration I cherish for the master, my inexperienced pen succeeds in at least suggesting Deppe's ideal, my aim will be fully realized.

Before concluding this introduction, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to two of Deppe's pupils—Anna Clark-Steinger and her husband, Mr. Frederick Clark—who, in a series of twelve preparatory lessons, gave me a clear conception of the Deppean principles.

In the Deppe Method of piano playing are comprised the ideas of a great artist—of one who devoted his whole life to the endeavor to bring about the realization of his ideals. Serene in the face of hostile criticism, unwearied by his incessant warfare against incredulity, he never gave up the struggle, being ever sustained by his unfaltering conviction that truth and right must, sooner or later, win their way. For, in the words of Joh. von Mueller, "though there be times when truth and good meet with no response, yet always shall that which is *eternal* find its time and season."

ELISABETH CALAND.

Wiesbaden, May, 1897.

(Present address, Charlottenburg-Berlin.)

CHAPTER I.

The Necessity for Co-operative Action in the Muscles of the Upper Part of the Body.

"A leading trait of grace is continuity, flowingness. Motion in curved lines is economical motion. Given certain successive positions to be assumed by a limb, then if it be moved in a straight line to the first of these positions, suddenly arrested, and then moved in another direction straight to the second position, and so on, it is clear that, at each arrest, the momentum previously given to the limb must be destroyed at a certain cost of force; whereas, if, instead of arresting the limb at its first position, its motion be allowed to continue, and a lateral force be impressed to make it diverge towards the second position, a curvilinear motion is the necessary result; and by making use of the original momentum, force is economized."—*Herbert Spencer; Scientific, Political and Speculative Essays; page* 384.

DEPPE had as motto this phrase: "When it *looks* pretty, then it is right." Now, what was his reason for deeming an attractive appearance to be so essential an element in piano playing? By way of answer, consider for a moment the conditions which produce this effect. Piano playing "looks pretty" only when the pianist—making use of just those movements which are absolutely necessary to the clear setting forth of the musical idea—eliminates from his playing all incoherent and doubled (or simultaneous) movements; for these, being inharmonious and disturbing in their character, not only exert a destructive influence on the unity of a composition, but they also effectually obscure the artistic thought with which it is interwoven. Art never *obtrudes* its purpose; therefore a work of art ceases to be true to its name if, in the rendering of it, the performer gives undue prominence to his own efforts. In such case, the hearer receives an impression which true art quite forbids—namely, that the means of expression constitute the end and aim of the art. According to Schiller, "Grace should always be pure Nature—that is, spontaneous (or, at least,

appear so), and a truly graceful person will never seem to be conscious of the possession of that charm."*

It was never Deppe's idea that anyone should be content with learning to strum a little upon the piano in a mechanical way; on the contrary, he held that even the shortest and simplest piece of music might—and should—be played with such artistic grace and finish as to turn it into a masterpiece. And herein is suggested something of the far-reaching character of the Deppe Method. Certain it is that to any earnest student who rightly discerns its true and inward meaning, and who attains to a physical and mental mastery of the subject, is thereby guaranteed a realizing sense of power and of freedom hitherto unknown.

In entering upon the main subject of this chapter, it is, first of all, necessary to obtain a clear conception of the nature of the movements termed "doubled" or "simultaneous" by the master, and to see just why they mar the harmony of an artistic interpretation. To aid in this design, suppose we take a familiar illustration from everyday life, as afforded by the initial attempts of a novice in the art of skating. How wildly and aimlessly the arms are thrust out in all directions, and with what convulsive jerks and twists the upper part of the body repeats the awkward gyrations of the limbs as the learner strives to move forward, and, at the same time, avoid a fall! After a little practice, however, many of these doubled and unnecessary movements disappeared. Day by day the joints become firmer and the muscles more controlled; day by day the movements grow more regular, rhythmical, and beautiful, until, at last, the whole appearance is a delight to the eye, and there is nothing to detract from the pleasure of watching the finished skater as he glides gracefully over the ice.

Observations of swimmers, riders, fencers, etc., will give results similar to the above, and will create the conviction that all physical exercises might be learned in simpler fashion, and with far less expenditure of time and energy, if the mechanism of the muscular system were first thoroughly comprehended.

* Ueber Anmut und Wuerde.

From such study there would naturally arise an exact knowledge of how best to shape each movement in order to reap a maximum of result from a minimum of effort.

In the article by Deppe, of which mention is made in the preface, there is a humorous reference to these simultaneous movements when occurring in piano playing; he speaks of those pianists who "saw the air with their hands, and who move their elbows after a fashion which calls up visions of a cobbler at work on his bench." Nothing caused him greater nervous irritation than to see and hear a pianist in whose performance one sought in vain for a sweet and mellow tone, or a beautiful movement. The fusion of these two things—*i. e.,* beauty of movement and beauty of tone—was to him a law of primary importance in the art of music. In other words, he claimed that all movements on the keyboard could be shaped in such wise that beauty of tone would be the natural consequence of beauty of movement. For if, in the acts of ordinary life, a graceful movement produces a pleasing result, with how much greater force and significance will this law apply to piano playing—a manifestation of art which justly holds so high and æsthetic a place!

"When it *looks* pretty, then it is right" So said Deppe, and, in this connection, it is interesting to remember Niemetschek's description of the playing of Mozart: "He has such beautiful little hands, and he moves them over the keys so naturally and easily, that the eye is delighted, while at the same time the ear is charmed by his tones."* While we by no means assert that Deppe considered beautiful little hands to be essential to grace and euphony in playing, it is none the less true that he never accepted a pupil until he had first carefully examined the conformation of the hand.

Turn to Dubois Reymond's book, *Ueber die Uebung,* and you will read that "perfection in any physical exercise involves not only familiarity with the necessary movements, but, in an equal degree, the elimination of all that are aimless and superfluous." And Schopenhauer, in *Das Objekt der Kunst,* writes as follows: "Grace consists in this, that each movement, each change of posi-

* Otto Jahn; Life of Mozart, page 133.

tion, shall be effected in the easiest, best-adapted, and least-constraining manner." Making the application to piano-playing, it then becomes in order to ask: How may the hands be moved over the keyboard so as to answer the demands of grace, while, at the same time, each movement is of the easiest and most appropriate kind? Such is the problem for which the Deppe Method provides a solution.

Since any evidence of strenuous effort renders it impossible to convey an impression of ease and lightness, it follows that the hand must, first of all, be *emancipated*—that is to say, *it must be quite freed from the hampering weight of the arm. "The hand must be light as a feather,"* repeated Deppe often. But how shall it be rendered light? The hand will be light only when it is *carried,* instead of *carrying itself,* over the keyboard. The lightness and freedom thus imparted to the hand is effected through the agency of the shoulder and arm muscles, which support and carry the hand; and, with a view to strengthening these parts of the body, Deppe recommended to his pupils various physical exercises, notably those performed on the horizontal bar. In addition he sent them to the parade ground, there to watch the soldiers drilling, and to see how the recruits learn to regulate and control their muscular movements. I myself had to practice with dumb-bells, and even to carry one in my daily walks, holding it first in one hand, then in the other. When I came to Deppe for a lesson his first act was always to grasp my hand in greeting; to meet his requirements, it had to be "light as a feather," so that he could guide it in any direction he pleased, and yet never have the sensation of sustaining any weight whatsoever.

This light, free hand ranks first among the qualifications of a heaven-born artist, though not always is such an one conscious of his endowment in this regard. Deppe's idea of its importance receives confirmation from a letter of Buelow's (*Musikalisches Wochenblatt,* 1896, No. 23), wherein he states his desire to rid himself, under the guidance of Liszt, of the "awkward constraint" characterizing his execution.

Now, how does one "carry" the hand? By enlisting the aid

of, first, the muscles of the shoulder, then those of the upper arm, and, lastly, those of the forearm. In order to have practical demonstration of this fact, and to prove experimentally that the hand is really "light" under these circumstances, try executing, with much care, the following exercise: First, raise the arm, very slowly, till it assumes the attitude shown in Plate I, *but do not elevate the shoulder in the slightest degree.* After retaining the arm for a moment in this position, let it sink, *still slowly,* till the finger-tips touch the keys, so lightly that they are not depressed. *During the whole course of this exercise, concentrate the entire attention on the action of the muscles of the back and shoulder, in order to gain a vivid and conscious perception of the truth that these muscles do work conjointly in the task of carrying and sustaining the arm.* Unless this simple exercise be performed with thoughtfulness and deliberation, it will be quite fruitless, for then the sensation which proves the co-operative working of the muscles under consideration will not be experienced.

PLATE I.

A low chair for the use at the piano is an indispensable requirement; its height should be so regulated that, when the hand rests in the proper position on the keys, the line formed by the forearm is an *ascending* one, and the level of the white keys is seen to be somewhat above that of the elbow. (See Plate II,

Chapter II.) Deppe considered the low piano-chair a matter of paramount importance, and not without reason, for by its use the necessary co-operation of the back and shoulder muscles with those of the arms is, practically, rendered compulsory.

The frequent repetition of the following exercise will be found an effectual way of gaining the requisite feather-light hand: Raise the arm till it assumes the position shown in Plate VI, Chapter III; then, by a *conscious use of the back and shoulder muscles,* describe slow, circular movements with the entire arm, moving it freely in the shoulder socket, and allowing the hand to hang loosely from the wrist. Though the hand is, necessarily, sustained by the wrist, the wrist by the forearm, and that, in turn, by the upper arm, yet in none of these members should there be any exertion of *independent* activity. The arm must be in a state of complete rest and passivity, and simply allow itself to be *guided as a whole* through the prescribed motions. Given these conditions, the hand will surely prove "as light as a feather." Since this exercise—which is not specially fatiguing—does not demand the use of a piano, it will be found profitable to practice it in front of a mirror, and obtain thereby a profile view of the movements. One may test the perfection of this exercise by watchful attention to the bend of the elbow; for, from first to last, the angle between upper arm and forearm must remain absolutely unaltered; in actual piano practice this angle, of course, undergoes constant change of dimensions. It will easily be perceived that this co-operative employment of the muscles may be learned, if necessary, more readily through practical instruction in a lesson-hour than from any theoretical description.

At this point the majority of pianists will be ready to ask: *Why* should I make use of the muscles of my shoulder and back when playing the piano?

Because, in the first place, the hand must be, according to Deppe's rule, "as light as a feather," and, as we have seen, this lightness is an impossibility unless the shoulder, *not the hand,* sustains and carries the weight of the arm.*

* When the performer sits high, it is inevitable that at least a part of the weight of the arm must be borne by the fingers, under which circumstances the hand at once becomes heavy; hence it is clear why the master insisted that only a low chair should be used at the piano.—[E. S. S.]

Secondly (in conformity with a foundation law of the muscular economy), one who observes this principle in his playing will not only expend less vital force, but will use his strength more harmoniously. Now, in the opinion of Herbert Spencer, as given in his essay on *"Gracefulness,"* "truly graceful motions are those performed with comparatively little effort;" and again, he adds: "The graceful way of performing any evolution is the way that costs the least effort." Let us consider why this is the case.

When Dubois-Reymond declares that "one cannot imagine a Liszt or a Rubenstein without muscles of iron," and that, furthermore, "the bow of Joachim's violin travels several furlongs during the performance of a symphony,"* he brings home to us most forcibly, by means of these illustrations, some conception of the tremendous expenditure of energy involved in the playing of an artist. That the hand alone can meet such a demand is obviously impossible, seeing that, in itself, it possesses a relatively small amount of muscular power. It therefore becomes evident that those who follow the example of the great artists, and enlist the help of all available muscles, will not only command greater strength, but strength of a far more enduring character.

Such, then, is the principle we may term *"muscular synergy."* The effect of its operation in piano-playing is the production of an absolutely noble and beautiful tone, a tone pervaded with a strange charm, a tone which never wounds the ear by its hardness—in short, a tone which is the exact opposite of that produced by a detached finger-stroke. Be it played forte or piano, never does this tone lose its rare sweetness, nor an inherent quality of intensity by virtue of which it is invested with such marvelous carrying power.

This harmonious interworking of the muscles of the upper part of the body was an underlying and essential principle in Deppe's teaching. Nor is its influence limited to the sphere of tone-production; on the contrary, it forms the basis—as we shall see later—for the artistic and spontaneous rendering of an en-

* Ueber die Uebung; page 24.

tire work of art. A paragraph from Souriau's *"Esthetique du Mouvement"* may appropriately be quoted here:

"When we have to make an exertion of strength, *muscular synergy* is requisite in order to avoid fatigue. Not only do we spare ourselves, in this way, a painful sensation of strained effort, but we actually develop more of real energy. Force is not transmitted to the muscles, but is engendered by them; and, each of them having but a limited amount of energy at its disposal, it follows that, if we wish to put into any movement every available atom of energy, then we must obtain the concurrent working of the greatest possible number of muscular fibers. In order that these diverse muscular actions shall not counteract one another, it is indispensable that they be fashioned under the law of a common rhythm, and this is what we understand by *muscular synergy.* In executing any movement which is somewhat complicated the muscles do not work simultaneously, but act one after the other; and the efficacy of the result depends on the perfection of the rhythm which is bestowed upon this series of partial efforts. It is necessary that these be combined in such a way that each muscle shall come into action at the most favorable moment. The habit of this rhythm once formed, it appears to us a perfectly natural proceeding; at first it is, of course, not so easy. When we have to make an unaccustomed movement, we soon realize that we must first find out a certain method by which to shape that movement."

This law of *"muscular synergy,"* which Souriau considers of such vital importance, forms, as it were, the *keystone of the arch* in the Deppe Method of piano playing. At this point it may be well to mention that all well-formed children have, by nature, a "light hand;" later, through the occupations of daily life---such as writing and other hand work—this natural lightness is often lost. But it may be recovered, even in adult life, and the habit of *"harmonious co-operation of the muscles"* again contracted, if only care be taken that the movements have their beginning *in the right source of power*—that is to say, in the muscles of the back. For, in the words of Herder, "If the body

is regular—that is equal on each side—then the center of gravity is found in the middle, and the arms poise themselves evenly on either side. In all creatures of nature there exists this center of gravity which is the governing or ruling point, and which regulates the movements of each side of the body."*

In order to have practical demonstration of the truth of this assertion, return again to the exercise described in connection with Plate I.

* Vom Angenehmen in Gestalten.

CHAPTER II.

Position of Hand and Arm; Tone Production.

"Whoever will achieve great things must be capable of deep penetration, keen discrimination, broad combinations, and steadfast perseverance."—*Schiller.*

AS HAS already been intimated in the preceding chapter, one of Deppe's first requirements was the use of a low chair at the piano, its height to be regulated by the relative positions of hand and elbow.* If, when the hand is laid on the keyboard, the level of the elbow is seen to be a trifle lower than that of the white keys (see Plate II), then the height of the piano chair is correct, and the player is ready to assume the Deppe hand position, as follows: The right arm being raised and carried freely by the muscles of the shoulder, the hand, "light as a feather," is slowly lowered until the finger tips touch lightly the keys** G, A, B, C, and D, but *without depressing them in the least*—an achievement which becomes possible only when the hand is *entirely* supported by the arm, and the arm by the shoulder. The elbow should be as close to the body as is possible without undue compulsion, and the line *formed by the fifth finger, the outside of the hand, and the forearm should be a straight one*—that is to say, the forearm should form a right angle with the keyboard. (This feature is shown with admirable clearness in Plate III.) A regulator for this line is found in the *middle finger,* on which the hand may turn as on a pivot until the correct position is found, and the fingers assume the curved and tranquil attitude depicted in Plates II and III. It will be found needful to guard carefully against *unconscious elevation of the shoulder,* and equal care must be taken that the entire pose of hand, arm, and body remains

*To avoid the necessity of using an inconveniently low chair, Bechstein, of Berlin, has constructed, after Deppe's plans, a piano having longer legs than those of the ordinary instrument.

**First space above staff; treble clef.

quite easy and unconstrained. "Always amiable" (*liebenswuerdig*), said Deppe. The wrist—which is more or less elevated during the execution of runs, etc.—is now to be held but slightly higher than the back of the hand, so that the latter has a barely perceptible slope upward toward the wrist. A point to be closely watched is the *position of the outside of the hand;* so far from being permitted to *sink* at all, it should be *turned upward from the keyboard* to a height a little above the level of the thumb. Naturally there will result a certain obliquity in the line of the second finger; and the thumb, curved outwards at the first joint, will have little more than its tip on the keyboard.

PLATE II.

The first exercise, preliminary to any actual finger work, consists merely in an endeavor to hold the hand and arm, *with perfect immobility and yet without stiffness,* in the position above described—a feat which experience will prove to be much easier in theory than in practice. A profile view of the correct attitude is given in Plate II, while Plate III shows the hand as seen from above.

Let us now consider some of the advantages accruing from this hand-position.

(1) Owing to the straight line running through the hand and arm, the muscular connection between the two becomes of the most direct and positive kind. When the hand is allowed

to *turn out at the wrist,* this *"rapport"* is summarily broken at that point, and the fourth and fifth fingers—no longer lying parallel with the keys, but stretched diagonally across them—suffer a proportionate loss of freedom and of power.

(2) The very important muscles which lie along the *under* (or inner) side of the forearm are now brought into exactly

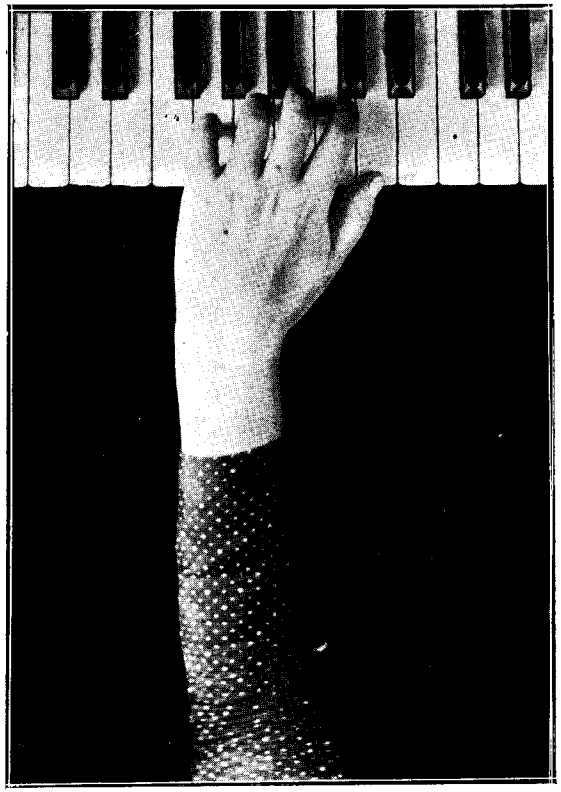


PLATE III.

that position which is most favorable to their free and unhampered co-operation with the muscles of the upper arm; hence follows a notable increase in their strength and efficiency.

(3) Through the agency of this hand-position the fingers are effectually aided in attaining to *complete independence,* and *equality of power.*

Now we come to the few finger exercises which Deppe prescribed and which he always prefaced by a command to concentrate the whole attention on the movement to be performed, the player making, as it were, a mental map of the entire route from brain to finger tips.*

First place the hand upon the keyboard in the manner of the preliminary exercise, and with the fingers on the same keys. Then raise the fifth finger a very little from its key (*the other fingers remaining poised lightly on their respective keys*), but be careful not to raise it too high, else there will result a "crack" in the muscles, and, according to Deppe, there will be a consequent interruption of the connection between hand and arm. By a direct effort of the will maintain the finger in its elevated position for a moment; then, by a single, quick, decisive movement bring it on to the key below. The finger should not be thrown on the key, nor should the tone be the result of a push or a blow thereon; on the contrary, the movement should be so direct, so rapid, *so devoid of all outward appearance of effort,* as to give the impression that the finger has simply been allowed to fall of its own weight upon the key. Deppe always said, "Do not strike; let the fingers fall;" and he used this expression in order that his pupils might have their attention effectually directed to the importance of the *apparent* unpremeditation which underlies artistic tone-production. Later we shall return to this subject.

After the fifth finger has gone through several careful repetitions of the above exercise—each time returning to its exact original position—execute the same movement with the other fingers, each in its turn, meanwhile maintaining the most complete tranquillity in the hand itself and in the unemployed fingers. Each separate finger, quite unaffected by the task which its neighbor has to perform, must carry out with perfect independence the commands transmitted to it from the brain. In this manner one may, by watchful observation, obtain an exact idea of the extent to which his fingers actually work under the *conscious* direction of the will. At first the effort to maintain

* Deppe was accustomed, just here, to point first at the forehead, and then at the finger tips.

the hand in the strict Deppean position will occasion a certain amount of trembling in hand, arm, and finger; but, after a short time of practice has brought the fingers under better domination, this feeling of tension will disappear. Still further practice will so "educate" the hand—to use Deppe's word—that the fingers will learn to yield instant obedience to the will, and a tranquil pose of the hand and of the unemployed fingers will become habitual with the player.

At this point one is ready to proceed to the binding together of two consecutive tones, beginning with the fifth finger as before, and listening with keen attention to make sure that each tone, as it dies away, is really carried over to the next one, in pure legato style. The *liaison* should be so perfect that, in expressive German parlance, "no air is perceptible between the tones," and to this end it is essential that the ear be trained to possess a fine critical faculty.

The next step is to use two fingers simultaneously—under precisely the same conditions as at first—in producing the thirds B—D; B—D; A—C; A—C; G—B; G—B, etc., thus preparing the hand for binding together, as smoothly as if they were single tones, the thirds B—D, A—C; A—C, G—B, etc. The left hand goes through the same exercises, three octaves lower on the keyboard, except that the fifth finger, instead of the thumb, rests on the key G. It will be found that the effect of the work performed is, in a measure, communicated from one hand to the other, with beneficial result; and, since the hands go through the same exercises, under identical conditions, it follows that they are finally brought under absolutely equal control. These exercises—the only ones which Deppe prescribed—form the daily bread of a Deppean pupil, and even a very advanced player will prove that they constitute, when practiced with deliberation and accuracy, an unrivaled means of discipline for hands and fingers.*

A tone produced according to these rules will, of necessity, be weak in the beginning; indeed, to avoid *forcing* the tone,

* Allow me to emphasize the fact that, from first to last, the hand and arm find no point of support on the keyboard. Therein these exercises differ radically, therefore, from various similar ones in which certain keys are held down by one or more fingers during the performance of the exercise.—[E. S.S.]

it should, at first, be barely audible. Naturally it is not possible to produce a tone having much volume when the mind and will are entirely absorbed in the effort to make each movement of the fingers in exactly the right manner, and at the same time to govern the operation of the muscles from shoulder to finger-tips. But, after the precise position of the hand has been acquired, and the working of the muscular mechanism has been mastered both physically and mentally, then the tone will ever grow in beauty and in sonority, and will be so spontaneous, so expressive, so instinct with life, that the player's wondering joy and satisfaction will likewise increase as the days go by.

The concentration of musical sensitiveness in the finger-tips is a faculty which only thoughtful practice can develop. This sensation may be compared, in some degree, to that experienced by a performer on a stringed instrument; that is to say, a similarly close and intimate connection should exist between the fingers of a pianist and the keys of his piano. As a helpful exercise in this direction, Deppe required his pupils frequently to hold a rubber ball in the hand, lightly pressing it meanwhile with the finger-tips, thus arousing and strengthening a delicate touch perception, and developing "consciousness" (*Bewusstsein*) in the extremities of the fingers.

This exercise served at the same time another purpose, for the muscles of the palm, being called into play to hold the ball firmly in the hollow of the hand, gained thereby an added power.

And so, little by little, this sensibility will reach higher development, and "the mutual discipline of hands and brain," as Deppe termed it, will gradually receive more thorough understanding; then the bud will unfold into the beautiful and consummate flower, and one will realize the truth and force of the axiom, "first a *little tone* (Toenchen) and then a *tone.*"* For "it should never be forgotten that apparently insignificant trifles may have great results, seeing that the materials for the most marvelous building must first be accumulated grain by grain." (Schiller.)

* Klose: Die Deppe'sche Lehre.

Now, the scales will no longer be *hammered* out of the piano; on the contrary, it will seem to the hearer as if the performer *drew* the tones from the instrument at the tips of his fingers. And, just as after a rain, one may notice a railing gemmed with a row of sun-illumined raindrops, so now the tones of a scale will pearl forth, each tone just as pure, as round, and as crystal-clear as its neighbor.

CHAPTER III.

The Binding of Tones—The Playing of Scales—The Leading of the Hand.

> "Forms ascend in order from the lowest to the highest. The lowest form is the angular, or the terrestial and corporeal. The second, and next higher form is the circular, which is also called the perpetual-angular, because the circumference of a circle is a perpetual angle. The form above this is the spiral, parent and measure of circular forms. The form above this is the vortical, or the perpetual-spiral; the next the perpetual-vortical, or the celestial; last, the perpetual-celestial, or the spiritual."
> —*Swedenborg.*
> (Quoted in Emerson's "Representative Men.")

IN THE execution of runs, and in the binding together of the various tones, chords, etc., which go to make up a piece of music, it is, of course, necessary that the hand move freely from one part of the keyboard to another. Now, in nature, all beautiful movements are more or less curved in their form; and, furthermore, Spencer asserts that "motion in curved lines is economical motion." These two principles—beauty of form and conservation of energy—Deppe applied to the science of piano-playing, and he termed the resultant motion of hand and arm the *"simple, rounded movement,"* in contradistinction to the complicated, doubled, and angular movements of the average pianist; it corresponds to the "perpetual spiral" of Swedenborg. "Since the hand must never be inert or passive, but always *consciously* alive," this movement is a continuous one, beginning with the first note of a piece, and ending only when the last tone has been sounded; therefore it is unsurpassed as a means whereby a composition may be rendered in most compact and perfect form; for, since all meaningless and superfluous motions are avoided, the movement adapts itself with the utmost nicety to the varying demands of the music. Even when a rest occurs, the movement is not interrupted, for the

hand, when lifted from the keyboard, is carried to the keys next to be played in a curve, the magnitude of which is accurately proportioned to the duration of the rest.* So unbroken is the rhythm of the composition, through the use of this simple means, that, as Deppe said, "the very rests become music." And so this curved and continuous movement, always reflective in its character, forms, as it were, a connecting thread, running through and uniting the ideas of the entire piece.

Herder, in his treatise, *"Vom Schoenen und Angenehmen der Umrisse, Farben, and Toene,"* page 62, has somewhat to say regarding this circular co-ordination of the melodic chain:

"A cycle unites all tones and successions of tones by an indissoluble bond, in such a way that, with one tone, we have all the others, and we are given not only one melody, but the whole series of melodies which a certain definite scale can produce. And just as a beautiful form is never born from the straight line and the square alone (although these constitute the basis of accuracy in art as well as in geometry), so harmony—which is to tone what geometry is to forms—can never give rise to the ever-changing melody of passion unless each sentiment has its curve, its climax, its aim, and its measure. The multitude of lines lying between the straight line and the circle are all lines of beauty, and, in music, these lines are melodic curves, each having its own path, distinct from that of any other, but all united by one eternal law, *the law of the tone-circle.*"

Herder, it will be seen, regards the circular movement as being the generator not only of single tones, but of any succession of tones. Now, let us try to make clear how Deppe put this principle to practical use. How, for instance, shall one play the scale of C Major?

In the first place, all the tones, as has been said, will be produced as the result of a circle-forming movement, the first arc of the circle being in evidence as the hand describes the ascending scale. The elbow being held as close to the side as is consistent with a free and relaxed condition of the arm, the hand

*On this point see "Die Deppe'sche Lehre," by Klose; page 17.

is then carried on to the keyboard, with wrist well raised. With the second note of the scale, however, the wrist must be lowered a little, and with the third note, it should sink sufficiently to reinstate the hand in the regulation position. This movement of gradual return to the prescribed position marks the beginning of the curvilinear movement, which finds further expression as the hand is moved, slowly and with reflection, over the following keys. Each finger is conducted to a point *exactly over the key which it is to depress,* and thus, as no finger need ever forestall the progressive movement of hand and arm by an independent stretching out toward its key, it follows that the harmony of the *ensemble* is never disturbed. And so, while the fingers take the first three keys, the hand is carried, by a lateral and progressive movement of the wrist, so far to the right that the passing under of the thumb, as it sinks on F, is barely perceptible to the eye; as for the second, third, fourth, and fifth fingers, they have but to take the keys over which they naturally find themselves. The third finger, it will be remembered, serves, by virtue of its position, as a regulator for the straight line which one must always imagine as running through hand and forearm. One of Deppe's sayings concerning the legato scale was, "The binding of tones should be in *the hand itself*"—that is, there must be a *conscious* realization of the fact that real tone-producing power resides in the alternate movements of expansion and contraction of the hand.

If the position of the hand in runs and the scales is correct, it will appear to be carried in a slightly oblique fashion over the keyboard, a circumstance which recalls a statement of Amy Fay's, in her book, "Music Study in Germany" (page 291): "Deppe's way of playing avoids throwing the hand out of position . . . and the smoothness and rapidity of the scale must be much greater. The direction of the hand in running passages is always a little oblique. . . . When Deppe was explaining this to me, I suddenly remembered that when he (Liszt) was playing scales or passage, his fingers seemed to lie across the keys in a slanting sort of way, and to execute these rapid passages almost without any perceptible motion."

In playing the descending scale, the hand describes the second half of the ellipse. The wrist, governed by the shoulder and upper arm, retains the hand in the correct, slightly oblique attitude, and above all allows no alteration of this pose during the passing over of the third and fourth fingers. In the left hand the direction of the slant is, of course, reversed. The most palpable advantage of this hand position is the one alluded to by Miss Fay: the displacement of the hand incident to the passage of the thumb is reduced to a minimum, and, owing to this suppression of disturbing movements, the hand appears to descend the keyboard in an unbroken line. As the hand moves toward either extremity of the keyboard, the upper part of the body must bend slightly in that direction; in this way the mutual relation of hand, arm, and upper arm remains unaltered, and the hand, as it is moved over the keys, can retain the strict Deppean pose in all its characteristic tranquillity. The accompanying engraving represents the position the hand assumes at the critical movement in a descending scale, and shows how there is no necessity for any movement of anticipation on the part of fingers, hand, wrist, or forearm. The thumb is just in the act of sinking on F, and at the same instant the hand—through the agency of upper arm and shoulder, and *without any independent action of the fingers*—is carried *as a whole* to a point where the third finger drops easily on E. Thus, as has been said, the

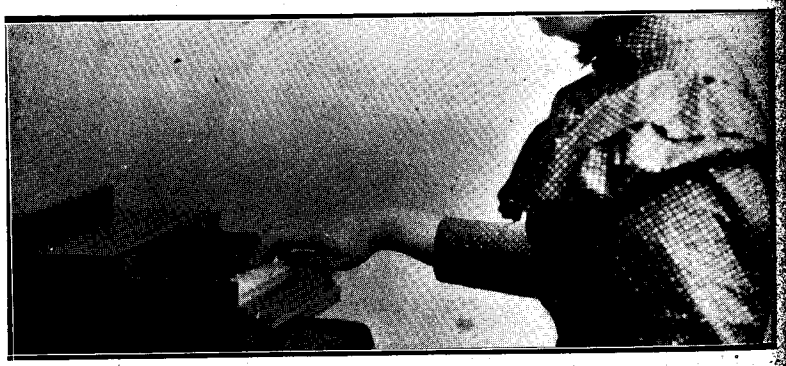
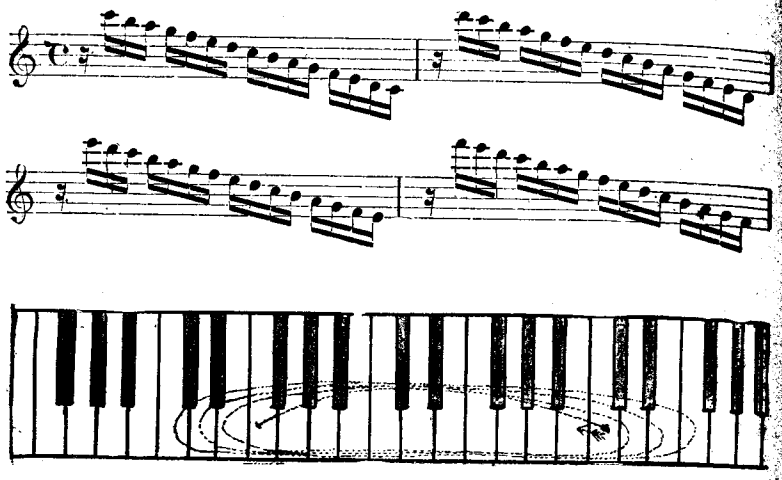


PLATE IV.

disturbing movements are reduced to the smallest possible dimensions, and therefore the player arrives at a legato scale in the most natural manner possible.

While the players's mental perception of the curved character of the movement must be very clear and well-defined, yet the consciousness thereof should exist only in himself; "good deeds should be done in silence," Deppe was wont to say. The auditor will observe only the easy and graceful raising and lowering of the hand; and the curved movement will reveal itself only in the instant when the hand is poised on the keyboard or lifted from it. In the one case, the elevated wrist, with which the hand approaches the keyboard, assumes the normal position, with a supple downward and outward motion, at the instant the fingers take the first key; in the other a gradual raising of the wrist is the beginning of the movement which removes the hand from the keyboard. The elevation of the wrist should be somewhat marked during the execution of runs, but, generally speaking, it should keep the prescribed position, as shown in Plate II, where it is seen to be just a trifle higher than the knuckles. As for the back of the hand, it must remain in a state of *controlled tranquillity*—a very different thing from inert passivity—the while the fingers, intellectualized (*durchdacht*) to the very tips, take the keys over which they are conducted by hand and arm.

This "simple, curved movement" of Deppe's teaching lends itself readily to the performance of any musical form. As an instance of its perfect adaptation to the task of binding a succession of runs, take the following example from the first Etude in Czerny's *School of Velocity*. Its performance will give rise to a (laterally) circular movement of the hand, the path it thus describes being represented by the continuous line drawn on the keyboard in the accompanying engraving. This line shows the path followed by the right hand during the first four measures of the Etude, and one should carefully follow the course of this line, in imagination, from beginning to end, bearing in mind, meanwhile, the corresponding music. It will then be readily perceived that the first half of each rounded



movement there depicted is the result of the performance of the corresponding measure, and that the second half is created by the movement which the hand makes when binding the end of one measure to the beginning of the following one. The mental perception of the *uninterrupted* character of the movement must be keen and vivid; then it will not be difficult to see how beautifully the movement which places the hand on the keyboard is rounded out and completed by the one which lifts it therefrom. (And it may be said, also, that there could be no better illustration than this Etude of the commingling of Deppe's two foundation principles—grace of form and conservation of energy.) By virtue of this continuous movement all succeeding measures may be rendered in exact conformity with the manner of the first one, each in turn being attacked with an elevated but pliant wrist which, at the third note, assumes the level customary in running passages. (See paragraph on scale playing.) Since the hand, as has been said, is *carried* over the desired keys, and since nothing is demanded of the fingers, save that they take, in the best possible manner, the keys over which they are thus conducted, it follows that the tones will be produced with little or no outward sign of effort. When hand or finger tries to anticipate this progressive carrying movement

of the arm, the inevitable result will be an inharmonious and superfluous movement; therefore it is well to remember Deppe's rule, that the center of gravity of the *palm* should always be directly over the keys that are to be played.

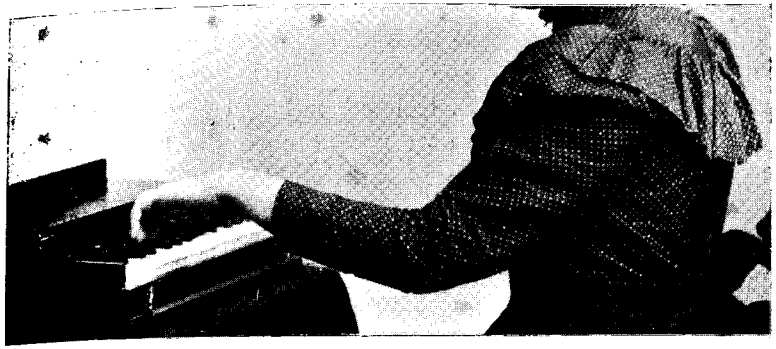


PLATE V.

The downward movement of hand and arm upon the keys was termed by Deppe the "controlled free fall;" the movements which prepare for this important one are clearly shown in the accompanying engravings. In Plate V the hand has been

PLATE VI.

photographed in the typical Deppean pose it assumes when first it leaves the keys, while in Plate VI this movement is continued and the hand, supported in utmost freedom by the arm, hovers over the next chord or passage to be played. Deppe used the term "controlled free-fall" as applicable in equal de-

gree to the movement of a finger in the production of a single tone, and to the descent of the hand as a whole upon the keys. In either case it was, of course, a forcible, if paradoxical, expression, designed to impress upon his pupils' minds the *spontaneity* which should characterize both tone-producing and tone-uniting movements. The descending movement should be so direct and unwavering, so devoid of all hesitancy or incoherence, that it will look as if hand and arm had simply been allowed to fall of their own weight upon the key. In like manner each curvilinear movement should create the impression that it is involuntary—that it is a *natural outgrowth of the music, and not something forced or extraneous.*

While there must be no constraint in the attitude of arm or body during the performance of the Etude we have just been discussing, yet nevertheless it will not do to lose sight of the repeated cautions regarding the position of the elbow. The elbow is particularized because its superior mobility makes it readily inclined to go out of range; but, unless it is kept as near the body as may be, its conspicuous activity will effect a radical change in the correct hand and arm positions, and its quite superfluous movements will destroy that sense of repose and harmony which should form an integral part of all performance. To sum all up, the elbow should be, as it were, the *center of gravity of the arm*, or, as Deppe expressed it, "the elbow should be like lead"—that is, it should always be held as if a weight were adherent to its under side. As for the unnecessary movements referred to, they may be totally avoided simply by the use of a low piano chair, and, as this also insures the co-operation of the essential muscles in back and shoulder, the student is able to give all his attention to preventing hand or forearm from leaving the proper pose. Given these conditions, perfection in movement and in tone-production is a matter of time and practice only. Most children, of normal build, have by nature a "light hand" at the piano (though—alas!—it is often rendered quite the reverse by erroneous teaching), and it is, therefore, rarely needful to explain to them anything concerning the supporting and carrying

powers of upper arm and shoulder muscles. All the attention of the teacher may, in such cases, be concentrated on securing from the little pupil graceful and simple movements, and a musical tone.

The beauty of the Deppe system lies in this: that *any* piece may be played—like the few measures borrowed from Czerny—with a continuous, curvilinear movement. But the curves described by hand and arm in their evolutions over the keyboard *must never exceed the limits of strict necessity.* When ostentatious or exaggerated in character, then, in place of seeming to be the "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," their disproportion will excite only laughter—so true is it that "from the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step." Naturally, it is easier to determine and to follow the proper movement line in a scale than in a piece of music, for in the latter many curves melt and blend into one another, and groups of tones must often be taken with a single inpulse of the mind, and a single curved movement of hand and arm. But all these and similar difficulties will explain themselves if only the player is careful to begin his experiments with *very simple pieces,* and thereby learn to conform his movements with exactitude to the style and content of a composition. One who watches such a player attentively, and follows each motion with his eye, will sometimes fancy himself to be on the point of grasping the underlying principle which originates and governs the graceful and uninterrupted movement. But ever the law eludes him, for, as Souriau says in his book on *"l'Esthetique du Mouvement,"* "it often happens that what one takes to be a single curve is, in reality, a series of different curves."

When Deppe uttered the axiom, "a flat pose of the hand *sounds* flat"—*i. e.,* lifeless or wooden—he meant thereby to emphasize the importance of making *every* movement a curved one, for it is only by an awkward and angular movement that one can lay the hand "flat" upon the keys, and the inevitable consequence thereof is a hard, unmusical tone. But the placing of the hand, with wrist well raised, upon the keys, is the beginning of a curvilinear movement; this is continued in the

pliant, downward-and-outward motion with which the wrist returns the hand to the normal position; and it finds further expression as the wrist rises again, with an equally flexible, yet controlled, movement, and thus prepares the hand for a new descending curve. In this manner the hand describes, at each successive displacement, a curve which joins itself to the one next following; *thus the movement becomes an uninterrupted one, because the hand is meanwhile carried over the keys by the same continuous movement that enchains the separate curves.*

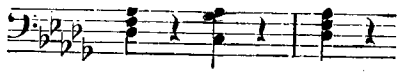
When this combination movement of wrist, hand, and arm has been made one's own, then will come of itself a clear perception of the fact that this "simple movement" lends itself with equal readiness to the performance of runs, thirds, sixths, arpeggios, chords, octaves, trills, and staccato passages—though naturally, in the execution of such varying forms, many different muscles will be brought into play and will exert a degree of force proportionate to the demands of the passage to be played. The player should always endeavor to create for himself a *mental picture* of a composition, in which these various arpeggios and runs, chords and octaves figure as entwining ropes of pearls; he should follow in imagination the curving lines formed by the execution of such passages, and have a vivid consciousness of the fact that by his two hands these invisible threads are to be ceaselessly interwoven.

Progressions of thirds and sixths are played with the hand and wrist in the position so often described, special pains being taken to insure *infinite lightness in hand and wrist*—a condition absolutely essential to smooth and rapid progression of the fingers. Given this condition, if the fingers are also thoroughly alive to their task, and are *carried* over the keys to be played, then the tones will be bound with such perfection that, to use Deppe's phrase, "there will not be room between them for the tiniest grain of sand."

The same conditions obtain for the execution of arpeggios and broken chords. As usual, the hand returns to regulation position during the playing of the first three notes, thus beginning that curved movement, the characteristic form of which is never absent (during *preparatory practice,* be it said) from the mental consciousness of the player. During an ascending arpeggio or broken chord—embodying the first half of the circular movement—the hand is managed precisely as in a scale, the only difference being that greater intervals now separate the tones. And so, by the elastic outward movement of the wrist, governed as before by upper arm and shoulder, the hand is conducted over the keys in a slightly oblique position, which reduces the passage of the thumb to a point almost of imperceptibility. At the same time, by means of the mentally-controlled expansion and contraction of hand and fingers, the individual tones, drawn from the instrument by the sensitive finger tips, will sound conscious and alive (*"bewusst und beseelt"*). In the descending arpeggio (second half of the circular movement) the wrist must now maintain a restraining influence on the hand, for, according to Deppe, "if the hand, under such circumstances turns to the left at the wrist in order to facilitate the passage of the third and fourth fingers, then their respective tones will be produced by means of a detached stroke or blow of the finger—a heterogeneous, mechanical, and utterly superfluous action, which will materially impede the harmonious progression of the melodic thought."* He held the opinion that any anticipatory movement on the part of hand, forearm, or finger—any *isolated* activity of these members—was certain to cause a variation in the normal hand position, and to derange, more or less, by consequence, the entire playing apparatus. Under such circumstances the fingers and the upper arm are no longer "en rapport," for the communication between them has been interrupted by some independent, arbitrary movement, to right or left, of a finger, the hand, or the forearm. This erroneous movement, however, should by no means be confounded with that indispensable and elastic lateral movement of the wrist which is directed and controlled by upper arm and shoulder. In the latter case, the *hand will always be found in the correct position*—that is, with a straight

*Klose: Die Deppe'sche Lehre, page 13.

line running through hand and forearm—simply because correct hand position and perfect wrist movement are both dependent upon the same cause—namely, the operation of upper arm muscles, ably supported by those of back and shoulder.



The basal principles in chord-playing are the same as already specified. When the chords are separated by wide intervals, or are detached (as in the above example), then the magnitude of the arc described by hand and arm must be proportionate to the duration of the rests, and to the force demanded in the execution of the chords; such a chord will be in evidence to the player's consciousness in the lower half of the circular movement which produces it. In a legato chord passage, however, the chord lies, as it were, in the middle of the circle, which is, of necessity, as small in dimensions as it is rapid and unobtrusive of accomplishment, and which must be under such strict mental control that the hand obtains only the exact time requisite to describe the curve through which it grasps the next chord. Thanks to the uniting powers of these scarce-perceptible curves, the legato of such a passage becomes irreproachable. Deppe explained the practical application of the curved movement to the playing of chords as follows: The hand, with wrist well raised and entirely under the domination of the will, is laid upon the keyboard, and, the very instant the sensitive finger tips have depressed the desired keys, the wrist is made to yield with an elastic downward motion which gradually restores the hand to the normal position. Whether this wrist movement shall be slow or rapid *depends entirely on the duration of the chord,* for "there must not be an instant's pause in the movement; on the contrary, its continuity must be absolute," while, at the same time, it is natural, simple, and graceful in appearance. Therefore, the wrist inflection must continue without the slightest jerk or interruption until it is merged in

the movement which lifts the hand from the keys, preparatory to the taking of the next chord in the same manner as before. It cannot be repeated too often, however, that this movement, though carried out with all necessary pliancy and grace, must ever have behind it the co-operation and controlling power of the superior muscles of arm and shoulder. Tones produced in this manner will actually seem to be hovering in the air, and will possess a beauty so ideal that all thought of the materiality of the instrument from which they emanate will entirely disappear.

The movement form in staccato playing is exactly the same. The firm and sensitive finger tips must, of course, leave the keys with the utmost rapidity, once the tones have been taken, and the "simple curved movement" is naturally of the smallest possible dimensions; in fact, it may be reduced to such a degree in rapid playing that, through the inwardly controlled rhythmical operation of arm and shoulder muscles, the motion of the hand on the key will come finally to resemble a regulated trembling, or vibration, the result of each vibration being the production of a tone. This description applies equally to the playing of octaves, for in their rapid execution exactly the same diminution of the movement takes place. The hand must be "light as a feather," and freely supported by arm and shoulder, the fingers being tense and curved, and the wrist firm, yet elastic; then a vibratory motion, which originates in the back and shoulder, is transmitted to the hand, each vibration producing an octave with a precision and regularity proportionate to the concentration of mind exerted by the performer.

Trills are executed according to the same general principles—that is, the shaking movement of the hand is governed by upper arm and shoulder; the finger tips do not leave the surface of the keys. The more intensity one wishes to infuse into the tones, the greater must be the degree of tension in those muscles which carry the hand over the desired keys, and which cooperate with it in tone production.

That wonderful *unity of design* which serves to distinguish the Deppe Method from all others renders it unnecessary to go

into further detail with regard to other technical figures. Let it suffice to say that they all rest on the same simple foundation principles as laid down in Chapter I: *The "feather-light" hand, freely supported and carried by the arm; correct and logical hand-and-arm positions; the production of tone through a seeming "free fall" of arm, hand, or finger; the curvilinear movement in tone-production and tone-uniting; and the mentally-controlled contraction of the hand, always demanding an instant, elastic, lateral movement of the wrist.* One who makes these principles his own—not less through reflection than through practice—will find that he gradually arrives at spontaneous comprehension of every technical problem.

A performance after this manner will always appear to cost little effort, simply because, as has been said, a minimum of labor is made to yield a maximum of result. Every movement of the player has its own special *raison d'etre,* and is made with some definite end in view, and the whole general effect is one of such simplicity that an observer is apt to cherish the delusion that he, too, could play in just that manner. But this apparent simplicity is, in reality, an attribute of art in its highest manifestations, for, as Frederick Wieck said: "Pure, genuine beauty is always synonymous with simplicity." Schiller, also, wrote as follows: "True beauty is founded on the strictest precision, on the most exact distinctions, and on the highest intrinsic necessity, but these attributes should rather allow themselves to be sought for than thrust themselves forcibly forward. Perfect conformity to law there must be, but it should seem to be pure nature. A work which fulfills these conditions will fully satisfy the understanding as soon as study has been made of it, but precisely because it is *truly* beautiful, its conformity to law is only suggested, never obtruded; and, therefore, it does not appeal to the understanding alone; on the contrary, it addresses itself as a harmonious entity to the entire man, to all his faculties together; it is nature speaking to nature."*

* Ueber die notwendigen Grenzen beim Gebrauch schoener Formen.

CHAPTER IV.

Concerning Practice.

"Taste the most refined,
Feeling the most profound,
Hearing the most delicate.

With the whole soul,
With the whole heart,
With the whole understanding."

—*Friedrich Wieck.*

THE TONE—so small in the beginning—will be found to increase in volume daily, in proportion as the pupil acquires equal domination over the different joints and muscles, and learns to employ his fingers in conscious and reflective fashion. Meanwhile there will go on, coincidently, a gradual enlightenment of the understanding, and a deepening of that power of perception, of intelligent insight which is so essential to the artistic interpretation of a composition. Deppe was wont to liken this interdependent development of tone power and of musical understanding to the process of growth in a seed planted in the soil. Hidden away in the seed is the entire plant—in embryo—which later is to unfold itself, and yet, in the first weeks after planting, it is often hard to realize that the seed is alive at all. But although it gives no sign, the plant is none the less developing all the while. One day it suddenly appears above ground, spreads out its leaves, waxes larger day by day, and finally, when arrived at full strength, displays the blossoms, which are sign and token of its maturity.

The building of a house served Deppe for another illustration. First a firm foundation must be laid to form a support for all that shall follow. Then come walls, floors, staircases, etc., and, after months of strenuous toil—always preceded by logical reflection—the whole structure is crowned by the roof,

and from the windows the owner may freely gaze on every side. And just so it is with the Deppean scholar. Such an one, striving ever to reach his ideal, will derive a very real pleasure, even in the beginning, from his attempts to produce a perfect tone, for this is, as it were, both foundation and corner-stone of the stately structure he hopes to build according to the master's principles. By means of a technic which adjusts itself with precision to the varying demands of a composition, he is taught to avoid all movements possessed of no definite aim, and to adapt each of his movements to the content of what he wishes to play. And by reason of the manner of tone-production, with its accompanying activity of the intellectual faculties, there arises that sense of happiness, of exaltation, which is always attendant on the consciousness of having done genuine artistic work.

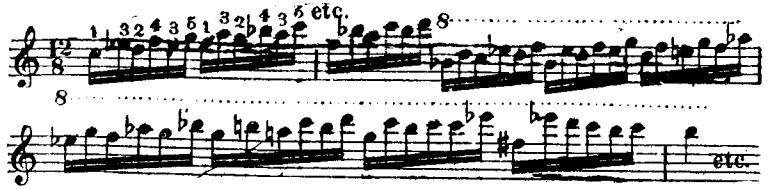
It goes without saying, however, that much industry, patience and energy are necessary if one will attain to results worthy of the beautiful art of music. Nor is it less essential that the student endeavor to cultivate in himself the utmost purity of taste, and a fine musical ear, and that he strive, by every possible means, to fan the flame of artistic enthusiasm in his soul. Meanwhile the mutual "discipline of brain and hands" must go steadily on, till the whole playing apparatus, from shoulder to finger tips, is used harmoniously and with reflection.

Deppe made his pupils practice *very slowly,* and frequently *with each hand separately;* thus there was ample opportunity for the heedful attention which alone can insure that one tone shall not predominate over another, but that all shall be equally pure and clear. When the pupil, after some weeks of this slow, single-handed practice, had assimilated the composition to such a degree that each tone and movement had special reference to the musical content thereof, then he was allowed to use both hands simultaneously, *but still in the same slow tempo.* Once the piece was fairly well learned, it was laid aside "to ripen," and another took its place and was treated in precisely the same manner. Through this progressive ac-

tivity, physical and mental, the growth of musical sense and perception was wonderfully stimulated, and musical ideas rendered clear and coherent. After four to six weeks of retirement, the pieces laid one side were brought again to the light of day, and polished into readiness for performance.

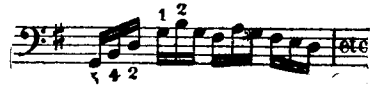
In order to find difficult or typical passages for parallel practice, Deppe examined large numbers of etudes and pieces and selected therefrom such passages as seemed to him specially useful; these he made his pupils study with particular care and attention. Here are a few samples:

Czerny's School of Velocity. I.



School of Velocity, No. 23. II.

Cramer's Etudes, Book I, No. 9. III.

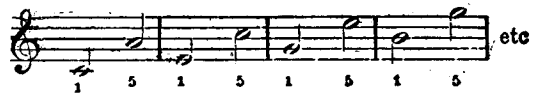


In Ex. I the hand must never be found out of the regulation position; it must be *carried over the keyboard* by an uninterrupted movement of the arm in such a way that the back of the hand remains tranquil, and the fingers have but to take the keys lying directly under them. When it is necessary to touch a black key, then the hand, by a movement of the shoulder and upper arm, is conducted over that key in such a way that the desired tone is produced without the slightest anticipatory movement of the finger. This passage also exemplifies Deppe's rule concerning the *binding of tones* (see Chapter III); the player must be vividly conscious that the *hand itself,* by alternate movements of contraction and expansion, *co-operates with the fingers* in producing each group of six tones.

The second example, also taken from Czerny's *"School of Velocity,"* puts in practice another of Deppe's principles: "one should draw the hand together till it resembles a walnut shell." (A performance of this passage will render Deppe's meaning quite clear; the shell-like formation of the hand will be observed when playing the second half of the measure.) In other words, there must be *concentration of tone-producing power in the palm of the hand.* Even when tones or passages are more or less widely separated—as, for instance, in the beginning of this exercise—there is no need for the hand to leave the regulation position and attempt to bridge the interval through independent action of the fingers. This employment of "extraneous means" (as Deppe termed it) always cuts short the synergetical working of the muscles, and, consequently, obscures the harmonious connection of the passage, mars the legato, and destroys that *appearance of unpremeditation* so essential to artistic playing; nor can it ever be otherwise if a tone is produced by a detached finger-stroke.

A further illustration of this principle is furnished by an example from one of Cramer's *Etudes.* The problem in this case is to execute the first five tones without a break, and with no anticipatory movement of hand or finger. When the thumb has reached G, then, instead of turning the hand sharply to the right and *throwing* the finger on to the next key, the hand, pivoting easily on the thumb, is carried *in unaltered pose* to a point which enables the second finger to sink with perfect naturalness onto its key. By this management of the hand it is possible to obtain the most charming legato effects.

The following exercise in sixths is to be performed very slowly; it was prescribed by Deppe as being helpful in the acquisition of concentrated power in the muscles of the palm. Each time that the fifth finger takes a new key, the fingers and the hand, dominated by the will, "draw together like a walnut shell;" then, as soon as the thumb takes its key, there follows an equally controlled and deliberate opening out of the hand, which, aided by a slight movement to the right of the wrist and arm, enables the fifth finger to complete the measure without causing any material deviation from the hand position shown in Plate III. If the "true inwardness" of this simple exercise is fully comprehended, then its performance will be found to involve considerable muscular tension, and to demand the closest attention on the part of the player; it is therefore a powerful agent in promoting the true "discipline of brain and fingers." Nor is it less valuable as a means of concentrating attention and will in the tips of the fingers, for while the fingers, directed by the will, draw together and then resume the strict Deppean pose, each finger must, at the same time, sustain a voluntary and conscious relation to its neighbor. Not one of the five must go out of line in order to bring the hand more quickly into the next position; on the contrary, each finger, *acting under equal mental control,* must ally its movements with those of the others.



"The power and efficacy of the muscle movements involved in this management of the hand result precisely from the alternate expansion and contraction of the hand; and an indirect result of the observation of this principle is that there arises a new idea of the office of the different fingers. The fourth and fifth fingers are used more frequently, and the second and third proportionately less so, than before. In consequence the fingers obtain what may be termed *equal rights;* each takes only its natural place on the keyboard, and is given no task not logically belonging to it. (Klose, page 14.)

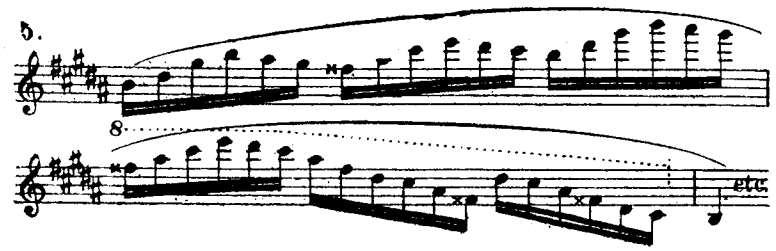
In the invariable and unvarying return of the hand to the Deppean position there is involved an artistic principle of the highest order; it appears as if the hand were *"caressing"** the keys—so sweet, so tender, yet so full of nervous energy, are the tones produced when curvilinear movements are employed.

* "Man solle die Tasten liebkosen." (Deppe.)

A rule of great importance in this connection concerns the management of the wrist: it "should revolve (*sich drehen*) as if on a pivot." This movement, apparently so natural and spontaneous, is in reality of the utmost importance,. seeing that it insures a continually curved carriage of the hand. Through the same influence the fingers take the keys in easy, elastic curves, melting and blending into one another; and thus is imparted the lovely legato quality which lends such charm to the playing of a finished Deppean scholar.

In much piano playing of the average sort the main use of the wrist would seem to be to throw the hand abruptly upward and downward—a movement which Deppe uncompromisingly rejected. According to his method the wrist movement is ever a (laterally) rounded one—*"the hand describing an arc"**—which allows the wrist perfect freedom of action in any desired direction. Naturally those who are blessed with supple and pliant wrists will always succeed in obtaining a more beautiful tone from the piano than those less favored in this respect; the same remark holds good as regards the elbow and shoulder.

Take yet another instance of the use of the curvilinear movement, as exemplified in the performance of this passage from Weber's *Polacca in E Major*:



"Here one must seduously avoid accenting the *first* tone in each group—that were to suggest nothing but a row of petty window-arches! Rather must the entire passage be rendered with a beautiful and uninterrupted equality, a tranquillity of

*Klose: page 19.

surface, which shall convey the impression of a grand, unbroken rainbow. Such interpretation and execution is impossible to the player who, on the one hand, cannot mentally see the radiant curve of the music, and who, on the other hand, has not acquired, through practice and discipline, the co-operating curved movement of hand and arm."**

In cases where tones are separated by considerable intervals, there is still no need for disconnected movements of anticipation on the part of hand or forearm. Such tones—as, for example, in the following passage—may be bound in perfect legato style by the simple expedient of carrying the hand, in a grace-

ful semi-circle, over the interjacent keys. And the result will be the same even though the tones lie several octaves apart. When connected by free, sweeping curves they will blend one with another so beautifully that the legato will suffer not the slightest interruption. If the player possesses a sufficiently vivid *mental* conception of the invisible curves which ally the tones, then their performance becomes, as it were, intellectualized, and there is thus imparted to the tone vibrations so sustained a quality that the resultant legato is correspondingly perfect. In connection with this theory it is interesting to remember a remark quoted in Darwin's book, *"Emotions in Man and Animals;"* page 90. The great scientist was conversing with a Mr. Litchfield on the subject, "What is the essence of musical expression?" and the latter said, among other things, "the effect (on the listener) is thus seen to depend not merely on the actual sounds themselves, but also, in part, *on the nature of the action which produces the sounds.*"

A tone produced according to the principles laid down in this chapter is always characterized by a high degree of carry-

**Klose: page 14.

ing power. Full of intensity and nervous energy—yet never harsh nor "wooden"—it floats with ease into the remotest recesses of a concert hall.

Deppe required two hours' daily practice from his students, and allowed them to extend the time to three hours, but that was the limit. Practice prolonged beyond this period became, in his opinion, mechanical, and mechanical practice is of no profit whatever to the player. Progress in music—as in other arts—depends largely on the *mental* vigor which the student brings to bear on his daily task, and certainly excessive keyboard work is as prejudicial to mental freshness as it is injurious to physical health.

Another Deppean rule forbids that a piece shall be played even once in its exact tempo unless it has first been faithfully practiced with painstaking slowness. And, however great the proficiency of the player, the law holds good that each new piece or etude must, in the beginning, have slow, single-handed study; thus each detail of phrasing and execution can be subjected to strong and perpetual control, and the movement forms characteristic of each particular composition firmly impressed on the memory. No matter what may be the degree of advancement through previous study, once the Deppean road is entered, the novice therein is stringently cautioned against playing even temporarily in his former style (although later these previous labors are turned to good account). But such prohibitions are not long required, for, when once initiated, he is quickly so enchanted with the purity, the nobility, and the soul of the new music that there is no desire to return to the old.

The piano appears to him now a transfigured instrument, and the tones pearl forth with a new richness and expression—thanks to the harmonious and reflective character of the movements which produce them. And, as the finger tips are daily educated to greater sensitiveness and responsiveness, the tones become increasingly pervaded with soulful beauty. The blending of all these conditions will unfailingly result in marvelously clear, luminous, and expressive playing.

If a careful reader will turn to page 12 of Forkel's *"Life of Bach,"* and read what is there written concerning his method of teaching, it will readily be perceived that Deppe's theories do not lack distinguished support. "In commencing lessons with a pupil Bach's first care was always to teach his own special style of touch. In his manner of holding the hand the fingers were curved so that their tips formed a straight line; each finger found itself, at the precise moment it was needed, poised above its proper key—not hurriedly dragged there; furthermore, the keys were not *struck,* they were *pressed* down. Two features are allied with this management of the hand: (1) No finger falls or is thrown on its key; on the contrary, it is *carried* there with a certain definite feeling of *inward* strength, and of mastery of the movement. (2) Owing to this controlled power there obtains great *equality of key pressure.*

"All this taken together has this superlative advantage—*all wasting of strength through needless tension and constrained movements is totally avoided.*

"The motion of Bach's fingers in playing was so light and easy as to be scarcely noticeable. The rounded form of the hand was conserved even in the most difficult passages; the fingers never left the keys more than if executing a shake; and, if one of them had a task to perform, the others maintained that perfect tranquillity which Bach imposed on every part of his body—a tranquillity which is never seen in those *whose hand is not light enough.*"

CHAPTER V.

The Simple Movement—Playing from Memory.

"It should not be forgotten that, even in those movements which force of habit has made natural to us, there yet remains something to be done by the will. Though we may have acquired such grace that it is no longer needful to pay special attention to the details of our movements, yet it by no means follows that they are left to be carried out involuntarily and automatically. Acquired grace is not mechanical grace. Ever must the will hold the body so watchful and attentive that it instantly obeys the slightest command; ever must the will maintain harmony between those diverse forces which, if left without government, so quickly become discordant."—*Souriau: L'Esthetique du Mouvement; page* 195.

AT THIS point it is natural for one to inquire if it is essential that even an advanced player shall subject every movement to close scrutiny and reflection. Practically speaking, it is only in a limited sense that such watchfulness is required, and the reason thereof lies here: the initiatory lessons demonstrate the foundation principles of the method with such exactness and precision that the different members of playing apparatus quickly form the *habit* of harmonious co-operation, and their speedy and perfect control follows as a logical consequence. The fingers, also, soon learn to take the tones in conscious and reflective fashion, while the ear is trained to listen with a critical attention which is quick to detect any inequality in the volume or beauty of each tone. Let the learner once thoroughly assimilate this *"discipline of hands and brain,"* and it will become to him as second nature, and to play otherwise will seem well-nigh impossible. Nay, more, the characteristic movement form will so insinuate inself into the actions of his daily life that he will find himself, quite involuntarily, grasping or lifting articles with a "light hand"—supported freely by arm and shoulder—and with an elevated and pliant wrist. As a rather extreme instance of this tendency, read the following concerning Mozart: "Nearly always

he involuntarily held and moved his hands as if he were playing the piano. His hands had such a confirmed disposition for the keyboard that it was only by dint of pains and trouble he managed to cut his meat at table."* A passage from Dubois-Reymond's *Ueber die Uebung,"* page 25, may possibly serve as scientific explanation of the above tendency: "The more a complex movement is practiced, the more unconscious becomes that preparatory activity of the nervous system on which it depends, until, at last, the movement cannot be distinguished from an involuntary and natural reflex movement. Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of the celebrated naturalist, observes that an apprentice in the art of turning must, at first, *will* each motion of the hand, but, in time, the action becomes so identified with the effect that the will of the operator appears to reside in the moving edge of his chisel." From this we may gather how effectually repetition can transform a conscious and voluntary action into one which is, to all appearance, involuntary.

Now, in the beginning of one's study after Deppe's principles it is undoubtedly needful to precede each movement with careful reflection, to the end that all doubled and superfluous movements may be avoided; later this reflection is required only to the extent of insuring the exact adaptation of the movements to the musical content of what one wishes to play. And this co-ordination of movement and content becomes gradually easier to the player, in proportion as he obtains a clearer insight into the significance of the "simple rounded movement," and into the manner of its execution. And in this co-ordination we see the condition which is most essential to the true re-creation of a composition—the highest and purest task which any artist can set himself to perform.

Let us now glance at the subject of *playing from memory,* since its connection with the simple movement is of the closest kind. In the opinion of Dubois-Reymond "all bodily exercises—such as fencing, riding, etc.—are not only gymnastics of the muscles, but, in a very special sense, of the nerves also." And, as we have seen in Chapter I, the same writer holds the

*Otto Jahn; Life of Mozart, Vol. II., page 133.

view that "perfection in any physical exercise involves not only familiarity with the necessary movements, but, in an equal degree, the elimination of all that are aimless and superfluous." Now, piano playing is certainly the equal of most other physical exercises in its demands, not only on the muscles, but on the nervous system and brain of the player. Well then, since *the elimination of all purposeless movements* is one objective point in the Deppe way of playing, is it not evident that the Deppean student works under conditions which are peculiarly favorable to direct and efficient operation of every function of the brain? The memory, in particular, being neither embarrassed nor obscured by incoherent and superfluous movements, has perfect freedom for profitable exercise and for growth; therefore its development is quickened, and the time of labor materially shortened.

Many pianists wear their nerves to threads through endless and exhausting practice, and, in the uncertain hope of one day seeing the reward of their labors, resign themselves to a perpetual martyrdom—a martyrdom which claims as victims every one within hearing of the ofttimes mechanical and monotonous performance. To be sure, the more talented ones do finally arrive, after years of strenuous effort, at great finger dexterity in the rendering of various selections, but how devious has been the route to the attainment of this result! And, even under the most favorable conditions, how few there are who acquire a complete mental control of the music they profess to play, or who become capable of an interpretation which embodies the very soul and spirit of a composition!

But the Deppean scholar, on the contrary, sees the end from the beginning, and, without any *detours,* steers straight for his goal. Basing his work on Deppe's central idea, he employs in his playing only *purposeful* movements—movements which stand in intimate relationship to the technical and musical demands of the composition. All haphazard work being thus avoided, it is obvious that less practice will be required, for such a player, making use of the "simple movement" with intelligence and with soul, will turn to most profitable account

every moment of the time which he spends at the piano. And if it were only by reason of this diminishing of the hours of study—and the consequent removal of the danger of overstraining the nerves—the Deppe Method should surely draw the attention of all who are interested in music; and, as a matter of fact, it was just this very characteristic which won for it the unqualified approval of every physician to whom Deppe expounded his leading principles.

Those whose study has been along the old lines frequently make the mistake of demanding an unnatural exertion of strength from the relatively weak muscles of hand and fingers; and, but too often, they thereby bring upon themselves a train of evils—such as ganglion of the tendons and "players' cramp"—while, in some cases, the whole constitution becomes so undermined as to compel entire abandonment of piano study. Such misfortunes are quite impossible to the true Deppean student, for the use of a low piano chair *insures* the natural and co-operative working of the muscles of the upper part of the body, and the aim and result of this co-operation is to render the hand "as light as a feather." And, being thus sustained and reinforced by the action of the most powerful muscles at the player's command, the hand is effectually preserved from all the disastrous consequences which are inevitably entailed by any abnormal or disproportionate exertion of strength.

As we have already seen when on the subject of tone production, Deppe spoke of allowing the fingers to *fall* on the keys, with intellectualized finger tips—the "*conscious* production of tone;"* and again, to denote the simple movements, he used the phrase, "free and controlled fall of the arm." Now, it stands to reason that his favorite expression, "free fall," must be taken in a metaphorical, rather than literal, sense, for certainly a "controlled" fall cannot strictly be designated "free." The fact is, this term was used by Deppe in an ideal sense, and as an illustration whereby he sought to convey to the minds of his pupils a vivid conception of the spontaneity which should characterize both movement and tone production.

*Klose: Die Deppe'sche Lehre, page 5.

A tone which owes its origin to a stroke from an independent finger, acting in isolation, possesses an ostentatious quality which brings the will and intention of the player into full view; and tones so produced can never, according to Deppe, form the basis for an artistic interpretation. He considered "the production of tone through the *apparently* unpremeditated fall of arm or finger to be an essential condition of a pure and æsthetic execution."

It will readily be conceded that the Deppe Method, which this essay has endeavored to make clear, is founded upon an artistic ideal of the highest kind; nor does this ideal lack authorization, for the philosopher, Kant, has left on record that, in his opinion, "the test of perfection in a product of any of the fine arts is that it shall seem to be the result of nature, rather than of design."** Schopenhauer, also, speaks of the artist's "tranquil and non-voluntary state of mind;"† and again, in his essay on *Das Objekt der Kunst,* page 266, he lays down the principle that "it is only when man is entirely detached from his own will and aims that there is born that purely objective, intuitive vision, which constitutes the true germ and substance of a real work of art."

These citations may serve as confirmation of the leading Deppean principle, not only in its application to tone production, but also as regards its relation to the interpretation of a work of art; for, as we shall see in the concluding chapter, Deppe held that the objectivity which alone permits a work to be presented to the hearer in all its original clarity, becomes possible only by the artist's complete detachment from the subjective.

**Kritik der Aesthetischen Urteilskraft, page 175

†Zur Metaphysik des Schoenen und Aesthetik, page 442.

CHAPTER VI.

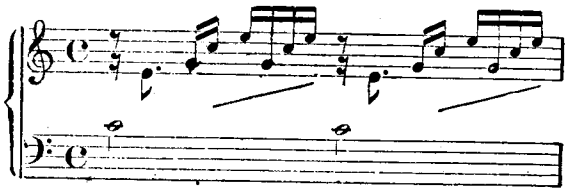
Some Practical Hints for the Player.

'Through the compact unity which enchains melody and harmony in such close intimacy, as well as through the distinctness which characterizes each tone in a succession—qualities which so effectually prevent all weakness and indecision—the piano is classic. On the one hand, by making all the parts of the ensemble work with reference to one another, it forbids any individual voice to become unduly prominent; on the other, it has about it something healthy, vigorous and strong, which forms a wholesome contrast to the melting languor and the nerve-exciting qualities of other instruments. From this point of view, therefore, the admission of piano-pieces in concerts finds psychological justification."—*Vischer: Aesthetik Musik, page* 1041.

BEFORE concluding this little work, we shall dwell briefly on Deppe's teachings concerning the use of the pedal; in this artistic subject, as in all other branches of his art, he shows himself both *savant* and master. As the proper employment of the pedal is a study in itself, it will not be possible to go into it in detail. There is, however, one general rule of prime importance which is often transgressed with disastrous effect to the performance: The foot, hovering lightly over the pedal, should be so under the control of the player that its impact thereon is inaudible, and the manipulation of the pedal should be so noiseless, so unostentatious, that no thought of its mechanism is obtruded on sight or hearing of the listener.

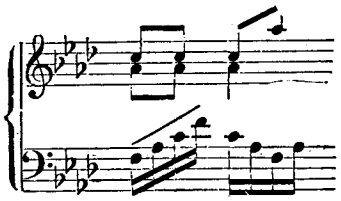
Deppe recognized three distinct functions of the pedal in piano playing, and named them accordingly—the *legato pedal,* the *pedal of mood,* and the *declamatory pedal.* To discuss these separately at any length would exceed the limits of this treatise, so one example of each must serve to illustrate Deppe's nomenclature; after studying these the student can, by experiment, prove for himself what artistic possibilities are involved in skillful pedaling. The short, straight strokes in the engravings are intended to indicate the precise moment when the pedal is to be depressed and released.

The opening measure of Bach's *Prelude in C,* from the *Well-tempered Clavichord,* serves as an example of a passage requiring the "legato pedal." The pedal is always lowered, lightly



but firmly, *after* the third tone (in this instance, G) has been sounded, and is released again immediately before the left hand takes the fundamental bass note, C. After the eleventh tone it is again depressed, and so on.

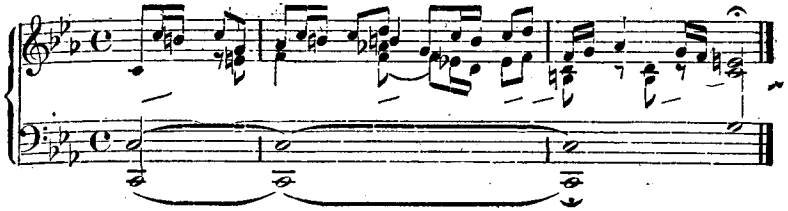
For the purpose of illustrating the "Pedal of mood," we have chosen the eighteenth measure of Bach's *Fugue in F Minor.* Here the pedal is lowered at the first beat of the measure, and is held until the third beat. In this Fugue the pedal should



be employed lightly and sparingly, after the manner indicated above. The effect on the hearer, said Deppe, will be to transport him in imagination to a cathedral, illumined by cheerful sunbeams streaming in through lofty windows.

A very good example of the use of the "declamatory pedal" is found in the conclusion of Bach's second Fugue—the one in C Minor. In teaching this Fugue Deppe required that it begin with precisely the degree of intensity characterizing the resonance of the final chord in the preceding Prelude. He claimed that this mode of transition from Prelude to Fugue constituted, as it were, a *mental thread* uniting the two. In

the accompanying illustration it will be noticed that the bass tone C—as organ-point and fundamental bass—is held until the final cadence, while the other two voices, often doubled, develop their thought in all completeness.



At the end of the second measure of the above example the pedal is lowered just as the sixth, E—C is played. When the pedal is released, the hand should also rise from the keys sufficiently to enable it to take the sixth, F—D with a new motion of the hand, the wrist being slightly raised. Immediately afterwards the pedal is again depressed, and, at the instant of its release, the hand is once more lifted, so that the first chord of the last measure is produced by a fresh impulse of hand and arm. It is especially necessary to raise the hand after sounding the last sixteenth of the concluding measure, for then the delivery of the final chord of the fugue will lose none of its due significance. The tone-volume of this last chord, the chord of the leading voices, should exactly equal that of the organ-point, C, which, held down for two and a half measures, is still heard in the second half of the final measure. "The pedal," said Deppe, "is the lungs of the piano," and the force of his simile will become apparent when the above passage is accurately played. Deppe always directed that one begin the theme of a fugue *piano,* augment the tone for the accompanying voice (or answer), and rise to full intensity only upon the entrance of the last voice. He exacted a broad and massive style of playing in the performance of a fugue, and deprecated exceedingly the introduction of *petty* crescendos and decrescendos, so trivial and commonplace in their effect. A fugue should increase gradually in tone-power till the cadence is reached where the leading of the voices becomes more complicated; at this cadence

the tone must diminish somewhat, and then swell anew, gaining its greatest intensity at the final cadence, for the climax of most fugues is found in their concluding measures. Should the fugue not be divided by one or more cadences, should it instead unroll itself like a mighty, unbroken fresco (as, for instance, the five-voiced fugue in C sharp Minor, which is interrupted by but a single cadence), then the gradations in tone-power must be determined by the content of the fugue—that is to say, the volume of tone must rise and fall in harmony with the more or less complex development of the fugue and with the expressive character of its content. No voice in a fugue should be given undue importance, rather should the player endeavor to mentally follow the melody-thread of each voice with thoughtful attention, and ever strive to make the co-ordination of voices as perfect as may be. Also, after a *ritardando* passage, the return to the original tempo should, as a rule, be made gradually. A performance on these lines, when aided by an artistic use of the pedal, becomes wonderfully graphic and *virante*.

As for the una corda pedal—commonly called soft pedal—Deppe compared it to a "buzzing," and allowed it to be used only when expressly indicated by the composer. The player should have in his own control the power of producing any desired *nuance* of tone, and then there will be no need to have recourse to an extraneous aid of such doubtful value.

The analysis of compositions by the old masters Deppe considered a most profitable exercise. For instance, he made his pupils take Bach's Fugues, and write out the different voices—soprano, alto, tenor, and bass—each on a separate staff, sometimes transposing them as well. He also trained them to discover and to write down the principal and secondary themes, the transitions, and the development of various Beethoven sonatas; and in other compositions—such, for example, as the Beethoven string quartettes—they were taught to seek out, and then to transcribe, the thread of the melody as played by the different instruments. By such exercises his scholars acquired a very clear insight into the structure of different compositions, and were, at the same time developed and educated along true musicianly lines.

CONCLUSION.

Concerning Interpretation.

"Although the virtuoso can but re-create a given subject, although he is apparently only the medium of the ideal presented to his soul by the composer, yet must he be a poet in the same degree as the painter and the sculptor—those direct interpreters of Nature, each in his own way, who also sing, in a certain sense, from the music-pages of the Creator. It matters little that the work of the virtuoso is transient, while the wood, the canvas, or the plaster lasts long, and the granite, the marble, or the bronze defies the centuries; the difference in outward conditions, or in material details, changes nothing in the problem presented to each of them by the God of Art."—*Franz Liszt.*

"The laws of morals are also those of art."—*Schumann.*

ONE who has thoroughly assimilated the philosophy as well as the practice of the characteristic Deppean movement form has taken a long step towards the attainment of technical and æsthetic beauty in execution and interpretation. Once it becomes a real possession it endows the player with the power to produce the subtlest tone-shadings, and enables him to reproduce a composition with technical accuracy and rhythmic grace; meanwhile the entire playing-apparatus, through reflective exercise and discipline, arrives at the point where it renders instant and unerring obedience to the slightest direction of the will.

The curvilinear movement, which, like an unbroken mental thread, runs through the entire piece—constitutes "a rhythm which binds together the *ensemble* of voices." (*Klose.*) And there is thus established, by means of this simple movement, a certain degree of guidance and control, which has its effect, not only on development and interpretation, but also on that artistic freedom which the execution of a work of art imperatively demands; and, through the same unobtrusive but powerful influence, the work is aided to appear in perfect and natural unity. A composition so presented will create the impression—

by virtue of its *vivante* and homogeneous character, and the clear-cut simplicity of its delivery—that it neither could nor should be performed in any other manner.

As has already been said, the fundamental principle in tone-formation is *spontaneity;* in other words, there must be *no appearance of effort.* And this is a condition which is of equally great importance in the realm of artistic execution and interpretation. It is a law which forbids one to throw a theme or motive into abnormal relief, or to place undue and studied emphasis on certain passages; it is a law which condemns, as inartistic, all "playing for effect," all indulgence in those little affectations and pretentious flourishes which are so plainly designed to draw attention to the performer's facility. Now, to *interpret* a composition means, in the true sense of the word, that it is to be *re-produced,* or *re-created.* Therefore the artist is not called upon to pour out a flood of exuberant sentiment, nor to intoxicate by a sensuous revelry of tone, nor to make an exhibition of either his personality or his finger-dexterity through the medium of the music; the true artist-interpreter has a widely-different aim. To himself he is but the mediator who stands ready to interpret to the hearer the thought of the composer, for, as Deppe himself said: "Only through complete detachment from the subjective is it possible that there shall exist that objectivity which alone can present a work to the hearer in its entire and original purity, just as it sprang from the soul of its creator." (*Klose,* page 57.) This is a principle which applies with special force to classical music and its just interpretation, for Deppe was a true high-priest of the classics; and, indeed, no system is better adapted than his own to the simple, classic, and perfect rendition of the works of the old music-heroes. As to the piano itself "it is indeed subjective in the sense that it is the instrument for the free outpouring of melody, but it is, nevertheless, objective also; by reason of its robust nature it resists excessively fine shadings of sentiment, it is antique."*

The works of modern masters allow, through their form and

*Vischer; Musik, page 1041.

content, considerable scope for one's subjective tendencies to assert themselves, and they may, therefore, be re-created through a more or less direct expression of the "ego" of the player, as long as this freedom of treatment does not lead to mutilation of the composition. But stricter limitations must obtain when we come to the works of the classical masters: Bach, who expressed the sincerity of his pious soul, and the vitality of his sentiments within the adamantine limits of the strictest forms of harmony and polyphony; Mozart, whose objective creations are radiant with such transparent purity; Beethoven, who, triumphant master of every law of his art, created those imperishable masterpieces which stand as the climax of all music, and which voice the mightiest emotions of the human soul; the works of such masters as these can attain to clear and perfect interpretation only when the player endeavors wholly to forget himself, in order that through him the mind of the composer may find utterance. "The task of the artist-interpreter is thus seen to be twofold: First, to submit himself to the unhindered influence of the work, and then to interpret it." (*Klose,* page 24.) When a composer, in his work of art, causes us to perceive the subjective emotions of his soul—clarified by his control over them—as an objective creation; when he reveals to our inner consciousness the frame of mind or mood which he depicts in his creation, not as his own, directly experienced by him, but as felt, so to speak, by a personality entirely detached from him; "when the work of art is, therefore, something objective which has passed through the medium of the human soul,"* then the reproduction thereof can be a true one only when the artist first frees himself from his subjective personality, in order to give the composer the opportunity to express himself, from within, through the medium of his work. Hegel, also, confirmed this when he said that "when the composition is of objective and sterling quality, when the composer has striven to express in tone the real essence of the subject or sentiment which filled his own soul, then the reproduction must be equally true and genuine. In

*Schopenhauer; Zur Metaphysik des Schoenen, page 446.

such circumstances the artist-executant not only *need* not add anything of his own, but he *dare* not, lest he thereby injure the artistic effect."*

Let us now try to comprehend what Deppe meant when he spoke of *"detachment from the subjective."* Every mortal who works with some high aim in view—be it scientific, literary, artistic, or what it will—sets his whole physical and mental strength towards the attainment of this aim, and, through this concentration of all his faculties, he divests himself entirely, at least for the time being, of all individual sentiment; his personality is sacrificed to the purpose he has willed to serve. If this be true concerning all who are inspired by a lofty purpose, it will surely hold special significance in regard to the musician. He, of all men, should find this self-surrender a perfectly natural procedure, for none pursues a higher ideal than he, nor one which, in its realization, demands deeper penetration, more delicate perception, or profounder absorbtion. The musician who devotes himself to the study of a work with both intelligence and enthusiasm, grasps the thoughts and sentiments of the composer "with the spirit and with the understanding also," and so clearly does he perceive their inner meaning, and so thoroughly does he assimilate them, that they become, as it were, his own. As a result, the consciousness of his own individual existence forsakes him for the moment; the "subjective ego" being banished, he thinks and feels only in the thought and feeling of the composition, and so loses himself in it that the *"objective ego,"* as we may call it, finds through him its fit and adequate expression.

The degree of this surrender of one's personality at the call of some engrossing purpose is dependent on one's mental endowments, but a certain measure of it is possible to everyone. Schopenhauer expresses this thought in the following words: "A man of high intellectual gifts leads two lives—one the ordinary, everyday life, the other a purely intellectual life, which sets him above and beyond the vicissitudes inseparable from mortal existence. This higher life is made up of con-

* Hegel; Aesthetik, Part III., page 216.

tinual thinking, learning, experimenting, and studying, and it gradually grows to be the *real* life, to which the other is so subordinated that it becomes merely a means towards the end in view."* And again he says: "There exists in all men—excepting those who are absolutely destitute of æsthetic sense—the faculty of so recognizing and grasping the vital and essential essence of an idea, as to thereby divest themselves, for an instant, of all consciousness of self."**

At this point it should be clear to the student how and why physical, as well as psychological, freedom may be attained through right understanding and practice of Deppe's principles. This is the condition Souriau had in mind when he affirmed that "grace is physical and mental freedom expressed in movement."† And when we embody this principle in piano playing—as has been minutely set forth in these pages—and make every movement connected therewith of the freest possible kind, then takes place a blending of the subjective and objective faculties. For, the free and graceful Deppean movement is not an *involuntary* one, on the contrary it is distinctly a *product of the will;*‡ and, since the will and the understanding, working objectively, make of this free movement-form our subjective property, there thus arises a fusion of subjective and objective, as has been said.

Herein we have tried to explain how we may make a work of art intellectually our own, and may so assimilate it—without undue objective influence thereon—that it shall find perfect expression through our subjective sentiment and our sympathetic insight. And it is only when subjective and objective are thus interblended that execution and interpretation will alike be characterized by that artistic symmetry and proportion to which Friedrich Wieck referred when he said: "Reflection in enthusiasm, unfailing self-control in the midst of fiery ardor—these should rule and guide."

Schopenhauer's definition of genius may not be inappropri-

* Parerga und Paralipomema, page 87.
** Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.
† l'Esthetique du mouvement; page 165.
‡ One is here reminded of Schiller's definition of grace: "Grace is beauty of form under the influence of free-will." [E. S. S.]

ate here: "Genius is nothing else than the most complete objectivity, or *objective direction* of the mind, in opposition to the *subjective direction* centred on oneself—that is to say, on the will. Therefore, genius is the power of maintaining oneself in a purely intuitive and perceptive state, of losing oneself in contemplation, and of detaching this perceptive and contemplative faculty from the service of the will to which it was originally subjected. In other words, it is the power to put self-interest and personal aims entirely out of sight in order to become a purely perceptive subject—a limpid mirror of the world. And this power must not be merely a thing of the moment—on the contrary it must endure as long, and with as much concentration of mind, as is necessary to reproduce, through the deliberately-chosen resources of one's art, the conception which has been received, and to fix in enduring thought the vague and shifting visions which hover before the mind."*

While these words of Schopenhauer serve as exposition of the psychological basis of those Deppean principles which govern the comprehension and reproduction of a work of art, the following quotation substantiates those ideas concerning the *liberating power of beauty,* which are so intimately interwoven with our master's teachings on artistic tone-production. "Beauty exerts its power with an independence which shuts out every extraneous influence; and it is not in so far as it *aids* thinking—which would involve a manifest inconsistency—but only in so far as it *obtains for the intellectual faculties freedom to manifest themselves in conformity with their own proper laws,* can beauty become a means whereby man is led from matter to form, from sentiment to laws, and from a limited to an absolute existence."**

And now we cannot do better than to close this little treatise with the same motto which began it: "When it *looks* pretty then it is right;" in this expression, as we have endeavored to show, Deppe practically condensed his whole system of teaching. For since, according to his theory, ideal tone-formation is the result of simple and harmonious co-operative movements, and since these movements, through the manner of their performance, respond at one and the same time to both the technical and æsthetic demands of a composition, then it is not difficult to see how real, to him, was the bond, and how close the relationship, between exterior beauty of execution and a rich, pure, and lovely tone. *Spontaneity*—absence of all appearance of effort—was to Deppe a fundamental condition underlying not only tone-formation, but also the re-creation of an entire work of art. Therefore he never gave prominence in his teaching to "technic," or to "method," *per se,* but ever taught that the technic of a composition is dependent upon its musical content. Indeed, he taught that the two are as intimately allied as soul is with body, for it is the content, or soul, of the composition which must inspire that special movement-form which shall best give outward expression to each thought of the composer. For these reasons he rigorously eliminated every movement not absolutely essential to adequate performance; for, he said, an irrelevant or aimless movement—or even a correct movement, if it be made mechanically—will surely have a disastrous influence on that harmony, and *apparent simplicity of execution,* so much to be desired in the presentation of a work of art.

Tone-formation, and manner of interpretation or execution, are, from a musical point of view, mutually dependent on each other, since they spring from the same conception, and repose on the same foundation. Deppe believed in Lessing's dictum: "The *first* law of expression is the law of beauty,"* and therefore the union of beauty of movement with beauty of tone lies at the very base of his system. And when he said that "in the art of re-creating the works of others there can be only one classic language, only one standard,"** he thereby expressed, in other words, one of his main principles, namely, that spontaneity in the reproduction of a work of art becomes attainable only when the correspondence between movement-form and content is ideally perfect.

* Objekt der Kunst; page 252.

** Schiller; Ueber die aesthetik Erziehung des Menschen.

* Laokoon, page 16.

** Klose, page 23.

The means whereby one may arrive at such interpretation and execution have been discussed in the preceding chapters.

The player who rightly understands and assimilates the principles herein laid down, who has acquired the faculty of keen and vivid mental grasp of a composition, and who adds thereto a genuine love for true and beautiful art—to such an one will surely come the power to give artistic, yet unexaggerated, expression to the deepest thought and emotions embodied in a tone-creation. And then will be fulfilled the condition Schiller had in mind when he wrote: "The soul of the hearer must remain quite free and independent, and must issue from the magic circle of the artist as pure and entire as if just from the hands of the creator;" for "though there be a *fine art of passion,* yet a *passionate fine-art* would be a contradictory term, seeing that the inevitable effect of the beautiful is emancipation from the passions."*

* Ueber die aesthetische Erziehung des Menschen, page 51.

PART II.

Practical Advice

—ON—

Questions of Technic

—BY—

Fräulein Elisabeth Caland

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION BY

Evelyn Sutherland Stevenson

"The special and essential problem of man consists in this: to apprehend, or to grasp, *as a whole* that which, in the diversity of phenomena, can be conceived of as a rational unity."—*Plato.*

"Virtuosity is not the *passive* servant of a composition; creative faculty, also, is demanded. The worth of virtuosity is entirely dependent on the sensitive organization of the artist, for without the vitalizing power of sentiment—to dictate the forms which beauty shall assume, and to bestow the will to reproduce them—virtuosity is but a lifeless mechanism, a mere matter of calculation and finger-dexterity."—*Franz Liszt.**

*See "Annalen des Fortschritts." (Essay on Clara Schumann.)

PREFACE.

AT the time when I brought *"Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels"** before the public I entertained little hope that it would win many friends save in the ranks of Deppe's disciples. But the many questions, letters, and expressions of endorsement, which have reached me since the appearance of the little book are proof sufficient that it has found favor even in circles remote from Deppean influence, and I have been thereby encouraged to supplement the above work by the following pages of brief advice on various questions of technic. It may be well to state that each suggestion and exercise herein contained has been tried and tested in my own teaching, and has been proven to be of sound, practical value. They serve as preparatory exercises for rendering the hand light and free upon the keyboard, and also as a means whereby one may attain to that *mastery of orchestral tone-coloring,* which an artistic performance demands, without sacrificing in the process the ideal tone-quality inherent in Deppean playing. All suggestions, theoretical and practical, stand in close relation to the above treatise, and therefore it is taken for granted that their employment will be preceded by careful study and practice of Deppe's foundation principles, for the exercises, with few exceptions, would be of slender value to one who had not undergone such preparation.

A necessary preliminary caution is this: Whatever stress may be laid in these pages on the physical means through which, in accordance with our basal principles, are attacked the technical difficulties attendant on the execution of various musical figures, yet one must never lose sight of the fact that the production of a pure and beautiful tone is the first consideration. However, *absolutely* mechanical work is in the main excluded when one attains to complete control of the

*The Deppe Method of Piano Playing. An English translation of this book is embodied in Part I of the present work.

mechanism of shoulders and arms, hands and fingers, for it is to the *brain* one must look for the source of such control.

Another point to which I particularly wish to direct attention is the importance of the Deppean five-finger exercises which are explained and illustrated in my first book; their execution should begin the day's work for even the most advanced player. These apparently simple exercises—devised with such scientific ingenuity by our master, Deppe—demand for their correct performance a hand-position from which results an ever-increasing freedom of movement; they thereby form the foundation for the true *"discipline of brain and hands;"* that theory of *"psycho-physical tone-formation"* which, since 1860, has been Deppe's literary property.* Moreover, the effect of these few exercises is to induce a remarkable lightness and relaxation in hands and fingers, and to render them free, flexible, and ready for playing in the shortest possible time. The constraining power which, originating in the brain, thus liberates hand and finger, is one of the most potent factors in producing a tone which is at once vital and poetic in its quality.

When I wrote *"Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels,"* I strove earnestly to present the principles of Ludwig Deppe precisely as I had myself received them, but I wish to emphasize the fact that the following hints, and also the Appendix to my Exercise Book** (in which is pointed out the most direct road to rapidity in octave-playing) are founded on my own personal knowledge and experience. Nevertheless, all which has been thus independently put forth is to be considered in the light of a natural and logical outgrowth from Deppean principles.

ELISABETH CALAND.

Charlottenburg-Berlin, April, 1902.

*In the year 1883 there was published, in the "Allgemeinen Zeitung," a criticism by Dr. Stavenow on the playing of Anna Steiniger, a pupil of Deppe for some years; therein this "psycho-physical tone-formation" finds commendatory recognition.

**Ludwig Deppe's Fuenffingeruebungen und Uebungsmaterial;" text in German, French Dutch and English. Ebener'sche Hofmusikalienhandlung. Stuttgart, 1900.

FIRST PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

Chords—Accented Passages.

IN many compositions there are chords which must be rendered with peculiar fulness and richness of tone; or, it may be, there are certain tones or passages which call for marked vigor and boldness of performance. If these and similar demands are to be adequately met, then, as a first essential, the hand must be made "light as a feather," through the supporting power of arm and shoulder (as explained in Part I, Chapters I and II), and must be *carried* with firmly-curved fingers, directly over the keys it is desired to play. If

PLATE I.

this is correctly done, the curve and tension* of the hand will be the same as when it is stretched out over a large ball.

When the hand, thus prepared, is poised upon the desired keys—but so lightly as not to depress them—then, the moment

*The player is expressly warned never to confound "tension" or "firmness" with stiffness or inflexibility. The controlled "tension" of the muscles which is insisted on throughout this book implies always the power of instantaneous relaxation, or yielding of the tension, when required, and—therefore—a certain elasticity. Rigidity of any joint or member would be totally at variance with my meaning, and would hinder, not further, the end in view.

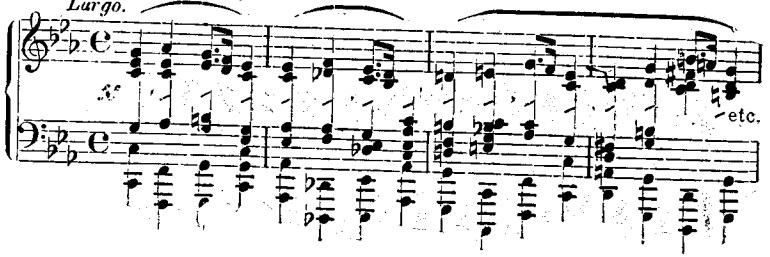
that the finger-tips feel the key-contact, the hand is suddenly and forcibly impelled downward, not as the result of any individual movement of the hand itself, but solely as the result of an impulse originating in the energetic contraction of cer-

PLATE II.

tain muscles of the back. From first to last the relative positions taken by wrist, hand, and fingers, must remain absolutely unaltered, nor must the inside angle of the elbow change in

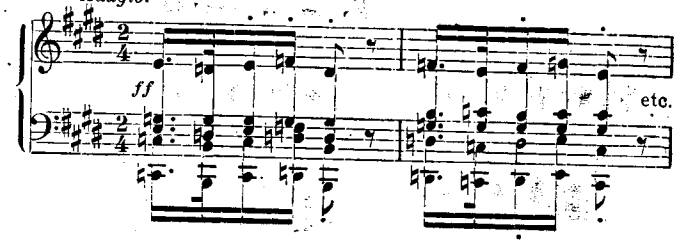
Chopin. Prélude op. 28 No. 20.

Largo.



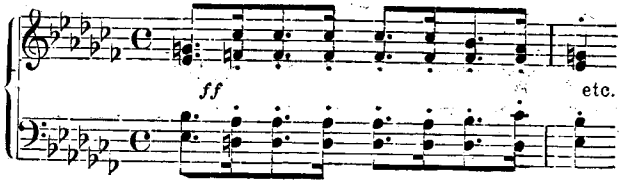
Beethoven. Sonate op. 2 No. 3.

Adagio.

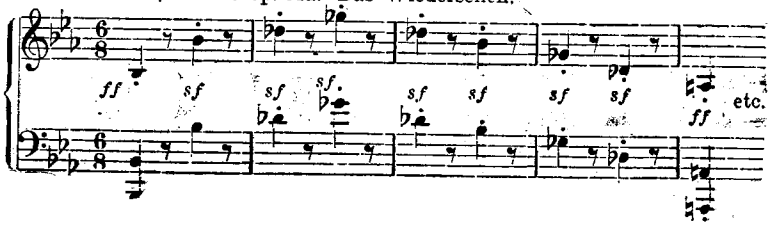


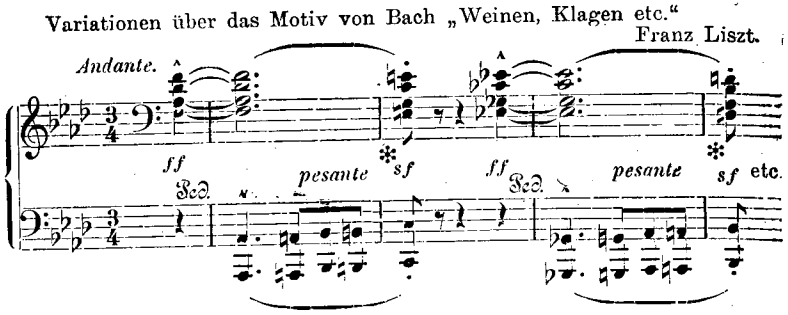
Beethoven. Sonate op. 26. Marcia funebre.

Maestoso andante.



Beethoven. Sonate op. 81a. Das Wiedersehen.





dimensions. (See *Deppe Exercise Book,* page 111,) In other words, it is positively essential that, as regards this movement, one should think of the entire arm, from shoulder down, *as a whole,* as if, so to speak, it possessed no joints whatever. Once the tones have been sounded, however, the fingers, still holding down the keys, glide along them towards the back of the keyboard, and, *at the same instant,* the wrist is allowed to turn slightly outwards with an elastic motion in which, of course, the elbow must share; thus the movement shows itself here also as a (laterally) curved one. (See *Exercise Book,* page 115.) The main test of the whole process is the *resultant tone-quality,* in which there should be no trace of harshness nor roughness. When the mental conception is correct, and correctly carried out, and when the collective members—arm, wrist, hand, and fingers—are steadfastly maintained in the prescribed position, and under strict control, then the tones will seem to float out upon the air, and will be so noble, so well-sustained, and so richly colored as to suggest those drawn from an organ.

Plate I gives a profile view of the relative positions of hand, wrist, and arm as they appear immediately after playing an octave in above style, while Plate II shows how the hand looks in the same circumstances when seen from above.

The preceding passages, taken from compositions of Chopin, Beethoven, and Liszt, are examples of the type of music where the touch just described can be used with the happiest results.

One may also play in the same way the following etudes and pieces by various composers:

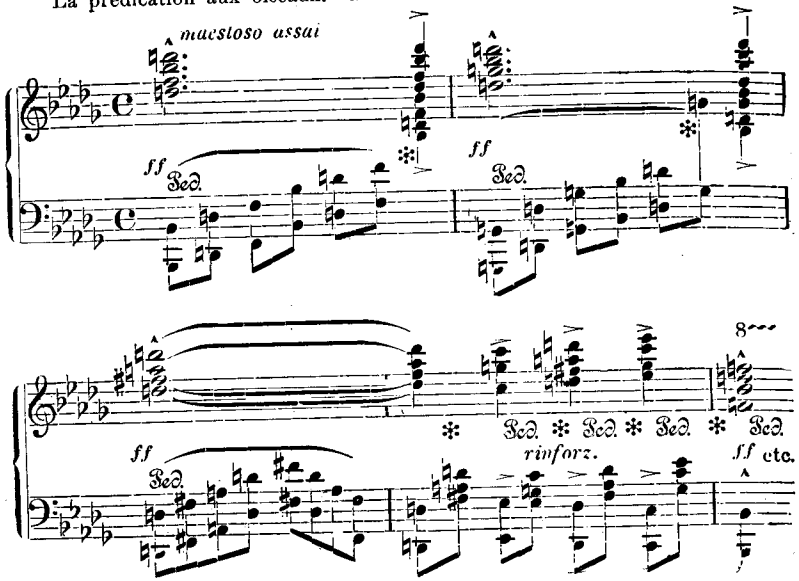
Biehl, Op. 154, Book II, No. 16. Staccato Chords; *Czerny,* Op. 335, Book I, No. 11, and Book II, No. 13; *Rachmanioff,* Op. 3, No. 2; *Schumann,* Variation II, from Symphonic etudes; *Liszt,* Rhapsodie, No. 12, chords in the Adagio, page 4, etc.

One must not rashly jump to the conclusion that this method of tone-production is applicable to forte passages only; on the contrary, the tenderest pianissimo is equally attainable, through precisely the same means, and without the slightest deterioration in vitality of tone. Arm, hand, and fingers are maintained in the same firm pose as before, nor is there any change in the movement which produces the tones; the only difference lies in the fact that a much smaller demand is made upon the energy of those muscles which, in either case, furnish the motive-power for the movement—that is to say, the muscles of the back.

It may also be necessary to state, with some emphasis, that the pose and movement just described are by no means intended to be used indiscriminately in any and every passage which calls for either unwonted energy or peculiar expressiveness in performance. If expression and ideal tone-quality must reach their highest manifestation, then Deppe's beautiful "free-fall" movement comes into play. This movement, described in Chapter III of Part I, consists in removing tension from the arm, and simply allowing arm, hand, and fingers to fall with unhesitating directness upon the keys. As an example of a composition demanding this touch we append a few measures from Liszt's *"Predication aux oiseaux"* (Legende I, St. Francois d' Assise.). Here the fortissimo octaves and chords of the bass are invested with a peculiarly solemn and pathetic character simply through the "free-fall" of the left hand which produces them, while the massive chords of the treble, on the other hand, are taken with the firmly-curved fingers and powerful movement described in the beginning of this chapter.

Both these modes of touch will prove themselves of the

La prédication aux oiseaux. Fr. Liszt.



greatest artistic value in the rendition of Chopin's *Prelude,* No. 20,* given on a previous page. The heavy chords of the first four measures are played with hands and fingers in the highest possible state of tension, and with all the energy and intensity which can possibly be summoned to aid in their execution. In the next four measures, marked *piano,* the hands fall upon the keys with graceful freedom, the necessary fingers taking the desired keys as the hand comes in contact with the keyboard. (Note carefully that this fall of the hand is *not from the wrist.*)

In the last measures of the Prelude, although hands and arms resume, in a lessened degree, their primary state of controlled tension, yet the most exquisitely delicate pianissimo becomes possible through a reduction of the motive-energy originating in back and shoulder. The hands are now raised as little as may be from the key-surface when passing from one chord to another, and the firm finger-tips are always poised an

*Concerning signs for use of pedal, see Part I, Chapter VI.

imperceptible instant on the keys before depressing them to produce a chord. Such subtle tone-shading, and such diminution of force are hereby attainable that the tones will at last seem to be merely breathed forth from the instrument. For the final chord of the Prelude, the first chord-touch is again brought into requisition.

The artistic sense and cultivated intelligence of the player must guide him in determining the character of a piece, and in divining the intention of the composer, so as to decide on the touch and movement which will best aid him in bringing any desired sentiment to its most perfect development. And the keener the musical feeling of the artist-interpreter, the easier it will be for him—through right adaptation of the means here given—to stamp a composition by his playing as a beautiful and harmonious work of art.

SECOND PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

Legato, Staccato, and Mezzo-Legato.

IN order to acquire certainty of touch, and perfect control of the hand, in such passages as demand sparkling brilliancy or unusual power in execution, it is recommended that studies similar to the following be practiced with the greatest possible velocity: Etudes No. 9 and No. 23, in the Deppe Exercise Book (specially for the right hand); *Czerny,* School of Velocity, Book III, No. 25, and Book IV, No. 36 (left hand); also No. 5 from first volume of Finger Dexterity, by same composer. These studies are to be played through first in legato, then in staccato, and, finally, in mezzo-legato, or portamento, style. Legato playing has been fully discussed in Chapter III of Part I.

In staccato-work each tone is the result of a regulated vibratory movement of the hand; this vibration originates in upper-arm and shoulder, and being transmitted to the hand, sets it into rhythmic and rapid vibration, similar to that one may notice in a steel spring.* By this method the fingers, held ever with great firmness, are in contact with the keys for the briefest conceivable instant of time.** (See Exercise Book, page 113.)

In mezzo-legato playing—otherwise termed non-legato, portamento, or quasi-staccato—there occurs a blending of legato and staccato. The tones thus produced cannot strictly be called *bound,* but neither are they detached or disconnected in effect; the tone-quality is intense and vital, and the impression conveyed by adequate performance is one of great brilliancy and reserve power. The impulse which gives rise to each tone proceeds from shoulder downward, as in staccato (the wrist being firm, yet elastic), but there is not a similar abrupt recoil from the key after the tones have been sounded. *Now* the firmly-curved fingers are raised as little as may be, in fact only enough to take the next tones, as in a legato passage. Each finger sinks into its key, not through an individual or detached movement on its own part, but as the result of a vital and powerful impulse which originates in shoulder and upper-arm, and which is controlled and regulated by the will. And, because this power may be transmitted to all the fingers in the same degree, they obtain what may be termed *equal rights* on the keyboard, so that the same fingering of a passage serves equally well, no matter which of above three touches one uses. If very full, sonorous tone is required, then more energetic action must be demanded—*not from hands and fingers, however, but from the parts possessing most inherent strength*—that is to say, from the muscles of the back and upper-arm. As a result of this powerful co-operation it will seem as if the whole weight of the arm sank full upon the key in the production of each tone.

* The player should aim at a velocity of 8-12 tones per second.

** The usual varieties and graduations of staccatto are performed, essentially, as here described, the only difference being that, if there must be special power or tone color in a passage, then there should be a proportionate degree of gliding pressure in the contact of the fingers with the keys.

It is taken for granted, let me repeat, that a round, pure, clear tone will, under all circumstances, be made the first consideration; there should be no hard nor unsympathetic tones in even fortissimo passages. Absence of all hardness affords conclusive testimony that correct muscular conditions obtain, and that the different members of the playing apparatus are firmly maintained in their relative positions to one another. For there is nothing which more effectually prevents this hardness of tone than rhythmical and co-operative action of the muscles; when "muscular synergy" prevails, no finger *hits* the key with a detached stroke, but must glide into it with more or less of pressure in the contact.

Mezzo-legato playing is specially conducive to strength and firmness in the hand and fingers, and aids the player in obtaining perfect mastery of these members; it is therefore recommended to be faithfully practised by those whose hands and joints are weak, over-flexible, and difficult to control.

Grand arpeggios should also be practised in the three ways

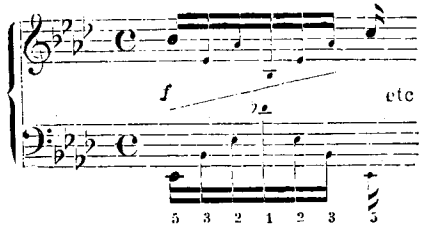
here given; legato arpeggios are treated of in Part I, Chapter III. Useful studies for this purpose are the following:

Czerny, School of Velocity, Book II, No. 12; *Czerny,* Finger Dexterity, Book I, No. 2; *Czerny,* Finger Dexterity, Book III. No. 21; *Czerny,* Finger Dexterity, Book IV, No. 31; *Deppe Exercise Book,* page 60, No. 26.

THIRD PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

(Exercise for binding widely separated tones—the "stretching exercise.)

TONES separated from one another by wide intervals are joined by means of the so-called "stretching" movement—a term which Deppe, by the way, repudiated, for he never allowed an abnormal spreading-out of the hand, nor extension of the fingers. In the appended example—the first quarter of the eighth measure of Chopin's Etude, Op. 25, No.



1—the left hand binds the bass tones with one another in the manner pictured in the three following engravings.

Plate III shows the hand-and-arm position just after the fifth finger has taken the first tone, E-flat.

In Plate IV the movement is continued, and the third finger is represented as pressing B-flat, while the second finger, *carried onward through the uninterrupted, curvilinear movement of the arm,* is about to take the key E-flat.

Plate V exhibits the attitude the hand assumes when the thumb has just fallen upon D-flat.

The hand is carried back again in the same manner, the second finger taking E-flat, and the third B-flat, as before, so that, by the beginning of the second quarter of the measure, when the fifth finger depresses E-flat, the hand returns gracefully to its original position delineated in Plate III.

PLATE III.

PLATE IV.

PLATE V.

It is important to watch that the fingers, although necessarily somewhat spread out, are yet held as curved as possible, as this aids in the essential concentration of power in the muscles of the palm; and it is of equal importance that the advancing arm, moving freely in the shoulder-socket, shall *carry* the hand in either direction over the desired keys. In Plate III the arm is farthest from the body, in Plate IV it has advanced much nearer, while in Plate V it may be seen close to the side. And thus the pliant, but fully-controlled wrist, and the firm, slightly-curved fingers, are conducted to and fro on the keyboard by a free and well-defined horizontal movement of the arm.

Moreover, we may also see, through the testimony of these engravings, that no finger ever reaches out, in advance of the arm, in an effort to touch a key by means of a detached "stroke" thereon; *each one simply takes the key over which it is brought by the progressive movement of the arm.* The wrist movement in a passage of this kind is of course continually a horizontal one, but it is never an *independent* movement to right or left; *each movement of the wrist must be made strictly in conjunction with that of the arm.* When these conditions obtain, and when the fingers are as curved as possible, it will then be found easy to carry out Deppe's injunction, "The shadow of the palm of the hand should lie directly over the keys to be played."*

Plate I shows the correct hand-position for this exercise, as seen from the side. It is, of course, understood that the right hand will go through similar exercises in the opposite direction. For the training of the right hand in execution of music of this type practise the following studies:

Czerny, Finger Dexterity, Nos. 15 and 19; *A. Biehl,* Op. 154, Book IV, No. 26; for left-hand practise take *H. Seeling,* "Schilflieder," Op. 11, No. 4; *A. Biehl,* Op. 154, Book IV, No. 27; for the training of both hands the following compositions will be found useful: *Schumann,* Romance, F-sharp major; *Chopin,* Op. 25, Etude No. 1, and Etude No. 13 (A-

*See Part I, Chapter III.

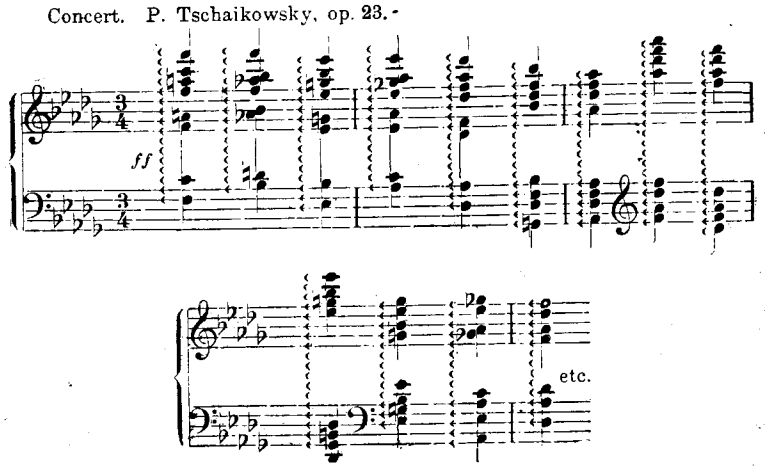
flat major); *Schumann,* Intermezzo from the Faschingsschwank.

The explanatory instructions which have been given, and also the hand-and-arm positions shown in the three plates, apply in equal degree to the execution of arpeggio-chords, the only difference being that each chord should be thought of as a whole, and should be grasped in a *single,* quick, decisive impulse, originating, of course, in the powerful muscles of the shoulder and back. As a result the tones forming each chord will follow one another with the utmost rapidity compatible with clear-cut distinctness of tone. The following pieces exemplify this style of playing:

Ludwig Schytte, Op. 75, Book 9, Etude 3; *J. Moscheles,* Op. 70, Book 1, No. 2; *Chopin,* Op. 10, No. 11 (Etude).

Such studies as are here typified can be delivered with adequate brilliancy and *verve* only when the performer draws to the fullest extent upon the energy residing in the powerful muscles of the back. It will then appear, as has been said in a previous chapter, as if the arms fell with their full weight upon the keys in the production of each chord.

The following measures from *Tschaikowsky's* Concerto, Op. 23, may be taken as an example of the passages which demand above manner of performance.



FOURTH PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

(The "shaking movement.")

IN Plates VI and VII there is a very clear delineation of the slow exercise to be used in preparation for the performance of broken octaves, sixths, thirds, and other tremolo figures. The underlying principle of this movement is the same as in the execution of trills, for the shaking, or oscillating, motion of the hand is, in this case also, the result of energy generated in the back and upper-arm, and the joints are maintained in a similar state of firm, yet elastic, tension. (See Part I, Chapter III).

Since any large movement is easier to watch, to control, and to execute, than a small one, this movement is, in the beginning, of considerable magnitude, and is made quite slowly. Here, also, the rule holds good that fingers, wrist, and forearm, must steadfastly retain their original relative positions, so that the hand, with fingers firmly curved, is supported, moved, and guided solely by the arm. (See Exercise Book, page 111.)

By careful observation and experiment the player may ascertain for himself that the curve-forming movement of the hand, from fifth finger to thumb, which produces a broken octave, is governed by muscles in the upper-arm and back, and that the forearm neither turns in the elbow-joint, nor changes its position in relation to the upper-arm.*

After several slow repetitions of this exercise, one should then double the tempo, and repeat this process until, finally, the rapidity of the movement, and its consequent dimunition, reach a point where the fingers no longer leave the surface of the keys, and the movement itself is reduced to a vibration thereon. When this degree of rapidity has been attained, the

* Marie Unschuld von Melasfeld, in her book, "The Hand of the Pianist" (page 43, Fig. 38), gives an apparently similar exercise as preparatory to octave-playing, but one may there observe that the turning of the hand occurs at the wrist only, and is so described in the text—a fact which serves to entirely differentiate her exercise from the one here given. We cannot say too often, nor too emphatically, that movements produced solely by fingers or forearm yield an entirey different tone, both as to volume and qualtity, from that which is the result of synergetical working of the muscles. The hardness of tone which an isolated movement always engenders is especially and unpleasantly apparent in forte passages.

PLATE VI.

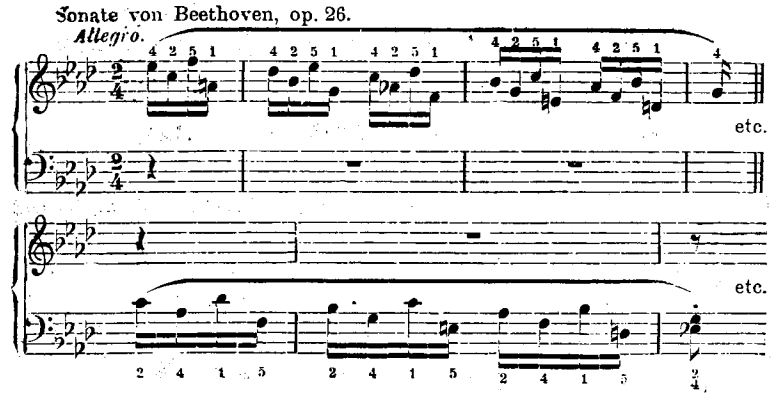
PLATE VII.

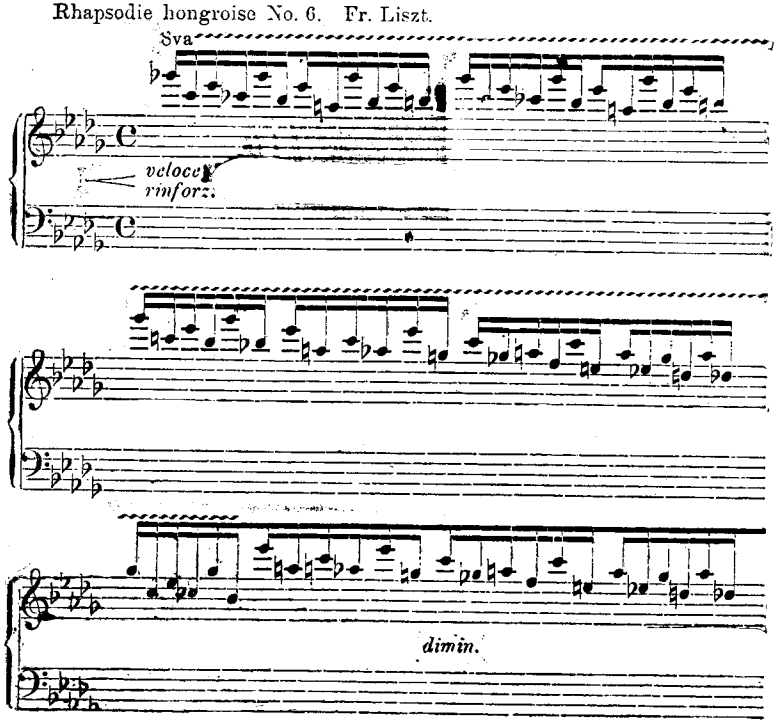
wrist will be found to have assumed the pose shown in Plate I, as a result of the above dimunition of movement.

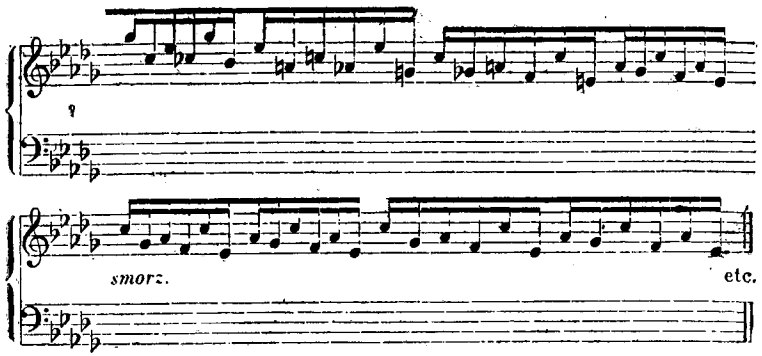
This manner of playing may be used, with the happiest results, in such studies and pieces as the following:

Schytte. Op. 75, Book III, No. 1 (Octave Study); *Clementi.* Gradus ad Parnassum (Carl Tausig), No. 28 in E-flat; *Cramer,* Book I, No. 12; *Loeschorn,* Op. 38, Book III, No. 24; *Czerny,* Op. 740, Book I, No. 8; *C. L. Hanon,* The Virtuoso Pianist, No. 60 (Tremolo Study); *Grieg,* Op. 62, No. 4 (Lyrische Stueke); *Chopin,* Op. 28, No. 14 (Prelude); *Benjamin Godard,* Op. 53 (En courant); *Beethoven,* Op. 541, No. 22 (Allegretto from this Sonata); *Chopin,* Etude No. 23 (No. 11 in Op. 25); *Liszt,* Ungarische Fantasie (Edition Peters), pages 10 and 12, etc.

Through the use of this movement in passages such as the two here borrowed from Beethoven and from Liszt, it will be found that both tone-quality and rapidity can be perfected to the last degree.







FIFTH PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

(Successions of Thirds, Sixths, Octaves, etc. Repetitions of Single Tones. Binding of Chords Without Use of Pedal.)

IN rapid performance of passages made up of thirds, sixths, etc., the hand-position is the same as in simple scale-work. (See Part I, Chapter III.) The *wrist is turned a little towards the outside,* and the resultant slightly-oblique pose of the hand greatly facilitates the passing under of the thumb.*

Here, also, hand and fingers are freely carried by the arm over the keys to be played, and great dexterity in touching the black keys is thus developed. Each movement should involve the arm *as a whole,* and the relative positions of wrist and elbow should remain well-nigh unaltered throughout the exercise.

The tone-figures which head this chapter are, as is well-known, very difficult to execute in legato style, but, when played with the light, freely-supported hand which Deppe enjoined, the effect is to bind the various chords and tones in a most unmistakable manner. Just as in mezzo-legato playing, one must now call in the aid of the vibratory movement; through the controlling and regulating power of the superior muscles which give rise to this movement, the tones never sound detached, or jerky, but always even, smooth, and rich in quality.

If successions of thirds and sixths on the white keys are played *without* alternation of fingers—that is, the thirds with first and third, or second and fourth fingers, and the sixths with first and fifth fingers, throughout—then a good legato is attainable through the above vibratory rapidity of movement, by means of which eight to twelve tones per second are sounded.

*The emphasis I so frequently place on this inward-slanting position of the hand is justified by the fact alluded to on page 112 of the Deppe Exercise Book, namely, that so many "Piano Methods" prescribe an exactly opposite position, and direct that "the hands shall be turned outwards, like the feet." For instance, on page 129 of "Aesthetik des Klavierspiels," when Kullak is describing two principal forms which depend upon hand-position, he says: "The hand is turned slightly outwards at the wrist;" and similar directions may be found in the following works: D. Gottlieb Tuerk's Klavierschule; Hummel's Theoretische—praktische Anweisung zum Pianofortespiel; Seifurt's Klavierschule; G. Damm's Klavierschule; H. Pohl's Klavierschule, etc.

Octaves on the white keys—"lightning octaves"—are played in the same way, using, of course, the first and fifth fingers. There are many exercises which claim to give facility in *changing fingers on the same key,* when a single tone is to be repeated, but it will be found that the connection between the tones is much more ideal when the repetitions are the result of a vibratory motion communicated from the arm to a *single finger.* When this method is employed, the *same* finger, firmly braced, falls on the key as the result of each vibration of the arm, and it then appears as if the key were pressed down during the very instant when it is rising after a previous pressure, or as if the finger, never losing the feeling of key-contact, caused the key to rise as well as fall. In this way the most marvelous rapidity is attainable, accompanied by the utmost purity and distinctness of delivery.

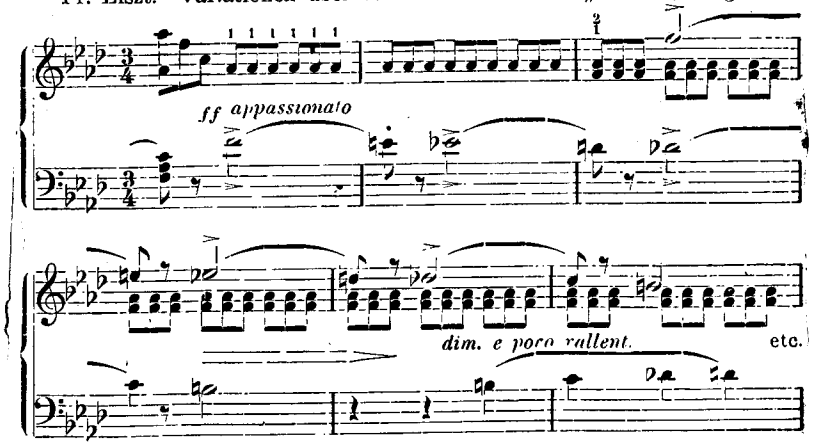
In Etude 32, Book IV, of *Czerny's Finger Dexterity,* there occurs a repetition of a single tone which forms a good example of above style of execution. While the second, third, and fifth fingers hold down the tones of the chord, the repetition of the C is effected by a *joint vibratory movement of arm and thumb,* and *not* by repeated individual movements of the thumb itself.

The following measures from Liszt's variations on a motive from Bach's *"Weinen Klagen,"* will serve as practical illustration of the type of music where this manner of playing will be found specially appropriate and effective.

If the smooth and connected execution we have described be desired, then undoubtedly the first condition to be sought is absolute and unfaltering control of every part of arm and hand, down to the very finger-tips, the wrist, in particular, being maintained in the highest state of firm, yet elastic, tension. The arm must be used as if it were what is called a "simple lever," moved and supported by the muscles of the back.

Even when octave-passages involve both black and white keys, the method above-described renders a legato performance a possibility; the firmly-curved fingers glide on and off the black keys as the result of an impulse imparted to the hand by the *upper-arm,* and, since hand and fingers are used *as a whole*

Fr. Liszt. **Variationen über das Motiv von Bach „Weinen, Klagen".**



in producing the tones, the position of the fingers, as regards the hand, remains unchanged. When a series of differing chords is to be played, then, of course, the fingers must go a little out of their original position in relation to the hand, but the movement involved should be only just sufficient to place the fingers, with the utmost rapidity, in readiness to take the next chord. The wrist, also, must maintain its position firmly, but should on no account be allowed to become rigid.

When shifting of the fingers is a necessity, the degree of legato is, in any case, dependent upon the tempo; if this does not demand more than four or five tones per second, then the legato becomes perfect.* Not only so, but it is attained in the most natural manner possible, and attended with scarce any evidence of effort, and this in spite of the fact that the binding of widely-separated tone-figures has long been regarded as a very difficult feat—indeed, a well-nigh impossible one when attempted without the aid of the pedal.**

The following are examples for this way of playing: *Kullak,* Octave School, Book II, No. 3; *Czerny,* Legato and Staccato, Book II, No. 16.

*On this point, see Part I, Chap. III.

**In Rieman's "Anleitung zum Studium der Technischen Uebungen," page 33, he says: "The fingers must change position with lightning rapidity if a chord-passage is to bear even a semblances of legato; actual legato is, of course, not a possibility."

SIXTH PREPARATORY EXERCISE.

Trills.

IT is a well-known fact that trills rank among the most difficult of all musical figures to execute with rhythmic precision; nevertheless, they may be rendered in quite an ideal manner by calling in the aid of that most useful "vibratory movement" which originates in the muscles of the back and upper-arm. Hand and arm should assume the pose shown in Plate I, and the fingers, as well as the muscles involved, should be characterized by similar firm tension. But the fingers, instead of being curved "as if stretched out over a large ball," must be drawn so closely together that the thumb, held underneath the other fingers, presses its tip firmly against the tips of the second and third fingers. All being now in readiness for the preparatory exercise, the arm is raised with a large, slow movement, and then allowed to fall* in such a way that the three united finger-tips depress *the same key.* This movement is repeated again and again, in steadily increasing tempo, the vibratory movement of the arm setting the hand into more and more rapid motion, until at last the movement diminishes to an exceedingly rapid vibration, or regulated trembling, upon the surface of the key each vibration resulting in a tone. (See Exercise Book, page 113.)

It is of course understood that the arm must be used *as a whole* in this preparatory exercise, each joint and muscle remaining firmly in its original position from beginning to end. When the rapidity of the tempo is at its height the fingers do not leave the key, but rise and fall with it, so that, in German phrase, "there is no *air* between the tones," or, as Deppe said, "There is not room between them for the tinest grain of sand."

*Concerning the "controlled free-fall," see Part I, Chap. III.

When this movement has been mastered,* then the fingers resume the normal five-finger position usual in legato-playing, and the player proceeds to take two adjacent keys so as to form a trill, using for this purpose not only the movement just referred to, but the movement of oscillation described in Exercise IV. These two movements, oscillation and vibration, co-operate in the greatest harmony, for both rest upon the same foundation, since if either one is called into requisition in a rapid performance, then the same muscles of back and upper-arm—those which move the hand and fingers—are put in a state of almost equal tension. The vibratory movement, however, demands a greater expenditure of energy than the other, and, therefore, certain muscles of the forearm are then drawn into co-operative use, although not directly active in producing the movement itself. The one movement produces a *vertical* vibration, and the other—the oscillatory movement—gives rise to a *horizontal* vibration of the hand. And the greater the degree of regularity and lightness imparted to the movement, through mastery of the muscular rhythm involved in the blending of the two vibrations, the more ideal will be the resultant tone-color, from whispering pianissimo to crashing fortissimo. And, given this mastery, it will not seem difficult to the player to sustain a trill—too often slighted in this regard—to any required length, and to endow it with any degree of power which a particular passage may demand. In presto trill-passages the activity of the moving members manifests itself according to the laws governing the operation of a lever, and for this reason a spectator receives the impression that the tones are the result of the sole agency of hands and fingers, whereas the *real* source of power should be looked for in the muscles of the back and upper-arm. (See Exercise Book, pages 116 and 117.)

It may be mentioned here that Plates I and II of this Supplement show exactly the hand-and-arm position suited to *rapid execution of octave scales and passages,* for this depends on the

*This vibratory movement should be perseveringly practised until one can produce 8—12 repetitions of a tone per second; therefore, metronome should be set at 60. (Concerning "Anschlagbewegungen," by Oskar Raif, see "Klavierlehrer, No. 15, August 1, 1901.)

skilful blending of two movements: "First, the *carrying of the hand by the arm* in any desired direction, and, secondly, the *simultaneous* generation of a regular, vibratory motion which is transmitted to arm and hand, the fingers being firmly curved." (See Exercise Book, page 115.)

Observation of these same engravings will also show that, although the hand is inevitably spread out a little as the consequence of spanning an octave, yet it is nevertheless *turned inward*—that is, towards the thumb—as much as possible; it is also clearly to be seen that the wrist is held just a trifle higher than the back of the hand. Deppean playing, as we know, always requires this slight elevation of the wrist, for, when it is held too low, certain muscles of the forearm are brought into an activity which greatly encumbers the hand in its movements, and impairs the lightness and freedom so essential in that member. This elevation is succeeded, in movements of moderate tempo, by an elastic downward and outward motion of the wrist, the moment the fingers have produced the required tones and are gliding inwards on the keys. (Exercise Book, page 113.)

In runs, and similar passages, the elevation is rather more pronounced, and the yielding movement of the wrist is distributed among the first three tones of the passage.*

An exception to this rule occurs (as has been pointed out in this Supplement) in the performance of massive chords, and in presto octave-, staccato-, or trill-passages—in fact, in any tone-figure which demands marked sonority, or vivid tone-color. In these cases the wrist must find itself in the pose shown in Plate I by the time the fingers come in contact with the surface of the keys; *then, sharing the impetus derived from the energetic action of the muscle of back and shoulder, it is slightly lowered, but only as a natural concomitant of the depression of the keys by the firm hand and fingers.* At the conclusion of each passage or musical figure the hand should be lifted from

* Those players who, not having opportunity for oral instruction in Deppe's principles, yet seek to model their playing according to the instructions given in Part I, frequently make the mistake of holding the wrist too high, which is, in its way, as injurious as the other extreme. The exact height of the wrist in ordinary playing is shown with the utmost clearness in Plate II, Part I, and in Plate I, Part II.

the keyboard with a decidedly elevated wrist, and then carried by the arm over the keys in a curve of greater or less magnitude, according to the exigencies of the case. This curvilinear movement by which the hand is both laid upon the keys and lifted from them, serves to bind chord with chord, and passage with passage; therefore, since all curves, whether of tone-production or tone-binding, blend into each other, the continuity of the movement suffers no interruption. We wish to state emphatically that each movement referred to in this treatise, whether it be vibrating, gliding, or a simple pressure of the keys, must always be accompanied by a mental conception of the *characteristic curve* it possesses, though in ever so slight a degree; and, no matter what the style of a movement, its beginning and ending must be performed as above. And it is perhaps well to repeat, with equal emphasis, that rule laid down in Part I, Chapter II, which forbids one to *raise the shoulder* under any circumstances.

The player has several times been enjoined to use the arm "as a whole," or "as a simple lever," etc., but it should be carefully borne in mind that this condition is meant to obtain *only at the moment of tone-production.* During this moment the muscles concerned are in a condition of harmonious, rhythmic, interdependent, co-operation, and, therefore, of firm, interlocking tension, a tension which increases in proportion to the degree of force exerted by the performer.

This "synergy of the muscles," as it is termed in Part I, Chapter I, reaches its climax in the playing of heavy chords, and strongly-accented passages, and there may then be perceived a sudden swelling out of certain muscles, notably those of the upper-arm. But, once the tones have been taken, there ensues a controlled, yielding movement of the wrist, together with an instant, concurrent, lessening of all muscular tension, so that complete relaxation of the muscles is accomplished by the time the hand is lifted from the keys. And, therefore, when Deppe said "the muscles should now relax," or "the wrist must now yield, with a controlled downward motion," he meant thereby to draw attention to this important physiological fact:

*A state of tension, or of firm, interlocking of the muscles, must invariably be succeeded by relaxation or devitalization of every joint and muscle used in playing.**

In order to derive the greatest amount of profit from this little treatise it will be necessary to bear in mind that it is intended as a complement to my two former works, *"Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels,"* and *Ludwig Deppe's Fuenffingeruebungen und Uebungsmaterial,"*** and the real value and usefulness of the various exercises, etc., herein contained, can be fully demonstrated only when they are tested in conjunction with the principles laid down in these two books. However, the main condition which makes for success is undoubtedly *concentration of mind on the part of the player*—a concentration which makes a random or mechanical movement an impossibility; for, when the movements are under the complete domination of the will, there results that rhythmic and harmonious co-operation of back, arm, and shoulder muscles, the importance of which we have tried to show. And, the nearer the player approaches to absolute mental control of his movements—the more effectually he trains his muscles to instantaneously contract or relax, at his will—the larger the drafts he makes on the energy latent in the powerful muscles of the back—the more characteristic and individual will his playing become.

The various exercises here given will doubtless, in the beginning, seem complicated of execution; nevertheless, slow and careful performance will prove them to be really easy, and to involve comparatively little physical exertion. They serve as

*On this point see Emil Sochting's little work, "Die Lehres des freien Fables" (Otto Wernthal, Magdeburg), where, on page 27, he refers to "stiffening" and to "relaxation" of the arm-muscles. Also C. A. Ehrenfechter, of London, in his book, "Technical Study in the art of Piano-Playing, on Deppe's Principles" (first published as a series of articles in "The Musical Standard," in 1890), writes as follows: "After the chord or single note has been executed, the arm is lifted high, allowing thereby the strained muscles to relax, regenerating thus their flexibility." See, also, the first chapter of "Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels" (Part I of this present book), where it is said that "this harmonious interworking of the muscles of the upper part of the body is an underlying and essential principle in * * * artistic and spontaneous tone-production." The following quotation on this subject is from the Appendix to my Exercise Book, page 116: "Generally speaking the beginner makes the mistake of expending a quite unnecessary amount of force. Usually, too, he fatigues almost all his muscles at the same time, because he has not learned how to bring them into play in due consecutive order, nor does he know how to apply those laws according to which a muscle is first made firm, then maintained in that state of tension, and, finally, relaxed when its activity is no longer needed."

**See footnotes to Preface.

a means whereby the most difficult musical figures may be performed with exquisite tone-coloring, with any required degree of velocity, and with a power and breadth of tone but seldom heard. "Energy without roughness, tenderness without affectation"*—such are the qualities thus placed within reach of the player, and thereby shall the popular saying, "Er schuettelt sich die schwersten Sachen nur so aus dem Aermel," find its literal justification.

*See Preface to C. Mikuli's Edition of Chopin's Works.

SOME CRITICISMS OF

Die Deppe'sche Lehre des Klavierspiels.

"I congratulate you on your clear and beautifully written work, in which you have given Deppe's principles with such fidelity and truth. The illustrations also are remarkably well done, and give an excellent idea of the correct hand positions. Your book made so forcible an impression on me that, while I read it, it seemed to me as if I heard Deppe speaking." AMY FAY.

NEW YORK, July, 1899. (Author of "Music Study in Germany.")

"Allow me to express to you my thanks for the inspiration which I have received through your presentation of the Deppean theories regarding piano-forte playing. On the path which each must make for himself one is thankful for the smallest help, but indeed it is no trifle you have bestowed upon us. I have been experimenting in the matter of "carrying the hand" over the keys in such a way as to develop grace in the binding of widely separated tones, and already, after little practice, I can perceive marked progress." DR. GRUNSKY,

STUTTGART, Oct., 1897. Musical Critic of the "Schwaebischen Merkur."

"This little book deserves more than passing notice from both teachers and pupils; in it will be found many pedagogical hints of distinct value."

STUTTGART-LEIPZIG. NEUE MUSIK-ZEITUNG.

"The Deppe method of piano playing, as explained by Elisabeth Caland, forms a valuable contribution to our literature on this subject . . . The treatise is very well written, and the reader will find therein much to provoke reflection and to incite to imitation."

EUGENE SEGNITZ.

MUSIKALISCHES WOCHENBLATT, May, 1900.

"This little book, so full of positive value and inspiration, is hereby heartily recommended to all the readers of our paper who are interested in piano playing. It is a pleasure to welcome so interesting a presentation of the subject." KAPELLMEISTER ARTHUR SMOLIAN.

KARLSRUHER ZEITUNG, Nov., 1897.