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PART II.

INTRODUCTION.

On Fingering in General.

The diffusion of an increased facility of execution on the Piano Forte, and the invention of new passages and combinations of notes, have given rise to a more varied application of the fingers, and have rendered necessary a system of fingering more adequate to the modern and improved style of playing on this instrument. This we shall here endeavour to develope and explain with all the clearness of which it is susceptible; as without a correct and convenient method of fingering, no person can become a good and ready performer.*

By fingering is understood the correct and appropriate application of the fingers of both hands. This is founded on convenience, and neatness or elegance of appearance, on which again depends, in a great degree, precision and certainty of performance.

Convenience supposes the choice of those fingers by which all the notes of a given passage may be most easily got at and most intelligibly performed. Elegance depends upon convenience, and forbids all unpleasant contortion or grimace. A passage is often considered as difficult, because the player employs a false or ill adapted method of fingering, or impedes the facility of the fingers by violent movements of the body.

As some passages admit of several dispositions of the fingers, and others of a single one only; to preclude all doubt and hesitation, I have, in most cases, chosen only one method, and that the best and most convenient.

The Thumb is the most important of the fingers, it is the pivot or point of support about which, whether the hand is to contract or to expand, the other fingers must turn, and direct themselves with the utmost possible facility and quickness, and without the least audible separation of the sounds. To exhibit to the Pupil all the cases of fingering which may occur, I have distributed the whole system of fingering under various heads, and have treated each division singly; as:

- I. Proceeding with the same succession of fingers when a passage consists of a progression of similar groups of notes.
- 2. Passage of the thumb under the other fingers, and of other fingers over the thumb.
 - 3. Omission of one or more fingers.
 - 4. Substitution of one finger for another on the recurrence of the same note.
 - 5. Extensions and Skips.

^{*} I consider this subject, therefore, as one of the most important of my treatise, and have endeavoured to elucidate it in every possible case, rather by numerous examples than by words.

- 6. Use of the thumb and little finger on the black keys.
- 7. Crossing a long finger over a shorter one, and passing a short finger under a longer one.
 - 8. Changing one or more fingers on the same key upon the immediate repetition of a note; and the successive application of one finger to two or more different keys.
 - 9. Placing the hands under each other, so that the fingers of one hand fall between those of the other; and crossing one hand over the other.
 - 10. Distribution of several parts between the two hands; and licences of fingering allowable in the strict or fugue style.

These different divisions of the system of fingering can only refer strictly and exclusively to passages for the right hand, as the place of the hand is fixed by the notation: the same cases of fingering may certainly occur for the left hand; but less frequently, and not in the order here prescribed for the right hand in particular.

Although the plan of the exercises contained in this Part is chiefly grounded on regular, and, generally diatonic successions of similar groups of notes, yet I have not neglected to place before the Pupil more varied applications of it; for Ex: by intermixing the black keys, by skips of larger intervals, and by extensions. The exercises are marked with fingering for the right hand, and in most cases for the left also; They must be practised at first with each hand singly, and then with both together. For the greater part, they are arranged according to the compass or interval, included between the extreme notes of the group or passage which serves as a model; yet they are not so limited to this point, but that other groups, bearing some similitude, but of wilder compass, are occasionly introduced.

I have also considered it necessary to add, from time to time, short remarks on the examples, calculated to assist the Pupil and facilitate the performance: as 1st how the hand should be held in playing the passage; 2dly whether the fingers are to be contracted; 3dly what note, on account of the better connexion and more certain performance of the group, must occasionally be held something longer than its strict time; and 4ly particularly, what note of a group or passage must receive a slight additional pressure or emphasis, in order to render the passage more intelligible to the ear.***

As the passages or groups of notes which serve as models, may be considerd as various modes of distributing the notes of certain chords, they, for the most part, admit of the same fingering as the chords themselves; where it appeared necessary, I have placed

^{*}That is, according to the compass of a third, fourth, fifth, &c: with a view to facilitate finding the method of fingering similar passages, when they occur in other compositions.

^{**} In the examples, this is indicated by a star. (*)

*** This emphasis must not be forced and unnatural; it supposes merely a little additional stress as compared with the other notes, it assists the player in keeping the exact time, and gives his fingers more precision and more power of refined expression. I have constantly indicated this by (A)

the chords which are the roots of the groups together with their fingering before the examples. To conclude, these short examples consist of melodial groups and passages, some simple, others complex; some following in regular succession, like the succeeding links of a chain, some in several parts, and all selected, either from my own works or those of celebrated Masters.

$$CHAP$$
. I .

On proceeding with the same succession of fingers when a passage consists of a progression of similar groups of notes.

s 1

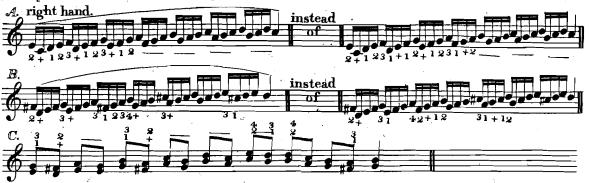
Indispensable as is the passage of the thumb under the other fingers, and that of the other fingers over the thumb, throughout the whole system of fingering, yet the too frequent employment of it is injurious, particularly when it recurs too speedily. To avoid this, we must employ the same succession of fingers when a passage consists of a progression of similar groups of notes. See Example (A.)

2

By this more simple disposition of the fingers, passages may be performed with greater certainty and connexion; for the hand here moves along with the utmost steadiness, and the fingers, which are but little lifted up, glide equably from key to key.

S. 3

The intervention of the black keys changes the symmetrical progression of the fingers, so far only as the rule in passages of single notes forbids the use of the thumb on the black keys; as soon as it returns to its previous position on the white keys, the original disposition of the fingers must again be resorted to Ex. B. passages of double notes however form an exception. C.



The following short exercises will familiarise the Pupil with many passages and group ings of notes, which depend on the mode of disposing the fingers explained in this chapter; and the assiduous practise of them will facilitate much of what follows in the course of this work.

Proceeding with same succession of Fingers in progressions of similar groups of notes.







(a) On the repetition of the note, the finger must be lifted up almost imperceptibly, the hand remaining perfectly at rest.





















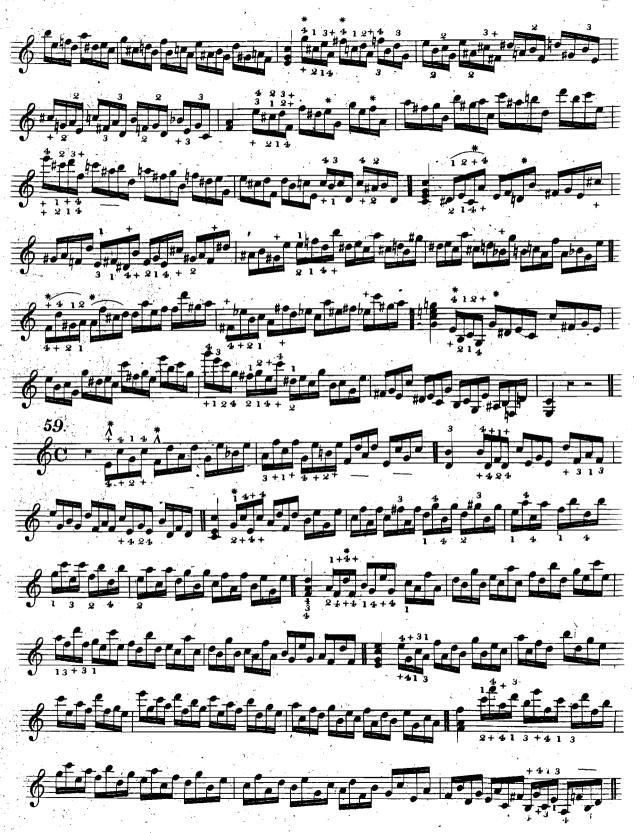














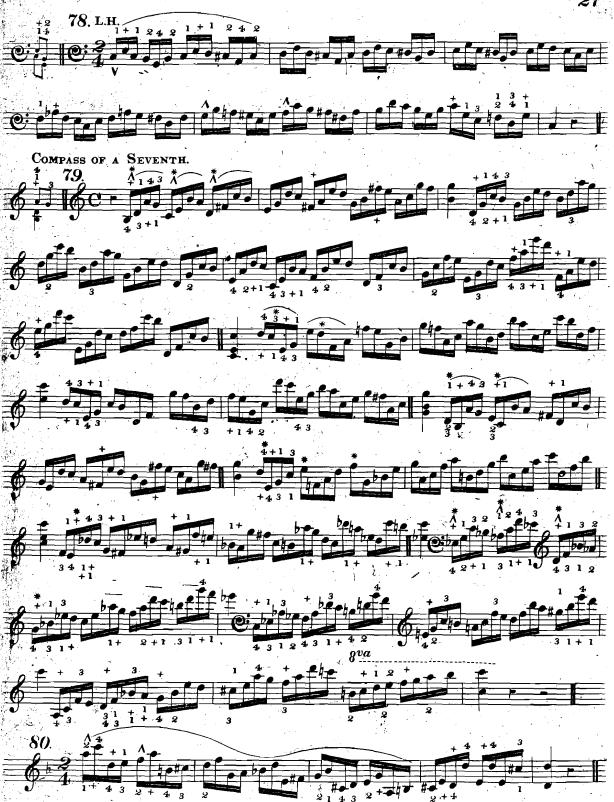




(a) When the interval of a third or fourth is taken with the 2d and 3d or 3d or 4th fingers extended, the angular position of these fingers somewhat resembles a fork, this in many cases, as here for example, saves passing the fingers over the thumb, and facilitates the performance.

















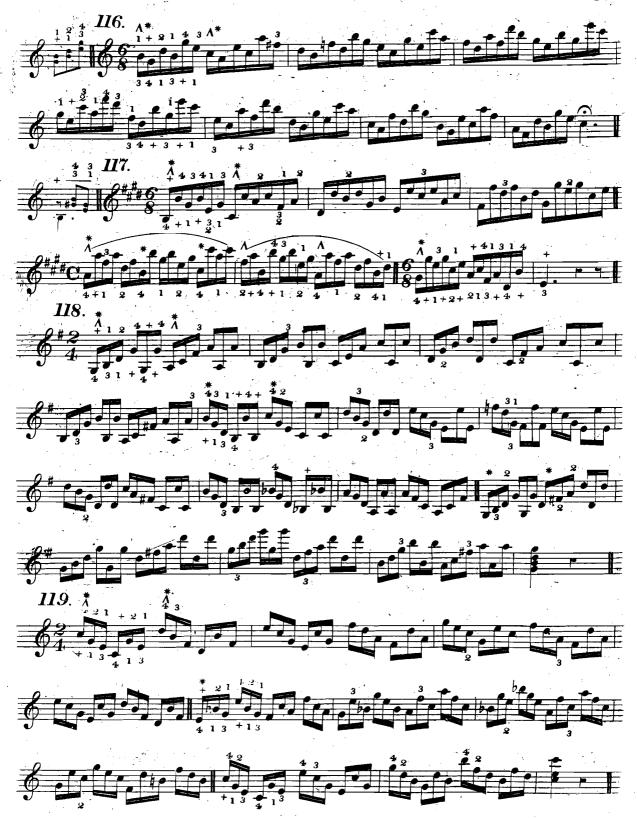


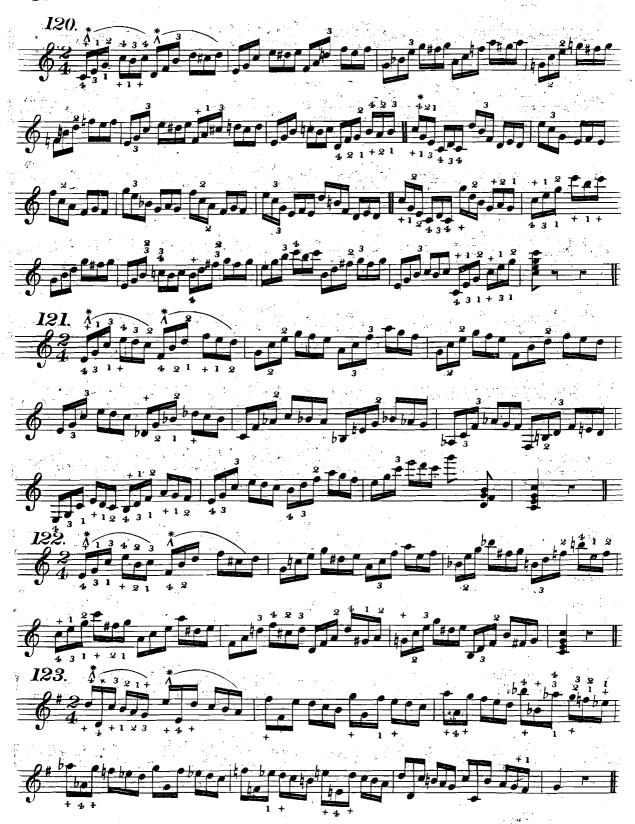














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(a) The hand preserves the utmost steadiness possible, and is to be little, if at all, lifted up from the keys.



