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PEDALLING IN  
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# PEDALLING IN PIANOFORTE MUSIC

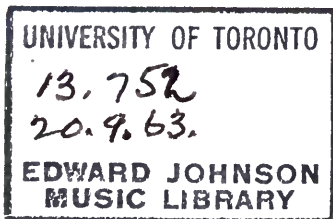
BY

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*With musical illustrations in the text*



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TO

COLIN TAYLOR

## PREFACE

IT has not been thought necessary to include the time signatures in the musical extracts given in the course of this work. As a rule, this can be seen at a glance, but if not it is of little importance.

To avoid the unnecessary multiplication of accidentals, key signatures have also, in many cases, been dispensed with.

Acknowledgment is made to Messrs. Augener for their kind permission to allow a few short extracts from the chapter on pedalling in the author's book on *Pianoforte Study* to be included in the present work.

A. H. L.

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PART I  
INTRODUCTORY

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PEDALLING

THERE is no more subtle art in connection with pianoforte playing than that of the correct management of the pedals, especially the right hand pedal. Yet this being so, it is strange that so few books have been written upon this subject, and that the amount of space devoted to it in most works upon pianoforte playing is of a comparatively meagre description. The professional pianist, although he studies the majority of his pedal effects with great care, pedals on the whole, instinctively. So does the amateur ; but whereas the instinct of the former leads to the production of very beautiful and delicate effects, the instinct of the latter is not usually attended by the same happy results. In his case the pedal is sometimes ignored altogether ; sometimes it is pressed down mechanically at the beginning of each bar, irrespective of the harmonic outline, and the method is not infrequently resorted to of using the pedal vaguely every now and then, either when the hands are not very busy and a little attention can be given

to the feet, or for the very opposite reason, because the hands are in difficulties and the pedal is called upon to help cover up the mistakes.

It is not surprising if many teachers feel much the same about pedalling as they do about fingering, for although more attention is given to the former than to the latter both in books of instruction and in editions of musical compositions, it is only in a minority of instances that this attention can be deemed even approximately adequate. Therefore the feeling is bound to exist that where instruction is not given in the printed copy it does not seem as if either of these subjects can be of sufficient importance to demand any serious call upon the time of either teacher or pupil.

This applies to pedalling even more than to fingering, for whilst it is quite easy to play any piece without once having recourse to the pedal, the *technical* outline hardly being affected by the omission, every note of every bar must be fingered somehow, whether the responsibility for the choice of fingering falls upon the composer, the editor, the teacher, or is left to the experimental resources of the pupil.

Difficult as it is to draw up rules for the systematic fingering of pieces, it is even more difficult to indicate any beyond broad general principles upon the subject of pedalling. These principles, honoured



sometimes in the breach and sometimes in the observance, may be summarised as follows :—

1. Pedal\* to be used where the music seems to need support and an added fullness of tone, whether in loud or soft playing.
2. Pedal to be changed at change of harmony.
3. Pedal to be released where passing notes, especially in the middle and lower registers of the instrument, would be likely to act as a disturbing factor by clouding and obscuring the phrase outline in the endeavour to retain the correct harmonic outline.

A discussion of the finer and more subtle effects will be found in subsequent chapters, but the above can be accepted as the bed-rock principles of simple and effective pedalling.

That directions in accordance with these principles can be found in several editions of standard works, as well as in many modern compositions is true. It is also true that many teachers are perfectly conversant with them, and may wonder why such pains are taken to point out what is already so widely accepted. But let this question be asked.

\* Unless otherwise stated, the word "pedal" always signifies right hand pedal.

How many teachers turn them to practical account by writing pedal directions into the pieces they give their pupils in the very numerous cases where adequate directions are not given in the printed copy? It must not be forgotten that if the rules which govern the teaching of music, or indeed of any subject, are not available for constant reference in some printed work, the necessity for their application is only too liable to be overlooked.

It is a paradoxical state of affairs which includes accurate pedalling as one of the chief factors in artistic pianoforte playing, and at the same time affords the student so little opportunity of gaining information upon the subject.

If one were to investigate the reasons for this it would be found to be due to a variety of causes, one of the chief ones probably being the clumsy fashion in which directions for pedalling are given. In the majority of instances the information that the pedal is needed is conveyed by using the first three letters of the word, thus, Ped, and the sign for its discontinuance is one not unlike a blend of a starfish and a porcupine, at least that is as near as any composer or copyist gets who tries to write it, and even in print the resemblance exists. All this takes up a great deal too much room on the page. In a series of rapid harmonic changes the pedal constantly

becomes due at a place already covered by the "d," the final letter of the previous "Ped," and if any attempts were made to mark such a passage in detail and to include as well the present mongrel sign for pedal release, it would result in such a crowded mass of directions that it would tend rather to confuse than to assist the student.


### THE HANS SCHMITT METHOD.

Other and more rational systems have from time to time been adopted, but the innovations have been of a spasmodic nature and no attempt has been made to arrive at any agreement with regard to the signs to be employed. One of the most practical was the one suggested by Hans Schmitt about 1860. It was patented and an attempt made to get it officially adopted, but apparently without success. Where the pedal was needed he placed beneath the bass staff a note equal in value to the length of time during which the pedal had to be sustained, supplemented by a horizontal line which continued till the point of pedal release was reached. This latter may seem superfluous, but the feeling amongst those who recognise the necessity for some change of method is almost unanimous in favour of the continuous line. Its presence before the eyes of the

pianist is counted upon to remove any inclination towards premature pedal release or delayed retention.

An example of this method is given :—



Syncopated pedalling (p. 45) he indicated thus, , the stroke through the head of the note signifying that pedal depression must take place not with, but immediately after key depression. This method, in spite of much influential support in the author's day, never seems to have been utilised in any editions of standard works, or in new compositions of that period.

#### THE BENJAMIN CESI METHOD.

A system resembling the above has been introduced by Signor Cesi into his edition of Chopin's works. The chief difference is that an extra line is placed below the bass staff, on which notes, equivalent to the time during which the pedal is to be kept down, are placed. The line is continuous whether pedalling

is needed or not, but no suggestion is given for syncopated pedalling.

*Funeral March..Chopin*

Another typical example—pedal line only

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### THE COLIN TAYLOR METHOD.

In this, a short perpendicular line shows where the pedal should be pressed down, and another, where it should come up, the two being joined by a horizontal line, so that the student has no chance of forgetting at any point whether the pedal should be in action or not.

*"Boats" Colin Taylor L. Hand only*

*pp*

It is a practical system and deserves to be more widely adopted.

#### SOME OTHER METHODS.

A variation of the ordinary marking is used in an edition of the works of Schumann—and possibly of some other composers. It consists of the first, instead of the first three letters of the word Pedal, and the sign for release is indicated by a simplified form of the one usually employed, thus, P †

If any objection can be urged against this, it is that the P is the letter used to indicate “piano”—that is that the music has to be played softly. Even with a difference in type it may easily be overlooked as a sign for pedal depression, and the sign for release is still unnecessarily elaborate.

The marks for down and up bow on the violin  $\sqcap$  v have been, at times, suggested as a substitute for the present signs, but have not met with much favour.

A universal method is badly needed, but in its absence recourse will be had to the following for the extracts quoted throughout this work.



This, a slight variation of the Colin Taylor method, is sufficient to show when the right pedal must be pressed down, and how long it must remain down, the final perpendicular stroke being dispensed with. Half pedalling will be marked thus,



The signs for the soft pedal and for tremolo pedalling will be found in the chapters dealing with these subjects.

#### DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF ACCURATE AND ADEQUATE PEDAL MARKING.

One of the most serious reasons for the neglect to define more accurately where the pedal is to be used is that no general agreement exists, even amongst the greatest pianists, as to where a pedal effect should be introduced or avoided. There exists merely a consensus of opinion that, first, in a certain type of passage (and there are very few upon which opinion is unanimous) a pedal effect is desirable, such, for instance, as a series of chords or arpeggios unhampered by passing notes, and secondly, another type where it is manifestly inappropriate, such as any passage of intricate part writing in music of a Contrapuntal or Fugal character.

It would be no more possible to give indications for all the pedalling that is desirable than it would be to give directions for every tiny crescendo and diminuendo or for every flicker of rubato that can legitimately be introduced into the rendering of a musical composition ; the markings required would be multitudinous. Also being printed, they would become in time traditional and stereotyped and would seem to preclude any variation in their employment. Spontaneity is one of the chief charms of interpretation, and a work would suffer if the artist felt himself restricted to an exact and mechanical repetition of all his effects at each performance he gave of it.

#### COMPARISON OF PIANOFORTE PEDALLING WITH ORGAN PEDALLING.

The cardinal error made in dealing with pianoforte pedalling is that it has never been treated as organ pedalling is treated, that is, it has never been looked upon as needing separate and independent study such as the technical difficulties associated with the organ pedal board render obligatory. There are no technical difficulties in pianoforte pedalling. There are only two pedals in place of a whole keyboard, and only one of these is needed with any frequency.



Anyone can press down either or both of them without any trouble, and no violent discord is produced unless the right pedal is held down continuously through a series of conflicting harmonies. Therefore the difficulties are underrated or unrealised, and teachers constantly omit to give the necessary instructions because technically, at any rate, pedalling is so easy, whilst composers and editors also omit to give adequate directions for a very different reason, because artistically at any rate, pedalling is so difficult.

The difficulties of organ pedalling are so much more patent than those associated with the piano-forte, that were a question propounded as to the relative degrees of difficulty of the two instruments, the answer would almost invariably be that there was no comparison between them, and organ pedalling would be voted as infinitely the more arduous and complicated of the two.

Nevertheless the popular answer would be an incorrect one. The difficulties of organ pedalling are purely of a technical character. Certain notes, all of which are written out, have to be played with the feet, and when the necessary facility has been acquired, this can be accomplished without anything having to be left either to chance or to the inspiration of the moment. The performer has to do

nothing but what is printed in the copy, so that perfectly accurate pedalling is within the scope of anyone who gives the necessary time to mastering the mechanical complications of the pedal keyboard. It is by no means the same with the pianoforte. Although no difficulty of a purely technical nature is encountered, there are quite enough of other kinds to compensate for this.

In organ playing there is never any doubt as to where the pedals are to be used. In pianoforte playing there is very seldom any certainty; the divergence of opinion amongst experts, the vagueness of the results produced in the one case, as contrasted with the very definite results obtained in the other, and the doubts engendered by the presence of passing notes, rests, staccato marks, etc., as to the wisdom of pedal application are all contributory causes to this state of mental indecision.

#### KNOWLEDGE OF MUSICAL THEORY NECESSARY.

It is perhaps almost superfluous to mention that appropriate pedalling can hardly be looked for from anyone not possessing an accurate knowledge of harmony, although a very sensitive ear can, to a certain extent, be relied upon to correct the very common tendency to blend antagonistic harmonies

This, however, is of more advantage to the performer than to the teacher. Where directions for pedalling have to be written in as a guide they must be based upon some plan, and only a recognition of the chord outlines of musical phrases will enable this to be done satisfactorily.

#### INAPPROPRIATE TERMS EMPLOYED TO DESCRIBE THE RIGHT-HAND PEDAL.

##### I.—*The Loud Pedal.*

The tendency to call the right pedal the “loud” pedal still exists, and is hard to eradicate, and when it is not called so, it is still too often thought of primarily as a means of making the music louder.

This is not to be wondered at, because if the left is, by common consent, designated the “soft” pedal, it is not easy to think of the other as anything but the loud pedal, and to support this view, it must be remembered that when big chords and fortissimo effects are needed, the right pedal always seems to be required, and, in fact, is required to help to increase the volume of sound.

##### II.—*The Sustaining Pedal.*

When students are corrected for misnaming this pedal, they are frequently told that it should be

called, not the "loud," but the "sustaining" pedal. Although the use of this term has, in a large measure, been discarded in favour of the more suitable, but not entirely satisfactory term "damper" pedal, it is still employed in many works dealing with pianoforte playing, and the idea exists all too prevalently that the primary mission of the pedal is to sustain the sounds created by the action of the hammer upon the strings. It is, however, almost, if not quite, as misleading a description as the word "loud." Neither is totally incorrect, for the fact that the pedal adds a certain measure of fullness to a forte or fortissimo passage and produces what may be described as "noise" when held down through a succession of harmonies that do not blend, seems to give a kind of warrant for terming it the loud pedal; the fact, on the other hand, that some kind of sound continues whilst the pedal is held down, even after the hands have left the keys, equally appears to justify the title of "sustaining" pedal.

As this pedal is used quite as frequently in pianissimo as in fortissimo passages, no time need be wasted just at present in proving that loud is an inappropriate adjective to apply to it. But the inadvisability of the word "sustaining" as a description of the effect for which it is responsible is not so immediately evident.

## THE TERM SUSTAINED AS APPLIED TO MUSICAL SOUNDS.

A genuine sustained sound is one that exists definitely and recognisably from the moment it first becomes audible till the moment it passes into silence. For instance, a note sustained on the organ, violin, voice, etc., can be continued till it is released, and therefore ceases to be audible, as firmly and distinctly as at the moment of production. It can, if desired, be increased in volume, and so at any period of its existence, is recognisable as a distinct, individual note. In fact, where the organ is concerned, the sound cannot diminish in volume unless recourse be had to fewer or weaker stops.

A comparison of the effect of sound produced by the pianoforte and that produced either by the organ, any wind instrument, the human voice, or a stringed instrument played with a bow, will serve to illustrate the difference between a theoretically and a practically sustained sound. If a note be played on one of these instruments or sung by a voice, and if, while still being held, a note below it is played by the same or another instrument, or sung by another voice, the upper note will still be the more prominent (unless overwhelmed by a great increase in tone in the lower note), whilst on the pianoforte the freshly

struck note will almost completely overshadow the one previously played.

It can be seen therefore, that the word *sustained* or *sustaining* with reference to any effect obtained or obtainable from a pianoforte is little more than a mere courtesy title. With whatever power a note or chord is sounded upon this instrument, and however brilliant the instantaneous effect may be, it is followed at once by a mere ghost of itself, just a shadow or murmur, and even this immediately sets about disintegrating and disappearing till it fades away into silence.

Whenever sound is created by percussion, as in the case of a pianoforte, a drum or a gong, it retains very little of its original value after the moment of impact. An illustration will make this clear.



If the above were played upon the organ, wind or stringed instrument, or sung by voices, the impression conveyed to the listener would be that at the second half of the bar (*a*) the chief note had become supported by the introduction of a lower one. If played upon the pianoforte, the impression would be that a new melody note, E, had been

introduced at the half bar, supported faintly by something above it, which might or might not be recognised as being the note heard at the beginning of the bar.

### III.—*The Damper Pedal.*

Reference has already been made to the increasing use of the word "damper" as a more fitting description of the action of the pedal than those previously employed. As the depression and release of the pedal act directly upon the whole body of dampers, the choice of the word seems justified. It is not an entirely felicitous term for all that. One naturally thinks of a damper pedal as a pedal that damps. The damping, however, only takes place upon the release of the pedal, its depression *un-*damps them.

There is no need in referring to this pedal to employ any qualifying adjective at all. When occasion arises to differentiate between the two pedals, the term "right" and "left" pedal are sufficiently descriptive. But with regard to the latter, the words "soft pedal" can be substituted if preferred. It is an appropriate designation as the only effect it is capable of is that of making the music softer.

## THE MECHANISM OF THE PIANOFORTE.

The construction of the pianoforte must be understood before the different effects of passages played with and without the pedal can be appreciated. Inside the frame are wires, commonly called strings, stretched perpendicularly, or obliquely in an Upright pianoforte, and horizontally, the length of the instrument, in a Grand.

Modern pianofortes—with few exceptions—are built on the *trichord* principle, an improvement on the *bichord* mechanism of an earlier generation. That is to say, that corresponding to each note of the keyboard, from a certain note in the bass upwards, are three strings tuned in unison which are struck simultaneously by the hammer as the key is pressed down. This does not apply to the lower register of the instrument, where, owing to the thickness of wire that is needed, the *bichord*, or two-string principle still prevails, whilst in the lowest register of all—about the last octave and a half—the added thickness renders more than one string superfluous.

## ACTION OF HAMMERS AND DAMPERS UPON THE STRINGS.

Resting upon the strings is a row of dampers, one to correspond to each note from the lowest note



in the bass to a note in the treble varying between C and E in alt



(the weakness of the vibrations in the notes above this renders damping unnecessary), and resting over or in front of the strings, but not touching them, is a row of felt covered hammers, also one to each note. Pressure upon any of the notes of the keyboard produces a two-fold result: it raises the dampers from the strings that correspond to the notes played, *but from none of the others*, and it causes the hammers to strike the strings thus freed with an equivalent amount of power to that used upon the keyboard. So long as any of the keys remain down after being thus pressed or struck, so long do the corresponding strings remain free to vibrate. It is not till the keys are released that the dampers return to the strings and immediately shut off the sound.

A curious fact in connection with the pedal action of the pianoforte is that the blow of the hammer-head upon the strings is so rapid, even when the key is pressed down slowly, that the eye is quite unable to detect the moment of impact. Young students should be encouraged to look inside the

instrument and observe the mechanism in operation, both of the hammers and dampers, noting specially how it varies under the influence, first, of the hands upon the keyboard, and secondly of the foot upon the pedal. It will be seen that whilst the effect of depressing notes upon the keyboard is to release merely the corresponding dampers from the strings, the result of the pedal depression is to raise *all* the dampers simultaneously, and this allows, not only the strings which have been struck to vibrate, but also those strings which are in sympathetic accord, these consisting mainly of major thirds, perfect fourths, fifths and octaves.

#### THE REAL MISSION OF THE PEDAL.

A realisation of the presence of sympathetic intervals in all music played with undamped strings will bring home to the student that the actual effect of the pedal, if used with accuracy and discretion, is to *surround the music with an atmosphere of appropriate harmonics and overtones*, which though devoid of the actual significance of recognisable individual notes, yet serves to enrich the phrases and to add colour and background to the musical outline.\*

\* A fuller description of the mission of the pedal in relation to different schools and periods is given in Ch. IV., pp. 60-62.

It is owing to the indeterminate character of its effects that the pedal must often be held through phrases in which occur diatonic and chromatic passing notes (Ch. IV., p. 51). Also in certain staccato passages as well as those where rests intervene amongst chords of the same harmony (Ch. V., p. 83). It must, however, not be forgotten that the presence of passing notes and the sympathetic vibration of strings other than those actually struck by the hammers, tend very quickly to create a blurred sound and pedal release becomes imperative. The moment at which the harmonic atmosphere becomes so confused as to render the continuance of the pedal effect inartistic and inappropriate is the exact period at which its release is demanded, but it requires considerable study to be able to appreciate the psychological moment and to adapt the pedalling almost intuitively to its harmonic requirements.

PART II  
PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE  
PRINCIPLES OF PEDALLING

CHAPTER I

PEDALLING AND THE COMMON CHORD.

IF the student wishes to approach the problems connected with this subject in the order of their relative importance and progressive difficulty, he must begin by learning to recognise the kind of passage, that, by almost universal agreement, demands pedal support. The type of passage referred to is not one in which the use of the pedal is optional, in which even the moment of depression or release is optional, nor one wherein any subtleties of half-pedalling or syncopation are needed; but just the plain passage where the pedal must be pressed down with the first chord or note, and raised definitely at a certain point—usually the final chord or note. The form most frequently taken by such a passage is that of a simple arpeggio unencumbered by any factor calculated to prove disturbing to the harmonic atmosphere. It is found mainly, but of course not wholly, in the technical and non-thematic portion of a work. It is a device much favoured by

Beethoven. He uses it in its very simplest form to conclude many of the last movements of his Sonatas. Reference can be made to the Kreutzer (Piano and Violin), the F Minor, Op. 3, and the one in A flat Op. 110, also to the opening of the E flat Concerto. The final bars of the oft-quoted "Moonlight" and "Appassionata" are not included in this category, because, whilst no disagreement exists as to the need for the pedal or the moment of its depression, opinion is not entirely unanimous as to the place for its release.

When a theme or subject is made up entirely of the notes of the common chord, some other part, the accompaniment, bass or counter subject will seldom be found to be free from passing notes. When only essential notes occur the pedalling is usually simple and straightforward, as shown in the next quotation.

*pp*      *Refrain de Berceau.. Palmgren*

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The subject of the G Minor Rhapsody of Brahms, is almost devoid of passing notes, and the pedalling,

though not quite as simple and obvious as in the preceding examples, presents hardly any difficulty in the opening section, and very little subsequently.



### THE ARPEGGIO.

#### I.—*In Etude Form.*

A development of the arpeggio is its appearance in Etude form ; a very characteristic example can be seen in Chopin's Etude in C minor (Op. 25), where the pedal is needed in every bar, and must be changed with every change of harmony, this usually, but not invariably, occurring at the beginning of each bar.



Where chord changes take place in the course of a bar the pedalling to be adopted is equally simple.



The same composer's Etude in C Major (Op. 10) affords an almost equally good illustration, but in this, the arpeggios are found only in the right hand, the left being occupied with simple octaves, which in most bars do not change till the new harmony appears.

Many similar examples can be seen in the Studies of Czerny, Cramer, Moscheles, and other writers.

## II.—As Accompaniment.

The next appearance of the arpeggio is as an accompaniment to a theme or melody, and it must be remembered that unless the music is to be played piano or pianissimo in the lower register of the



instrument, the pedal is needed as frequently in soft as in loud music.

As soon as passing notes appear in a melody, individual judgment is required as to the moment for pedal release. Where they affect the harmony as little as in the following they can be ignored, but the subject of passing notes is dealt with so fully later that it would not be profitable to pursue it further at present.

*"Song without words"*  
Mendelssohn

12

\* *Passing note*

Detailed description: This musical score shows a piano accompaniment for Mendelssohn's 'Song without words'. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two flats. The melody in the treble clef includes a passing note marked with an asterisk. A horizontal line below the bass clef indicates the pedal point, which is held for the duration of the melody. The number '12' is written below the staff, and a legend indicates that the asterisk denotes a 'Passing note'.

### REPEATED CHORDS.

The pedal is required just as imperatively in the case of repeated chords when they are not broken up into arpeggios.

*All<sup>o</sup>* *ff* *Fantasia in C. Schubert.*

13

or

Detailed description: This musical score shows the beginning of Schubert's 'Fantasia in C'. It is marked 'All<sup>o</sup>' and 'ff'. The score is written in bass clef and shows a series of repeated chords. A horizontal line below the staff indicates the pedal point, which is held for the duration of the repeated chords. The number '13' is written below the staff, and the word 'or' is written below the pedal line, suggesting an alternative interpretation of the pedal.



*Concerto in Bb mi - Tschaiakowski.*

14

## EXCEPTIONS TO ABOVE RULES.

It is plain sailing so far, but difficulties begin to arise, not only where divergences occur from the pattern of simple chords and arpeggios, but almost as frequently within that very restricted area.

The pedal is needed with great frequency in nearly every class of music. Where the chord outline is definite and is not surrounded by an embarrassing number of passing notes, it will generally be found to be appropriate; at any rate it will never create any objectionable impression if changed with judgment. But because an effect is unobjectionable and is often appropriate, it does not follow that it is therefore expedient to summon it to one's aid upon every occasion. The pedal adds a species of colour to pianoforte music as the brass or the wind do to orchestral music, but colour must not be used indiscriminately. It is as necessary

to learn when to dispense with colour as when to employ it. No higher compliment can be paid to a pianist than to say that nothing becomes him in his pedalling like his leaving it, its avoidance often being more valuable as an artistic asset than its employment. But as it should never be used aimlessly, it likewise must not be avoided without a definite reason.

The problem now under consideration is—Under what conditions should the pedal not be used when the music is built upon the simple harmonic basis illustrated in the previous portion of this chapter.

#### FIVE RULES.

I.—In music of the pre-Beethoven era it should be used very sparingly.

II.—It should obviously be avoided when marked so by the composer.

III.—A passage that has been pedalled on its first appearance, can be played unpedalled (or with a different system of pedalling) on its subsequent appearance or appearances, the converse method equally holding good.

IV.—The pedal can be released for the mere purpose of affording relief to the ear when

continuous harmonic support threatens to become monotonous.

V.—When a theme or subject consists solely of the notes of the common chord played either singly or with the two hands in unison, no support must be given to this by the pedal.

### THE RULES ILLUSTRATED.

I.—Illustrations to the first rule will be found in Chapter oo, and need not be dwelt on here.

II.—A composer sometimes desires that certain passages in his works should be played unpedalled, and to ensure this marks them “*Senza Pedale*,” or uses some indication of similar significance.

*Finale, Sonata Op. 27 - Beethoven*

15

In this the directions for pedal avoidance are implied instead of being expressed. It is made quite clear that no cumulative crescendo is required, but a clearly articulated passage of an even quality of tone, ending in an abrupt burst of sound on the

fourth beat, the pedal being reserved, according to the composer's marking, for this effect.

Brahms marked "Senza Ped" in the concluding bars of his G Minor Ballade. He wished nothing to be included but the actual notes played; no harmonic background, no atmospheric impression, just the uncoloured architectural outline. Schumann occasionally marked "Senza Pedale," as in No. 5 of the Carnival, Etude IX. of the Etudes Symphoniques, etc. Similar marking is to be seen in some modern compositions where the composer takes pains to indicate in detail the pedal effects he requires, but it is not usual to find, as in the Beethoven Sonata and the Brahms Ballade, passages made up entirely of the notes of the common chord with directions from the composer that the pedal is not to be used.

III.—In Schubert's Impromptu in A flat, the figure of the opening subject occurs repeatedly later on, first in the following simple form

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The melody in the treble staff is a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B-flat4, C5, B-flat4, A4, G4. This melody is repeated in the second measure. The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment of quarter notes: G3, B-flat3, D4, G3. Below the bass staff, there is a marking "no Ped." with a dotted line underneath, indicating that the pedal should not be used. To the left of the bass staff, the number "16" is written, and below it are the letters "a", "b", and "c" stacked vertically.

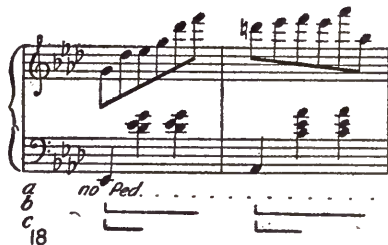
and then as an accompaniment to a melody in the left hand.

17 *a*  
*b*  
*c* no Ped.

A thoughtless pianist would pedal every bar in each repetition in exactly the same manner, on account of the simple chord outline, and the almost total absence of passing notes. A thoughtful one would realise that the continual recurrence of the same figure offered an excellent opportunity for varying the pedal colouring on the lines indicated above.

The ordinary pedalling (*a*) which adapts itself to the harmonic outline, may later on, be omitted altogether (*b*) from some of the four-bar groups, or can be deferred till the second beat; (*c*) which, in the former of the two extracts assists the staccato effect in the bass, and in the latter, helps to retain the bass note which the finger is unable to keep down for its full value.

Chopin's Valse in A flat (Op. 42) affords another interesting example.



This, or some slight variation of it occurs after every section of the Valse, and although it will be found *generally* advisable to use the pedal throughout each bar, some welcome variety can be imparted to one or two of its many repetitions by varying the pedal treatment as suggested in the above marking. Method *a* helps to accentuate the detached character of the bass chords, *b* gives tone and support to the whole bar, and *c* adds a little fullness to the accented portion of the bar only.

IV.—Sometimes the atmosphere becomes heavy with an unchanged and long spun out harmony, chiefly owing to the repetition of chords and arpeggios in the lower registers of the piano-forte, then pedal release (or half release) becomes advisable.

Beethoven, who had a predilection for chords of close harmony in the bass, supplies several examples, in one of which, quoted below, the four bass notes of the chord of G Major are played twenty-four times in succession, the variation from which it is taken coming to rest with the same chord played as a slow arpeggio. The rapid pedal changes (or half changes) should take place at, or immediately after, each of the right hand chords.

*For. and. Fugue in E♭: Beethoven. — No. 33*

19      1      2      3      4      5      6      6 groups  
or 1/2 release (and simile)

The pedal in the last bar should be released early, the chord itself in such close position in the bass supplies all the resonance necessary.

The alternative pedalling given in No. 13, p. 27, provides another but shorter illustration, the option being given of playing the arpeggio of C Major without pedal after keeping it down for the previous chords of the same harmony.

V.—In announcing an unaccompanied theme composed entirely of notes of the common chord, architectural clearness is the paramount need, and

this cannot be attained if the pedal is brought in with its disturbing atmospheric effects.

*All.<sup>o</sup> Sonata in C.mt.-Mozart*

20

*All.<sup>o</sup> Sonata in F minor Op. 3. N<sup>o</sup> 1. Beethoven*

21 L.H. tacet

The staccato character of the theme in these two instances may seem to explain why the pedal should be avoided, but as an explanation it is inadequate, because, were the bars quoted technical instead of thematic, it is quite possible that the pedal would be required. But if the student will look at the opening bars of the Sonata Appassionata (Op. 57), he will see that the subject, which consists entirely of the notes of the common chord spread over a wide compass, should be played with as pure a legato as the fingers are capable of producing. Nevertheless, to surround this theme with an atmosphere of harmonics and overtones would be inappropriate and undesirable from every point of view.

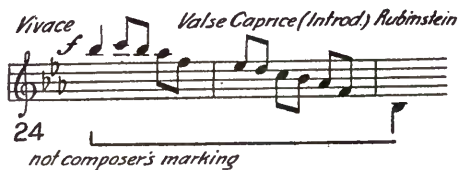
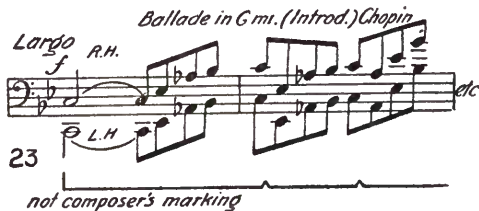
It is not so easy to dogmatise with regard to much of the music of a more recent date, but even in the elusive and impressionistic examples of the modern school it is as well that the announcement of an



absolutely unaccompanied theme should be unpedalled.



There are certain passages of chord outline, made up either of single notes or with the two hands an octave apart, which, though forming no portion of the actual theme of a work, still possess some individual and occasionally even melodic significance. They are often found in the introductory bars of a pianoforte composition.



The former is built upon the major chord of A flat, with a passing note, B flat in each octave. The

latter has the dominant seventh of E flat for its outline with a passing E flat and C. Some authorities advocate pedal in the Chopin Ballade, with occasional partial release, as shown above, and at least one editor recommends it for the Rubinstein Valse. Considering the free, cadenza-like nature of these bars, and the generous pedalling needed during the latter progress of both these works, they might well be left free of any sustained chord effect, the latter number particularly.

#### TWO SCHOOLS OF PEDALLING.

It may not be amiss in this connection to call attention to the fact that there exist two schools of pedalling, with divergent and even somewhat antagonistic aims. So little has this subject been studied scientifically and systematically that it is doubtful if the existence of two methods is actually realised even by their respective exponents. The chief points of difference are that according to one method the pedal should—at any rate in the classics—be resorted to mainly in order to add body and colour to chords and chord passages, whilst according to the other it should be called upon to supply a harmonic background to nearly every type of passage.

The difference of view is very clearly marked in the next examples, one authority recommending the pedal in the first one (No. 25) at the opening octave, and another its postponement till the entry of the chord passage ; and similarly with the little valse movement in the second one (No. 26).

Students must make their own choice of method, but until greater unanimity has been reached upon this subject, it will be found safer to err rather on the side of caution and restraint than on that of a too lavish resort to the colour scheme provided by the pedal.

If so much freedom exists it may be asked why time is apparently wasted upon giving such detailed and complicated directions upon the subject. But whilst there exists a considerable variety of appropriate pedalling for an artist to select from, there is also a wide scope for the exponents of involuntary effects. Bad pedalling will spoil the

interpretation of any musical composition, and as it is advisable not to spoil musical compositions needlessly, no apology is offered for the elaboration with which a subject of such complexity as pedalling is treated in these pages.

## CHAPTER II

### PEDALLING FOR ISOLATED CHORDS, AND FOR CONSECUTIVE, NON-LEGATO, CHORDS OF DIFFERENT HARMONY.

THIS effect, which is needed continually, is too often completely overlooked, this being due almost entirely to the inadequate pedal markings in even the best editions. Even where general directions for pedalling are printed in the music, or are written into the pieces by teachers for their pupils, it is seldom that these directions extend to the pedalling of individual chords.

If the neglect only applied to chords marked *p* or *pp* it would be more easily understood, as the association of pedalling with loudness is hard to eradicate from the mind, but as the use of the pedal always adds *something* to the effect produced, whether atmosphere, resonance or fullness be the term chosen to describe it, it is all the more remarkable that indications for pedal support in forte and fortissimo non-legato chords are so seldom given by composer, editor or teacher. Nothing that can be

done to help such chords to vibrate and ring out, to increase the impression of climax, when they occur at the end of a work or section of a work, or to obviate the short snappy effect of detached, unpedalled chords, should be overlooked or neglected, yet it is astonishing how rarely pedal instruction is given. It is only another illustration of the same vicious circle referred to previously—neither the composer nor editor puts pedal marks for these chords, either because he does not think of it, or if he does think of it he looks upon the necessity for the pedal as so obvious as not to be worth the trouble of marking, whilst teachers and students finding no information forthcoming upon the subject, often, in their turn overlook it, or if giving any thought to it, decide that the absence of information indicates either that the pedal *need* not or *must* not be used.

It is not usual to find a theme or subject made up of consecutive *detached* chords of different harmony, although several instances can be found in the works of Schumann, who has a predilection for chord effects. When these are written to be played arpeggio, and in either hand extend beyond the compass of an octave, the pianist as a rule feels the necessity for pedal effect, so as to enable the entire chord, and not merely the upper notes to be heard.



The March movement from the Fantaisie affords another example. For non-*arpeggio*, detached chords within the compass of an octave, the student is referred to the same composer's *Novelette in F*, the *Nachtstück in D Minor*, and the third variation of the *Etudes Symphoniques* amongst many similar instances. They are not quoted, because Schumann, almost alone amongst composers—whilst not giving any detailed directions, wrote “*Pedale*” or “*con pedale*” at the beginning of nearly every work, and every number in a work.

It is a waste of effect to rob individual chords of the resonance afforded by the pedal and the student who learns to appreciate this fact will soon be able to introduce appropriate pedalling into chord passages, of which the following may serve as examples.

The final chord is intended to create a sensation of surprise by its unexpected *fortissimo*, and needs all the resources of the pianoforte that can be called into play, certainly comprising that of the

*And<sup>te</sup> (closing bars) from Sonata in G  
Op. 14. Beethoven*

28

*optional* ..... *compulsory*

pedal, but this is seldom marked and very seldom used.

*Sonata in Cmi. Op. 13 (end of 1<sup>st</sup> mov<sup>t</sup>.) Beethoven*

29

Ped on no account to be omitted in these bars, in spite of the absence of pedal marks in most editions.

Innumerable instances could be adduced but to little purpose. The student can dip into music of any school almost at random, and find them for himself. In nearly every case these detached chords are enriched by the use of the pedal, but no immutable law can be passed upon this subject.



The concluding chords of a work should *almost invariably* be pedalled.



It is quite extraordinary how often this is disregarded. In the Mendelssohn example the editor (or composer) has gone to the trouble of marking the pedal carefully for the long, preceding series of arpeggio chords on the tonic, and has then omitted to indicate it for the final chords. The sign for pedal release being printed just before these chords looks like an indication for them to be played unpedalled, which would be totally inaccurate.

In a series of non-legato chords marked *f* or *ff* the pedal may be dispensed with occasionally, for the reason, previously alluded to, of affording the ear temporary relief from the vibrations it sets up.

Monotony of tone colour should at all costs be avoided in any form of musical interpretation, but only sufficient exceptions should be introduced to accentuate the rule requiring the pedal for detached forte or fortissimo chords.

## CHAPTER III

### SYNCOPATED PEDALLING.

ALTHOUGH the release of the strings from the dampers should in most cases take place at the exact entry of the harmony that requires pedal support, absolute synchronisation of hands and foot is not always advisable. Recourse must then be had to syncopated pedalling, which, as its name implies, means that the pedal must be raised *at* the change of harmony, and be pressed down again shortly—in most cases immediately—afterwards.

The reasons for this are two-fold: first, that an adequate legato may be secured, unobtainable through the action of the hands, and, secondly, to prevent the overlapping of antagonistic harmonies. The former is usually required in a succession of legato chords, and it will be found that some of the fingers have to be lifted in each chord in order to be able to strike notes in the one that follows. Therefore, if the pedal is put down with, instead of after, each chord a very unsatisfactory legato is obtained, for the foot will come up simultaneously

with those fingers that are needed in the following chord. Chopin's C Minor Prelude, which is written thus—

31

has actually to be played thus (the two systems of pedalling being included).

32

*Ordinary pedalling (bad legato)*  
*Syncopated pedalling (good legato)*

Any passage of legato chords affords an almost equally good example. The student is referred, amongst many that could be chosen—to the middle section of Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor (Op. 37, No. 1), and the theme of the slow movement of Beethoven's Sonata (Op. 57).

In Percy Grainger's Irish Tune, syncopated pedalling is given in every bar throughout the piece by the author himself.

The second reason for adopting syncopation in pedalling is the exact opposite to the one given above. It is not because the hands are unable to accomplish the legato unaided, but because they are easily able to do so that the change of pedal must take place a shade later than would under other circumstances be necessary. When the notes can all be held down their full value it means that the chords have been broken up into arpeggios. Then the danger arises as one harmony glides into the next, that the final note or notes of the one may be caught as it were by the fresh pedal entry, if effected at the very instant the harmonic change takes place, and carried over into the next chord. This can only be avoided by the syncopated treatment as seen in the next illustration.

*Song without Words, No. 1, Mendelssohn*

The image shows a musical score for the first system of 'Song without Words, No. 1' by Mendelssohn. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piece begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The melody in the treble staff is a simple, flowing line. The bass staff features a more complex accompaniment with frequent arpeggiated chords. A large, curved brace spans across the top of both staves, indicating a single, continuous pedal point. Below the bass staff, there are four vertical lines, each starting with a bracket that spans the width of a measure. These lines represent the placement of the piano pedal, which is held down for the duration of each measure, creating a syncopated effect where the pedal is changed at the beginning of each bar rather than at the end of the previous one.

33



*Valse in Ab. — Chopin*

35

*not* →

(3) In wide spread arpeggio chords, where, as in the above, the important foundation note is either materially weakened or entirely lost before the upper notes of the chord are heard.

*L.H. Chorale from  
Prel. Chorale & Fugue — Cesar Franck*

36

*not*      *etc.*

This latter method would bring the pedal down each time, with, or just before, the upper melody note, and too late to retain the bass octave.

(4) There is another and final objection to a too general use of syncopated pedalling. All notes gain

a certain measure of fullness of tone when supported by the pedal, and, in inverse ratio, lose a corresponding amount of value upon pedal release. Notes deprived of pedal assistance at the moment of sounding are therefore weaker in tone than if played with ordinary pedalling, the added resonance, coming *between* the beats or pulses, produces a dynamic effect that is not required, and is only resorted to in order to avoid an undesirable effect of some other kind. For this reason it is often preferable to risk a slight overlapping of harmonies than to weaken the accented portions of the bar. In the majority of musical phrases the overlapping, when it occurs, is often so faint as to be practically negligible. Syncopation in pedalling is, under certain circumstances, both desirable and effective, but, in others, no corresponding gain can be urged to compensate for the weakness of tone engendered by this after depression, and the music, often suffers no detriment from the adoption of the simpler method.

## CHAPTER IV

### TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD PEDALLING BE INFLUENCED BY THE PRESENCE OF PASSING NOTES.

THIS is the most important and possibly the most difficult of all the problems with which a pianist is likely to be confronted.

There are very few phrases in pianoforte music unattended by passing notes, and, except in music of the pre-Beethoven era, the pedal is seldom dispensed with for any considerable number of bars in succession. As no complete consensus of opinion exists as to what phrases in music should or should not be pedalled, or at what exact point pedal depression or release should take place, it will be seen that helpful advice upon this matter is not easy to give. Whatever solutions are offered as the various difficulties arise will admit of numerous exceptions, but some general principles can be enumerated which will furnish at least a working basis in dealing with this branch of the subject



WHERE THE PEDAL SHOULD, AS A RULE,  
BE USED.

The pedal should be used whenever the necessity for sustaining the harmony more than compensates for the disadvantage of allowing passing, or non-essential notes to vibrate concurrently.

THE DIFFERENT REGISTERS.

The effect of the pedal upon passing notes in the highest register of the pianoforte is so slight as to be almost negligible. Towards the middle of the instrument their presence makes itself more clearly felt, but with a sustained bass, the pedal can seldom be dispensed with. Passing notes in the lower part of the treble and the upper part of the bass create too disturbed an atmosphere to make pedalling generally acceptable, the unacceptability increasing in proportion as the music descends into the middle and lower octaves of the bass. In every instance the undesirable impression created by pedalled passing notes is mitigated when they are of a diatonic, and considerably accentuated when they are of a chromatic character.

This supplies an example of a simple tonic harmony which it is desirable to support with the pedal whilst the passing notes of the most harmless

*gva* *Nocturne Pastorale - Field.*

*dim* *etc.*

37

diatonic character are safely out of the way in the upper regions of the instrument.

#### SOME ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE WORKS OF CHOPIN.

One of the most characteristic patterns of this, the most pianistic of all composers, consists of a blend of chromatic and diatonic passing notes in the treble over a simple harmonic bass.

Whilst every effort should be made to retain the chord outline, no rigid and monotonous method of pedalling must be employed, and relief must be sought, when the right hand part remains too long near the middle of the pianoforte or descends below it.

#### THE BERÇEUSE.

The passing notes in this composition (too well-known to quote) are not only of a delicate, ornamental nature, but they are placed mainly in the upper

octaves of the instrument. The pedal can therefore be used throughout the work, if care is taken to change it at the half bar whenever the tonic harmony gives place to that of the dominant seventh.



A little welcome variety can be imparted to this by omitting the pedal occasionally from the second half of the bar. The late Walter Macfarren strongly recommended this, and as he knew Chopin personally, and had heard him play frequently, it is probable that the suggestion was more than the mere expression of his individual opinion.\*

#### ETUDE IN F MINOR, OP. 25.

The pedalling of this characteristic number is by no means easy. The right hand part consists in about equal parts of essential and passing notes, the latter on the whole slightly predominating. Its phrases, which need no assistance from the pedal seldom rise high enough to nullify its effect upon the

\* He also mentioned the interesting fact that Chopin, in playing this work, used to keep down the soft pedal from beginning to end.

passing notes, the highest note reached in the course of the work being



yet the chord figure upon which the whole of the bass is constructed cannot well be left unpedalled.



One well-known edition marks the pedal to be put down in accordance with the chord outline as above, but suggests that at times it should be omitted from the second half of those bars in which a change of harmony occurs, exactly on the principle of the Macfarren pedalling of the *Berçeuse* just referred to. Other authorities advise pedal depression for the first half *only* of every bar throughout the work. It does not require a great stretch of imagination to look upon the pedalling in certain pieces as the equivalent of shading in a drawing or painting. The tone of this *Etude* would be too uniformly grey if practically the whole of every bar was in shadow—through pedal depression—nor can it be deemed an improvement to have the first half of every bar, as it were, overcast (pedalled) and the second half quite clear and unclouded. What is needed is a fairly

equal distribution of lights and shades, relieved by a flicker of light here and a shadow there, like sunshine playing amongst leaves. To attain this end, the student is advised in playing this number to avoid the monotonous repetition of any pedal effect. He should use the system either of whole bar or half bar pedalling as a foundation, but should not be afraid to leave occasional bars unpedalled (not necessarily always the same bars), and should experiment in others with a touch of pedal, sometimes at the lowest bass note, and sometimes just here and there as his fancy prompts him.

### THE A MINOR ETUDE (OP. 25).

This Etude illustrates the advisability of releasing the pedal as the music, embellished by passing notes

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano etude. The first system is marked *All.<sup>o</sup> con brio* and *ff*. It features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a harmonic accompaniment. A dashed box encloses the first few measures, with the instruction *loco.* written above the treble staff. Below the first system, there are two horizontal lines with brackets indicating pedaling instructions: the first is labeled *no Ped* and the second is labeled *optional*. The second system is titled *Etude in Ammor.* and shows a similar melodic and harmonic structure. Below this system, another horizontal line with brackets is labeled *no Ped*.

takes a downward course, the importance of this being emphasised by its chromatic character.

### RETENTION OF BASS NOTE.

The need for allowing the lowest note in a chord to vibrate, often renders compulsory the retention of the pedal through a series of passing notes.



Few of the decorative cadenzas which abound in the works of Chopin are of so simple a diatonic nature as the above. Most of the editions in which pedalling is given in any detail mark the pedal to be retained for the whole bar, however elaborate the chromatic nature of the embroidery. It is not easy to avoid this if the bass is to receive its full harmonic value, but a good deal of latitude is permitted to the executant. To avoid overpedalling in the two little ornamental passages in the F# Major Nocturne, the pedal may be released about half way through the bar, if the very slight

alteration be made of retaining the notes at the third beat till the end of the bar,



thus providing the necessary chord support independent of the pedal. In the original version they have only the value of a quaver, and must, consequently, be released at the fourth beat.



#### WHERE THE PEDAL SHOULD NOT, AS A RULE, BE USED.

(1) Where the theme and accompaniment containing passing notes are both in the bass.

If the student will refer to the opening bars of the Finale to Beethoven's Sonata in E flat (Op. 27, No. 1), he will see that although the passing notes are almost entirely diatonic, the whole phrase is placed too low down to render pedalling allowable.

(2) Where the bass is of a florid *chromatic* character.

In the next extract and any of a similar pattern, the pedal should be strictly avoided on account of the chromatic nature of so many of the passing notes and their position in the bass.

*Ballade in Ab. - Chopin*

45

A florid bass, mainly of a diatonic character, does not preclude the use of the pedal if the treble is of a sustained melodic nature. Such works as "Lorelei." Seeling, with very few passing notes, and its general chord outline. "Danklied nach Sturm." Henselt, consisting of scale and chord outline in almost equal proportions and even the G Major Prelude of Chopin built on somewhat the same pattern, all need pedal assistance, but judgment must be used, and great care taken to avoid anything like excess of pedalling.

(3) In contrapuntal music in general, and Fugues in particular.

The pedal is not needed, or only very slightly and intermittently in music of a contrapuntal character with its continuous passing notes. This applies



particularly to Fugues, a form of composition, wherein the clear exposition of the separate voices is the main object to be achieved. It is essential to remember this in playing Fugues of the Bach and Handel period, but the restriction applies with less force to modern fugal music. In this, the greater freedom of construction, the reliance placed less by composers upon continuous counterpoint, and their more generous employment of arpeggios, call for a judicious, and at times, a very considerable amount of pedal support.

#### INFLUENCE OF PERIOD UPON PEDALLING.

The more one investigates the problems of pedalling the more clearly the fact emerges that period plays a very material part in their solution, especially with regard to the pedal treatment of passing notes.

There are three aspects of pedalling :

(a) The basic rudimentary mission of the pedal is to add some sort of sustaining effect to chords and passages of chord outline. In music of the Mozart and Haydn school it is not needed with great frequency in any type of passage, but—and this is the important point—the presence of many passing notes, or a change of harmony, is, if the pedal be down, *an almost unfailing signal for its release.*

(b) With the arrival of the next era in music the pedal had its functions materially increased. In Beethoven's day it began to be recognised that it could be employed in a second capacity ; that is with the mere object of strengthening the volume of sound, to a certain extent *irrespective of passing notes*. Most of the examples given in this chapter are illustrative of this method.

(c) This aspect of pedalling naturally extended its boundaries as instruments improved in tone and resonance, coinciding with the technical and harmonic development of pianoforte music, till the third stage was reached. In this the pedal is used in addition to its ordinary functions, for the purpose of *creating an atmospheric background*, or adding to the atmospheric colouring supplied by the character of the composition. With this end in view the presence even of chromatic passing-notes and the intermingling of harmonies often becomes the signal, not for pedal release, but for pedal depression or retention. In modern pianoforte music of a certain *genre*, this method of throwing a screen of vagueness and mystery over the music by means of the pedal is perfectly legitimate and results in some very characteristic effects.

Further comments and illustrations of this phase of pedalling are given in the chapter on

“Some modern composers and their Pedal Effects,” p. 181.

The student, when in doubt as to the advisability of pedal employment, should reflect whether the method he feels tempted to use is appropriate, not only to the passage in question, but to the period and school to which the music belongs. Other times, other manners; the methods of Corot are not those of Canaletto, and the criminal code of Clapham differs widely from that of Martaban.

#### THE PEDAL TREATMENT OF SCALES.

The majority of notes in any scale, diatonic or chromatic, are passing-notes, and as pianoforte music abounds in scale passages, their pedal treatment needs very careful and special attention. Beethoven made great play with the single-handed scale, accompanied and unaccompanied. In his chamber music and concertos he introduced two-handed scales, but, curiously enough, there are very few examples of these in his Sonatas. There are probably more two-handed scales in the C Minor and E flat Concertos than in the whole of the thirty-two Sonatas.

Chopin and Liszt made extensive use of the two-handed scale, and since their day every form of scale in single and double notes, both in similar

and contrary motion has been exploited by pianoforte composers. Schumann is the only writer of eminence who eschews scale passages almost entirely. It is difficult to realise in listening to his pianoforte works that the brilliance and variety of his technical effects are achieved without any reliance being placed upon the almost inevitable scale.

#### SCALES THAT SHOULD NOT, AS A RULE, BE PEDALLED.

For the attainment of some special dynamic or atmospheric effect, almost any form of scale passage may be pedalled, but unless instructions are definitely given to the opposite effect, it is advisable to refrain from pedalling the following :—

(1) One-handed scales, that have neither accompaniment nor preliminary chord.

(2) Descending scales in single or double notes when they pass below the treble register, and

(3) The generality of scales in the lower octaves of the pianoforte.

#### SCALES THAT MAY OR MUST BE PEDALLED.

Eliminating for the moment the music of the earlier composers, it may be stated that scales in the treble, particularly ascending ones, should be

pedalled if the bass has chords or figures of chord outline, which independently of the upper part, would suffer if left unpedalled.

For instance, the three ascending scales of F Major, A Minor, and C Major, of which the first is given below, in Chopin's Prelude in D Minor, must be pedalled on account of the chord figure in the bass.

46

In addition to these there is a right-hand *descending* chromatic scale in thirds, travelling the whole length of the treble, which must also be pedalled. The bass figure, this time written *fff*, renders this imperative.

47

The left-hand chords, plus the crescendo, make pedal support desirable in the next extract, although

it is open to the performer to defer the pedal entry till the second bar.

*Rondo Capriccioso. Mendelssohn.*  
8vo

48

*cresc.*

*p*

optional essential

A discreet amount of pedal assistance can be invoked for the ascending and descending scales in the Finale of the E flat Sonata of Beethoven (Op. 91), on account of the repeated chords in the bass. Each one of the short descending scales in the Finale of Op. 57 should also be pedalled, certainly those in the right hand,

49

*f*

*p*

and with some discretion in the way of occasional release, those in the left-hand also.

The right hand scale passages in Weber's Rondo in E flat should, in spite of the general chord support

in the bass, be very lightly pedalled, and only when they are in the highest octaves of the treble. Weber's pianoforte works, though romantic in character, can hardly be said to belong in spirit to the school typified by Chopin, Schumann and Brahms. The construction, and harmonic scheme have too little variety to warrant their inclusion in the same category. A good deal of freedom is allowed in the choice of their pedal treatment, but clearness in performance is more generally appropriate to them than the cloudiness produced by over much pedalling.

#### LEFT HAND SCALE PASSAGES AND THE PEDAL.

It is sometimes necessary to pedal a bass scale passage, in spite of the warning as to its general inadvisability, either (1) to add resonance to a fortissimo, or (2) to assist a crescendo and thereby increase the value of a climax.

*Sonata in C. Op. 53 (Finale) Beethoven.*

50

These bars, in which the left hand is occupied with an ascending and descending scale of C (ff), starting in the bass, are almost invariably played with the above pedalling.

In the next example the need for pedal support is hardly so evident, yet Liszt in his edition, gives, as might be expected, instructions for pedalling.

*Fantasia in C.  
Schubert  
(Liszt's edition)*

51

The next illustration requires much judgment and discretion in its pedal treatment.

It is a bar which demands all the resources of tone and fullness of which the pianoforte is capable to enable it to make its due effect.

Pedalling on the lines suggested helps to supply this requirement, and at the same time makes provision for mitigating as far as possible the unavoidable blur produced by the pedalled passing notes in the bass.



*Etude in C♯ m. Op 25  
Chopin*

52

*ff* *molto* *rit*

*f3p*

Reference should be made in this connection to Chopin's C Minor Nocturne, where pedalling is usually marked to be retained through the stormy octave passages, in order to preserve the harmony of the chords met with during this section of the piece.

53

*ff* *col basso* *8va.....*

*col 8va simile*

*Pedalling, from Klindworth's Edition.*

Those who prefer it can rely upon the hands alone to achieve all the brilliance required in bars like the above. Their method possesses the merits of securing a cleanly articulated bass, but the alternative method suggested has advantages which should not be lightly set aside.

### PEDALLING IN TWO-HANDED SCALES.

Very few of these are met with prior to the Chopin era, those that are should not be pedalled.



In the above, which is repeated first one and then two octaves higher, clear articulation is far more necessary than atmospheric blur.

The same remark applies to the final bars—Piu Allegro—of the solo part of Beethoven's Concerto in E flat. They consist of a rising series of two-handed scale passages in the key of the piece, lasting for six bars and culminating in the seventh with the orchestral entry on the tonic chord.

Even the two-handed scales in contrary motion in the first movement of this work must not be pedalled, though this injunction would hardly apply in a modern work. In this case, pedalling might be needed and would in all probability be marked by the composer.

The type of two-handed scale which is most usually pedalled and which is allowed by most authorities to provide a legitimate effect, is an ascending one, beginning in the bass, preceded by a chord of the same harmony and played forte or fortissimo. The continually recurring scale in the A flat Polonaise of Chopin is one of the best known examples. It is customary in these and similar passages to press down the pedal at the chord and to retain it till the last note of the scale.

A second example can be seen in the long scale passage in tenths near the end of the Tannhäuser March as arranged by Liszt. To ensure this being pedalled it is marked so in most editions. The end of Chopin's A Minor Etude (Op. 25) is another case in point. This two-handed ascending scale is almost invariably pedalled, but if, according to a very prevalent custom, the scale is played so as to embrace the whole range of the instrument—that is, beginning an octave lower and finishing an octave higher than it is written, a little relief will be experienced

if the pedal, after being put down for the chord, is released and rapidly pressed down again for the first note of this scale, thus :

Example 55 is a musical score for piano, consisting of two staves. The left hand (treble clef) plays a scale starting on a chord, with a 'Ped.' marking above the first note. The right hand (bass clef) plays a scale starting on a chord, with a 'Ped.' marking below the first note. A bracket connects the two 'Ped.' markings, indicating a rapid change of pedal. The word 'till' is written in the middle of the score.

*Rapid change of Ped. advisable.\**

When the scale does not start below the level of the preliminary chord, the pedal is recommended even where the chord is placed as low down as in the following.

Example 56 is a musical score for piano, consisting of two staves. The left hand (treble clef) plays a scale starting on a chord, with a 'Ped.' marking above the first note. The right hand (bass clef) plays a scale starting on a chord, with a 'Ped.' marking below the first note. A bracket connects the two 'Ped.' markings, indicating a rapid change of pedal. The word 'Simile' is written in the middle of the score. The title 'Rhapsodie in B minor - Brahms' is written above the score.

\* The Cotta edition of Chopin omits the pedal from the scale in the Polonaise, and on each recurrence, indicates very clearly that it is to be played unpedalled. But, at the end of the above Etude the pedal is written to be held down from the chord to the final note of the scale. It is difficult to account for this apparent divergence of views in the same edition.

Although the effect is less justifiable, the modern pianist does not always confine his pedalling of scales to those which are preceded by a chord. Immediately prior to the one last quoted occurs a two-handed scale of F Major, beginning on the lowest F octave. No chord is written, yet the pianist who pedalled the G flat scale would almost certainly treat the one in F in the same manner.

The two-handed scales in Weber's "Invitation to Valse," should not be pedalled, but the Major scale for two hands at the end of the same composer's Polacca in E, may, as it is preceded by the tonic chord, be pedalled or not at the option of the performer.

A word of warning, is, however, necessary with regard to all these suggestions concerning the pedalling of scale passages. They must be taken as applying only to pianists whose technique is sufficiently developed to enable them to play all such passages at an appropriately rapid tempo. Nothing could well be more unmusical than the effect produced by a careful student playing a pedalled two-handed scale at about half the requisite speed, the effect becoming more objectionable if a scale in contrary motion be substituted, whilst a pedalled chromatic scale, played at a conscientious,

instead of an accurate tempo, could easily become a quite unbearable infliction.

The chord effects in a pedalled two-handed scale are partly but not wholly illusory. When an initial chord is played it is the mind rather than the ear which retains the impression of the harmony. When the chord is omitted, the imagination supplies the harmony, the pedal assisting in this by seeming to sustain the thirds, fifths and octaves more distinctly and to throw them into greater prominence than the other intervals of the scale; an impression of the chord is therefore created almost as distinct as that of the scale, although it is only the latter that has been played.

In justice to the student it must be recorded that some pianists shirk using the pedal under the above circumstances. Some compromise in a long scale by releasing it midway, some change, or half change it during the progress of the scale, whilst others considering, with some justification, that the initial chord will be swamped by the confusion of sound engendered, only pedal the chord and the upper half of the scale. None of these methods are recommended (though none are forbidden). For music of a bold character, bold treatment is required, and the pianist who retains the pedal from the initial chord to the final staccato note of the scale, obtains a more

striking and quite as legitimate an effect as the one who refrains, in the interests of technical clearness, from pedal depression, or who experiments with partial depression or some other form of compromise.

### SCALES IN CONTRARY MOTION.

There are other exceptions to the rule concerning the non-peddalling of descending scales in the lower portion of the pianoforte, one such must be made in favour of scales in contrary motion, which, especially in the works of Liszt, may often be pedalled with benefit to the glittering and bravura nature of the music in which they are usually found. An example (in abbreviated form) is included.

*Tannhäuser March - Wagner-Liszt.*

57

*Pauer's edition*

*Alternative method*

A few bars earlier in the transcription, the above is preceded by the same scale in contrary motion, but in double octaves. This, in Pauer's edition, is also written to be pedalled.

For the purpose of creating a stormy, turbulent effect, the pedal can even be used for two-handed scale passages that do not rise above the bass register. It was a favourite device of Liszt, whose pedal methods are discussed later.

One authority recommends that in the well-known scale passages in Mendelssohn's G Minor Concerto it should be kept down for the whole bar. If this were taken from a work of Liszt or Rubinstein, or if the effect aimed at were that of a mere D Minor noise, the wisdom of the advice would hardly be doubted, but the neatness and elegance required in the performance of Mendelssohn's music renders such treatment somewhat inappropriate. It is probable that the alternative marking would strike most pianists as a preferable method.

The image shows two musical staves. The upper staff is in bass clef and contains a scale of eighth notes starting on G4 and ending on D5. It is marked with *All: f* and *sf*. A large horizontal brace above the staff spans the entire duration of the scale. Below the staff, the number '58' is written. The lower staff shows an alternative method for the same passage, with a horizontal line underneath it. To the left of this line, the text 'Inadvisable Alternative method...' is written.

### GLISSANDO SCALES.

The rules applying to the pedalling of ordinary scales apply in the majority of cases to scales played

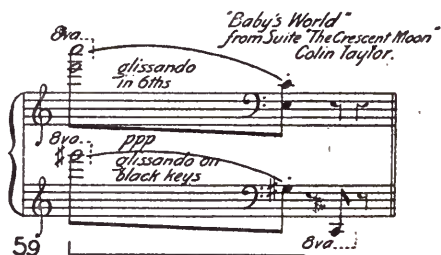


glissando. The example in Weber's Concertstück should be played unpedalled, though performances can be heard in which this rule is disregarded. The treatment of the many glissando scales in Liszt's transcriptions requires a little judgment. Those with chord support, as well as those written fortissimo can be pedalled legitimately, but short, light passages are much more effective with clear articulation.

Many examples of glissando are to be found in compositions of the modern atmospheric school, and these are usually benefited by pedal support. The modern glissando is not confined in these works to the conventional single notes and octaves, but thirds, fourths and sixths—obviously only on white notes—are written to be played in this manner, as well as glissando in single notes on the black keys. Ravel makes use of these effects possibly more than any other composer, but although it is customary to pedal the glissando passages in his works, he, in direct opposition to many of his contemporaries, is exceptionally chary with his pedal indications, and when he does put a mark for pedal depression he seldom includes the one for its release.

The example given below is from a work already referred to. The pedal is marked by the composer to be retained through a descending passage of

sixths in the right hand, and a single-note scale on the black keys in the left, both played glissando.



#### A SHORT REPEATED BASS FIGURE—PORTION OF A DESCENDING SCALE—IN OCTAVES.

An example of this is found in the middle section of Chopin's A flat Polonaise. It is manifestly impossible that the full value of the theme, the chords and the long crescendo with its culminating climax can be obtained without assistance from the pedal. Yet the slightest excess in pedalling and lack of judgment in pedal release can easily turn the octave bass into a meaningless babel of sound. Different pianists treat the phrases according to their own individual views as to what is fitting and effective. Over pedalling and under pedalling are equally to be deprecated, but the following suggestions seem adequate for the colour scheme,

78 PEDALLING IN PIANOFORTE MUSIC

whilst avoiding the undesirable falsehood of extremes.

Bars. No. 2 5 6

pp

60

60<sup>a</sup>

10 11

cres.

60<sup>b</sup>

Ped. not to be used (or only very lightly) in all bars not quoted.

13 14 15 16

f

sempre cres.

\* 61

This octave section can be pedalled in exactly the same way the second time as the first, but some

\* To save unnecessary accidentals, this extract is written in E flat instead of D sharp Major.

pianists in the repetition leave few bars without at least a touch of pedal, for the sake of variety and an added fullness of tone. It is a matter that can be left entirely to the decision of the performer.

It must be repeated that the point to be decided wherever the harmonic outline is interwoven with passing-notes is just this :—

Is it of paramount importance to maintain the clear articulation of the individual notes, or can this be advantageously sacrificed in the endeavour to attain added sonority and something in the nature of an orchestral climax ?

The more modern the music the more can recourse be had to the second method, the more distant the period, the less allowable does it become.

#### SOME EXTREME EXAMPLES.

It is interesting to note that composers sometimes give directions for pedalling which nothing in the music, apart from the desire to obtain increased tone, seems to justify. “ *Ped à discrétion* ” is often as sound an economic principle in music as the “ *Pain à discrétion* ” is at the cheaper table d’hôte restaurants in Paris and may often be applied with advantage in spite of the more generous suggestions

of composer or editor. In the extract given below, nearly all the conditions exist which seem to render pedalling not only unnecessary, but undesirable. It is by no means essential for the dominant pedal (F) in the upper part (though a touch at the first and third beats helps to mitigate the effect of the compulsory staccato), and it is certainly not needed either for the short sections of Fugue subject, inverted, also in the treble, or for the scales in the bass, changing from single notes to thirds. But the bars quoted are the first two in a long coda which works up through an increasing crescendo to the final chords, and presumably on that account the composer wished pedal support to be given from the first bar, and to be used with appropriate changes till the end.

*Fugue from  
Var. & Fugue: Brahms*

*ff*

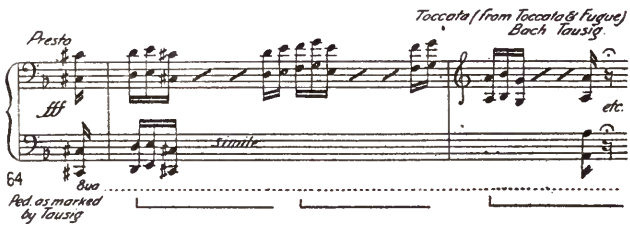
62 *Col Ped*  
*(Composer's marking)*

Later on when the scales are transferred to the right hand and the octaves, etc., to the left, less

discretion and more pedal can be used with perfect safety.



One of the most remarkable examples of the way in which passing-notes can be ignored in the endeavour to obtain an increased volume of sound can be seen in the next quotation. There is no chord or hint of chord outline and the fortissimo octaves are chiefly in the lower portion of the pianoforte.



Whilst no one could be blamed for not pedalling a passage of this character, the effect may be accepted as a virtuoso device specially adapted to performance in a large hall. It is not sufficiently

recognised that many effects are justifiable in a concert hall that do not lend themselves to closer and more intimate conditions. In the larger area the lighter overtones are lost, only the most important making their presence felt, and the outline consequently appears much more clearly defined than it could possibly do in a more confined space. This does not mean that all these effects are to be discarded except in the concert-hall, but the size of the room or hall should weigh with the performer and cause him occasionally to change or modify his treatment of the pedal according to the acoustic exigencies of the situation.

## CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEMS OF RESTS AND STACCATO IN  
RELATION TO PEDALLING.

THE presence of rests simultaneously in the treble and bass, denoting short periods of silence, seems to accord ill with the use of the pedal which produces some kind of sustained sound, and it is not uncommon to find a sign marked for pedal release by a teacher upon the appearance of rests of even the shortest duration for both hands in a passage where the harmony remains unchanged. Sometimes a break is actually needed to accentuate the phrase outline, but a remembrance of the fact that the pedal does not definitely sustain notes and chords, but only fills up the space between them with the correct harmonic atmosphere, should suffice to dispel the desire to release it at the mere appearance of rests when no harmonic change takes place to render it necessary.

Rests for one hand only need not be considered, as the pedalling then depends upon the construction of the phrases played by the other hand.



Chords and chord passages of the same harmony separated by rests are not found nearly so frequently in the melodic as in the technical portion of a work, usually in the concluding bars of either the whole work, or, less frequently, of some section of it. Music of every school and period abounds in such endings for which pedalling is seldom included in even the best editions, and less seldom resorted to by even the best of students. Where these chords divided by rests occur at the end of a work, and not merely at the end of an Introduction or a middle section, some definite advice can be given. It is less binding than the laws of Lycurgus, but where doubt exists it can advantageously be followed.

(a) If the concluding chords are preceded by a rapidly played passage of a harmony, other than that of the tonic, or by the tonic supplemented by passing notes, it is better to raise the pedal for the rests that are found prior to and between the concluding chords.

(b) If the harmony preceding these chords is merely that of the tonic chord unhampered by passing notes, there will seldom be any occasion to raise the pedal. In the former case (a) it is seldom wise to run the risk of catching an alien harmony or unwelcome passing note with the pedal. In the latter (b), it is inexpedient to break the harmonic

continuity in spite of the intervening rests. The student is referred to the end of Mendelssohn's Spring Song for a simple but typical example. Two others, less easily accessible, are given below.

*"Hark, Hark the Lark" - Schubert, Liszt.*

65

If the pedal were raised for the rests the piece would have a very broken and scrappy ending. The atmosphere of the tonic chord of B flat Major must not be allowed to evaporate, the rests in cases of this kind denoting cessation of activity but not cessation of sound.

*Intermezzo, Op. 117  
Brahms. Final bars*

66

*Ped. marked  
by composer*

## SOME ILLUSTRATIONS FROM BEETHOVEN.

The student is referred again to the ends of the oft-mentioned "Moonlight" and "Appassionata." Both are too easily accessible to make quotation necessary. Some pianists in these and similar forte and fortissimo endings, release the pedal for the rests and press it down again for the closing chords. It is to a certain extent a matter of individual taste, but there is much more to be said in favour of retaining the harmony than against it. This receives confirmation from those phrases in the Sonatas, where the pedalling is that given by Beethoven himself. In these he makes it clear that he did not, as a rule, wish the rests between chords of the same harmony to be regarded as periods of silence. An Illustration from Op. 53 is given :—

*Op. 53, Finale. — Bars at end of section preceding Coda*

67 L.H.

It is doubtful if pianists would retain the pedal through the bars containing the crochet rests if it were not sanctioned by the composer.

## FANTAISIE IN F MINOR, CHOPIN.

The Klindworth-Scharwenka edition of this work affords several interesting examples of pedalling in relation to rests, as is shown in the subjoined extracts.

68

*a* K. Sch.  
pedalling.

*b.* Alternative  
method.

69

Kl. Sch.

The image contains two musical extracts, labeled 68 and 69. Extract 68 shows two staves of music in F minor, marked *ff*. It illustrates two different pedalling approaches for a specific passage. The first approach, labeled 'a' and attributed to K. Sch., shows a continuous pedalling line under the notes. The second approach, labeled 'b' and as an alternative method, shows a pedalling line that lifts at the end of each phrase. Extract 69 shows a single staff of music in F minor, marked *p*, with a complex rhythmic pattern. It is attributed to Kl. Sch. and also shows a pedalling line that lifts at the end of phrases.

It is only fair to add that agreement would not be general as to the desirability of the pedalling as quoted from this edition. In each of the above extracts many pianists would prefer to indicate the phrasing more clearly by making a break at each

rest, as shown in the alternative method given. But that two such eminent musicians as Klindworth and Scharwenka thought otherwise is sufficient argument in favour of giving very careful consideration as to the wisdom of retaining the harmony in all such cases by means of the pedal in spite of the presence of rests.

#### THE CONFLICTING CLAIMS OF " CHORD " OUTLINE AND " PHRASE " OUTLINE.

This problem, which is one of the greatest interpretative difficulties a pianist is likely to encounter, is well illustrated in the above extracts. The pedal should, if used in a legato phrase, be kept down till the conclusion of such phrase. It also should, when down, be kept down as long as the harmony remains unchanged. But it happens often that, first, the harmony changes in the course of a phrase, or, secondly, that two phrases, or two sections of the same phrase, separated by a rest or rests, have the same harmony. The opening bar of the Impromptu in A flat of Chopin supplies an example of the former, the B Major extract from the Fantaisie (No. 69) of the latter. The pedalling suggested for the Impromptu is given below.

70

one phrase

Two harmonies  
Tonic Dom 7th

In the *Fantaisie* the edition quoted sacrifices the phrasing in a measure for the sake of retaining the harmony.

In dealing with phrases, broken by rests that are encountered, not at the end, but during the progress of a work, the claims of the phrase against that of the harmony must be nicely weighed. The student after careful application, should not be afraid to trust his own judgment, and to ignore the pedal markings in even the best editions if he feels impelled by what seem to him adequate reasons, to adopt a contrary course.

#### PASSING NOTES IN THE CONCLUDING TONIC HARMONY.

With regard to the difference made by the presence or absence of passing notes, many illustrations spring to the mind. In Chopin's *Valse in A flat* (Op. 34, No. 1), the pedal should be raised

before the two final bars on account of the *presence* of passing notes in the preceding harmony, and be put down afresh for each of the concluding chords.\* In the same composer's Valse in F (Op. 34, No. 3), the pedal need not be released, on account of the entire *absence* of passing-notes.

Op. 34 No. 3.

71

Passing note

72

2 bars (Fma) till

A similar interesting contrast can be seen in the closing bars of the first and last numbers of Schumann's Carnival.

73

8...

\* In the final bar a double octave, or an octave and single note are often used instead of a chord. Nevertheless the words "final chords" are always used for the sake of brevity.

The presence of the passing-note B flat would tend slightly to cloud the final harmony if the pedal were not released as indicated. Apart from that, as these bars form the close, not of the whole work, but only of the Introductory section it is more appropriate to accentuate the presence of the rests in the closing bars than to conceal them.

In the much longer concluding passage in the Finale of this work there are rests in every bar, but no passing-notes. The value of the climax would be seriously impaired if, owing to an exaggerated respect for these rests, the tonic harmony were continually interrupted by pedal release.

#### WHEN PASSING CHORDS TAKE THE PLACE OF PASSING NOTES.

The presence of chords other than that of the tonic, even more than passing notes, necessitates pedal release for the rests in the final bars.

*Fantasia in C. - Schubert*  
8va. (Final bars)

74

a  
not b  
not c



*Fugue from Var. & Fugue  
Brahms (Final bars)*

When the pedal is put down for the first of the three concluding chords in the Schubert Fantasia, a little of the chromatic harmony from the previous bar is almost certain to be caught by it. This is unavoidable if the pedal has been used in that bar till the end, however rapidly it is changed. For this reason the pedalling at *b* is not recommended, nor is that at *c* any more desirable because if a break is made after the first chord, a similar break for the sake of consistency and accurate phrasing, must be made after the second one.

The same remarks, but substituting "dominant seventh" for "chromatic" harmony, apply in every respect to the Brahms extract.

Incidentally it may be mentioned that the first of the three bars of the Schubert extract (No. 74) presents an interesting little problem on its own account. Out of consideration for the rapid alternation of the two chords which constitute the bar, the pedal may be left untouched throughout.

Out of consideration for the fortissimo and the desire to achieve as striking a climax as possible, the clash of alternating harmonies may be ignored and the pedal be kept down through the whole bar. If neither of these methods commends itself, the pedal may, at the pleasure of the performer, be pressed down for about the second and third beats, producing a quite appropriate effect of a little added volume of sound in the middle of the bar. A fourth and quite legitimate effect is the exercise of the very rapid repeated change (or half change) of pedal—the tremolo effect, discussed later—the foot rising and falling at about every half beat.

*L.H. only*

a..... *no Ped.*

b.....

c.....

d.....

76

This digression has been purposely made to show how wide a choice of methods in pedalling is sometimes offered, and how much the colouring of a bar or phrase depends upon the one selected.

#### THE PROBLEM OF STACCATO.

The conviction that a pedal effect and a staccato effect are so antagonistic that they should on no

account be used together, exists even in the most unexpected quarters. The author of probably the best work on this subject dismisses the matter with a curt injunction that "the pedal must not be used in staccato passages." This is not only unsatisfactory but misleading. There are many staccato pieces or phrases from pieces, where pedalling would be manifestly inappropriate. The Scherzo from Beethoven's Sonata in E flat (Op. 31, No. 3) requires no pedal assistance except in the occasional fortissimo chords,



nor is it needed in the subject of the slow movement of the same composer's Sonata in G (Op. 14).



nor, in a much lighter vein, in the transcription of the Gavotte from Mignon.

*A. Thomas*

79

Obviously less pedalling is needed in staccato than in legato playing, but a great deal of the music that is written to be played staccato needs background and the continuity of harmonic atmosphere that the pedal supplies as much as if it were written legato. A student whose mind becomes imbued with the idea, perhaps delusion would be a more fitting word, that the pedal sustains sounds so definitely that it cannot possibly be used in any but legato phrases is constantly being faced with apparently insoluble problems. A legato phrase in one hand may have a staccato accompaniment in the other, the legato phrase claiming the pedal support which the staccato accompaniment apparently forbids.

*Valse in Ab, Moskowski.*

80

This, in accordance with all pieces constructed on similar lines, needs pedal support, yet the student would feel very doubtful about the wisdom of applying it if he had assimilated the injunction against using it in any form of staccato passage.

Chords in moderate or rapid tempo, whether of the same or different harmony—consecutive chords or those interspersed with rests, as well as repeated chords can seldom be played other than staccato. A reference to No. 34, p. 48 (Novelette, Schumann), No. 14, p. 28, Concerto, Tschaikowski, and the chord endings given in the first part of this chapter, prove how unwise it is to enunciate such a principle as “The pedal must not be used for staccato,” without reservation or explanation of any kind. It may be urged that few of the above instances afford a fair test as to the necessity for pedalling staccato passages, because in some cases the chords must be played detached, not necessarily because a staccato effect is aimed at, but because their performance at the correct tempo would be otherwise impossible, and in one example, at least, legato phrases are found which may influence the decision as to the advisability of pedalling. Phrases, however, written to be played staccato in both hands, written in fact as staccato studies, need just the same treatment. Schumann, evidently enamoured of

this effect wrote "Pedale" even into the fourth variation of his Etudes Symphoniques, a number in which there is hardly a forte, hardly a non-staccato note, and in which even the left hand keeps mainly to the treble and the upper notes of the bass clef.



Staccato Etudes like that in C Major of Rubinstein and the Caprice in F# Major of Vogrich, need a good deal of pedal assistance. The opening bars of the latter may be pedalled for the sake of the initial C sharp, the dominant, although to get clear of the confusion of passing notes, the pedal should be put down afresh for the two chords of the dominant seventh at the conclusion of this introductory section. The subject on its first appearance,



and this applies to many pieces where both hands play staccato and piano, may be given, as far as the pedal is concerned in a variety of ways, either without pedal (this being the method recommended, but not insisted upon), with light pedalling, or with just a touch at each accented bass note, or at the first one in the bar only. Whenever the subject reappears softly it is advisable not to employ identically the same pedalling as that previously used, but where the music is marked forte or fortissimo, or where a crescendo of any importance is introduced, whether it be in the principal or secondary subject, or in mere episodic matter, it will almost invariably be found advisable to surround staccato as well as legato phrases with the harmonic atmosphere that only the pedal can supply.

No pianist would attempt to play the Rubinstein Staccato Etude unpedalled. Two extracts will suffice to show how unsatisfactory such treatment would be.

*All<sup>o</sup> vivace*

83

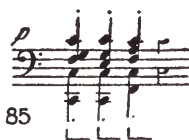
The image shows a musical score extract for the Rubinstein Staccato Etude. It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'All<sup>o</sup> vivace' and the dynamic is 'f'. A crescendo hairpin is shown over the music, and the word 'etc.' is written to the right of the staff. The number '83' is printed below the bass staff.



The advice given relative to the pedalling of individual chords applies in a general way even when they are written to be played staccato and softly.

*Fantaisie. Chopin.*

*Pedalling from the Klind Sch. edition.*



*Papillons Schumann  
(Last three bars)*



In spite of the staccato dots it is customary and desirable to have a touch of pedal for this, the final chord of the whole work and is marked so in the best editions. A final staccato chord, however lightly and delicately played, can seldom dispense with this supporting pedal touch. The staccato tap is distinctly recognisable in spite of this, and



the eye coming to the help of the ear, the impression is confirmed by the sight of the raised hands of the pianist, visible in any concert hall to fully three-quarters of the audience.

It is not that a sustained effect is needed, but the abruptness of the ending is mitigated if the aroma of the tonic chord is allowed to permeate the air for a few seconds before fading gently into silence.

A few general principles are added which the student will find it helpful to bear in mind.

(1) Single, unaccompanied staccato notes do not under normal conditions require the pedal, unless they form the notes of a chord which it is necessary to sustain.

(2) Many notes and chords require to be played with an extreme detachment which would be marred by even the lightest pedalling.

(3) It is not advisable to pedal continually recurring phrases, either legato or staccato, in the same manner at each appearance.

(4) With the object of accentuating the detached character of the notes and chords, a portion of every staccato piece should be left unpedalled, however brilliant its character.

(5) But with these reservations, the pedal should be applied to staccato phrases wherever the music seems to need added resonance or harmonic support.

Very little difficulty should be experienced in applying these rules if the idea is once banished from the mind that pedalling automatically counteracts the effect of staccato, when, as is actually the case, the detrimental effect is often of the slightest, and this is usually more than compensated for by the increase in rhythm, tone, atmosphere and musical colouring.

## CHAPTER VI

### PROBLEM OF THE PEDAL BASS.

A PEDAL bass usually takes the form of a single note or octave, but pedal chords are by no means uncommon. An absolutely satisfactory solution of the problem—How to pedal a pedal bass—cannot be found in dealing with a pianoforte of ordinary construction, because if the pedal is pressed down and kept down for the sake of retaining the bass note, a mass of conflicting harmonies will also be retained, and a more or less undesirable effect created. If, for the sake of clearness, the pedal is released, the drone of the foundation note, which should dominate the situation, will be lost.

#### THREE METHODS OF DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM.

In a long passage some writers advocate that the bass note should be sounded again at intervals of two or three bars, giving an opportunity for rapid change of pedal. Others try to achieve the same end—that of weakening the blurred effect caused by the retention of antagonistic chords—by *partial*

pedal release. The third method is that of keeping the pedal down firmly for the whole value of the pedal bass, no matter how many harmonies intervene and overlap.

#### THE FIRST METHOD.

The plan of repeating the bass note in a lengthy passage is not recommended. Had the composer desired such an effect it would have been perfectly simple for him to have indicated it. A note when struck, however quietly and unobtrusively, has a definite, penetrating sound, totally at variance with the calm of a long, sustained, unpeated note.

If, however, the blur and overlapping harmonies were definitely relieved by this expedient, it might be worth while resorting to it, but the relief is of an extremely slight and transitory nature; before two further bars have been completed, the harmonic cloud has again descended upon the music, wrapping it round in a mist of chords and passing-notes just as definitely as if no change of pedal had taken place.

#### “ PAPILLONS ” SCHUMANN.

One of the most interesting examples is to be found in the Finale of this work. The character of the music almost justifies the slight confusion

resulting from keeping down the pedal for a period of twenty-six bars. The music depicts the conclusion of a Carnival. The revellers are dispersing in the early morning. As the number draws near the end the clock is heard striking six. The valse is played in the right hand, the folk-tune in the left, representing two groups of merry-makers; many others can be imagined on the scene, so that the blurred effect produced by long retention of the pedal rather helps than hinders the impression sought to be conveyed of various groups meeting, mingling together, then passing by singing and dancing on their homeward way. The only harmonies employed during the whole series of phrases are those of the tonic and dominant so that the music, though clouded through the effort to sustain the tonic in the bass, produces no acutely jarring or discordant result.

To accentuate the value of the pedal an octave may, at the discretion of the performer be substituted for the single note. To maximise its importance it can be pressed down again *silently*.\*

By a little manipulation the left hand can be freed in order to accomplish this before the end of the last bar. The pedal instead of being held down

\* Silent pressure is discussed and illustrated in Ch. VIII. It is only included here to save quoting this extract from the "Papillons" a second time.

through the empty bar following, as is marked in most editions, may be released and the D octave retained alone. This will help to confirm the impression in the minds of the listeners that they have been conscious of the presence of a tonic pedal from the moment it was first sounded till it is heard vibrating alone after the intervening medley of sound has ceased.

87

*D octave retained by pedal*

*22 bars fill*

*A.M.*

*Silent pressure of D octave & ped. release*

*A.M.*

### PARTIAL PEDAL RELEASE.

This is seldom, if ever, suggested for any passage the length of the above, but it is recommended by some authorities in the well-known Prelude of Rachmaninoff, where bass octaves or chords, generally marked *ff*, are written to be sustained through a short series of chords of different harmony.

Theoretically this seems to have much in its favour, practically it will not be found to be completely satisfactory. The advice proffered here, and it is only advice, is that the pedal should be pressed down for the initial octave or chord in the

longer as well as in the shorter phrases, and should be kept down for its full value. If the partial release of the pedal weakens the chords sufficiently to eliminate the harshness of unrelated chords, it also weakens the bass notes to a less, though to a distinctly appreciable degree. One extract must suffice.

The image shows a musical score for a piano extract. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The treble staff contains a series of chords, with some notes beamed together. The bass staff contains a series of notes, with a large bracket underneath indicating a long pedal point. The score is marked with 'fff' (fortissimo) and 'etc.' (et cetera). The number '88' is written at the bottom left of the bass staff.

### LA CATHÉDRALE ENGLOUTIE—DEBUSSY.

This work is built mainly upon pedal notes, and chords, not only in the bass but also in the middle and upper parts. As no indications are given in the printed copy, some doubt may be felt as to what system of pedalling is likely to prove the most suitable. It is very frankly recommended that in every case the pedal should be kept fully pressed

down for the whole value of the pedal note or chord. That, in some bars, a very considerable overlapping occurs and a confused blending of harmonies ensues is incontestable, but again the character of the piece comes to the rescue and justifies a procedure that under other circumstances might be deemed unwarrantable.

The piece is a musical illustration of the legend of the city buried beneath the sea.

There are many versions of this story ; the oldest and best known being that of the city of Atlantis first mentioned by Plato. Many countries have similar legends, the idea of a submerged city still carrying on its ghostly activities is one that has seized upon the imagination of fisher folk in many ages. Brazil, Portugal and Ireland all have their variations of this theme, but the one most often referred to in modern times and the one that Debussy very possibly had in mind when writing this piece is the story of Is, off the coast of Brittany, where according to Rénan, the fishermen believe that the spires of the churches can be seen at times in the hollow of the waves, and at eventide the bells can be heard tolling, and the monks heard singing their evening hymn.

In the earlier and closing portion of the "Cathédrale Engloutie," soft harmonies at the



upper and lower ends of the pianoforte are written to be retained through a series of chords upon other notes of the scale. The effect of double pedal, the wide space between the sustained chords, the softness with which it is directed that they should be played, and the omission of the third in chords in the earlier bars, give a most picturesque suggestion of the vibrations of a distant bell, and render essential the retention of the initial chords by the pedal.

8. First two bars

pp

89

This musical score shows two measures of music. The first measure is marked with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a first ending bracket labeled "8." and "First two bars". The music consists of chords in both the treble and bass staves. A double pedal line is indicated by a bracket underneath the first two measures, showing that the chords are sustained across the bar boundary.

Bar near end

pp

90

This musical score shows a single measure of music, marked with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and labeled "Bar near end". The music consists of chords in both the treble and bass staves. A double pedal line is indicated by a bracket underneath the measure, showing that the chords are sustained until the end of the measure.

The middle section is a broad chorale with a persistent tonic pedal—C octave—booming resonantly in the bass. In the first phrase it is written to be held on for more than four consecutive bars with the theme played fortissimo above it.



One might under certain conditions, hesitate about retaining a pedal bass through so many different chords, all played fortissimo, but as in the Schumann "Papillons" this action helps to create the local colour. Absolute harmonic distinctness is hardly needed in a chorale supposed to be chanted by the spirits of departed monks, vaguely seen and heard, or rather imagined, in their submerged cathedral, the melody mingling with the clanging of a bell as twilight darkens into night.

#### ALL RULES MAY BE BROKEN SOMETIMES.

Although the student was warned in a general way against repeating a pedal bass note, there are

occasions upon which such an effect is permissible. The harmonic indistinctness allowable in a composition descriptive of a group of revellers meeting and parting at the conclusion of a carnival, or of a ghostly chant welling up from beneath the waves, is not desirable in a contrapuntal passage over a pedal bass for any longer time than is absolutely necessary.

In the next illustration it is suggested that the octave D should be repeated. This permits of a change of pedal half way through the passage, and is of great benefit to the music without in any way running counter to the spirit of the composition.

*Fugue D minor. Bach-Teusig*

The image shows a musical score for a piano arrangement of a fugue. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. A long horizontal line with a curved bottom indicates a sustained pedal point. The second system continues the music, with a similar accompaniment. A bracket below the second system is labeled "Suggested repetition of bass octave and change of pedal." The title "Fugue D minor. Bach-Teusig" is written in the upper right corner.

This work is merely an arrangement for the pianoforte of an organ fugue where the D is sustained by the pedal keyboard. The slight alterations involved in its repetition is more than justified if any definite gain in the matter of clearness ensues.

In a standard work *written* for the pianoforte, a liberty of this kind needs careful consideration before being adopted.

It often happens, especially towards the end of a work that though the dominant (single note or octave) is played at the beginning of a series of chords, the actual harmony of the dominant seventh does not occur till the penultimate chord of the series, at which point it will often be found advisable to repeat the bass note or octave and to change the pedal.

*molto rit.* *Fugue from Prel. Chorale & Fugue*  
C. Franck

93

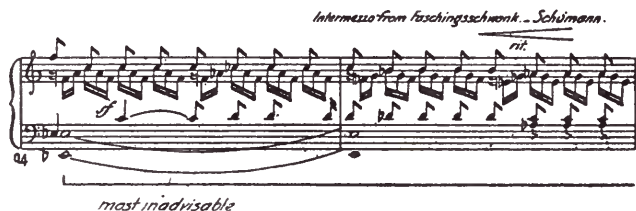
If the F sharp in the bass is not repeated and the pedal held down throughout the bar, as at *a*, the dominant seventh chord at the fourth beat will be so overlaid with the vibrations of the preceding chords that no real climax will be obtained. The idea of dispensing entirely with the pedal between the first and fourth beats, and not repeating the

F sharp need hardly be considered. The octave is written to last through the bar, and to disregard this would be an unwarrantable interference with the composer's intentions. Two alternative methods are given below.

*(Bass only)*

The image shows two musical examples, 93<sup>a</sup> and 93<sup>b</sup>, in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Example 93<sup>a</sup> shows a melodic line with notes G#2, A3, B3, C#4, D4, E4, F#4, G#4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G#5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, E6, F#6, G#6, A6, B6, C#7, D7, E7, F#7, G#7, A7, B7, C#8, D8, E8, F#8, G#8, A8, B8, C#9, D9, E9, F#9, G#9, A9, B9, C#10, D10, E10, F#10, G#10, A10, B10, C#11, D11, E11, F#11, G#11, A11, B11, C#12, D12, E12, F#12, G#12, A12, B12, C#13, D13, E13, F#13, G#13, A13, B13, C#14, D14, E14, F#14, G#14, A14, B14, C#15, D15, E15, F#15, G#15, A15, B15, C#16, D16, E16, F#16, G#16, A16, B16, C#17, D17, E17, F#17, G#17, A17, B17, C#18, D18, E18, F#18, G#18, A18, B18, C#19, D19, E19, F#19, G#19, A19, B19, C#20, D20, E20, F#20, G#20, A20, B20, C#21, D21, E21, F#21, G#21, A21, B21, C#22, D22, E22, F#22, G#22, A22, B22, C#23, D23, E23, F#23, G#23, A23, B23, C#24, D24, E24, F#24, G#24, A24, B24, C#25, D25, E25, F#25, G#25, A25, B25, C#26, D26, E26, F#26, G#26, A26, B26, C#27, D27, E27, F#27, G#27, A27, B27, C#28, D28, E28, F#28, G#28, A28, B28, C#29, D29, E29, F#29, G#29, A29, B29, C#30, D30, E30, F#30, G#30, A30, B30, C#31, D31, E31, F#31, G#31, A31, B31, C#32, D32, E32, F#32, G#32, A32, B32, C#33, D33, E33, F#33, G#33, A33, B33, C#34, D34, E34, F#34, G#34, A34, B34, C#35, D35, E35, F#35, G#35, A35, B35, C#36, D36, E36, F#36, G#36, A36, B36, C#37, D37, E37, F#37, G#37, A37, B37, C#38, D38, E38, F#38, G#38, A38, B38, C#39, D39, E39, F#39, G#39, A39, B39, C#40, D40, E40, F#40, G#40, A40, B40, C#41, D41, E41, F#41, G#41, A41, B41, C#42, D42, E42, F#42, G#42, A42, B42, C#43, D43, E43, F#43, G#43, A43, B43, C#44, D44, E44, F#44, G#44, A44, B44, C#45, D45, E45, F#45, G#45, A45, B45, C#46, D46, E46, F#46, G#46, A46, B46, C#47, D47, E47, F#47, G#47, A47, B47, C#48, D48, E48, F#48, G#48, A48, B48, C#49, D49, E49, F#49, G#49, A49, B49, C#50, D50, E50, F#50, G#50, A50, B50, C#51, D51, E51, F#51, G#51, A51, B51, C#52, D52, E52, F#52, G#52, A52, B52, C#53, D53, E53, F#53, G#53, A53, B53, C#54, D54, E54, F#54, G#54, A54, B54, C#55, D55, E55, F#55, G#55, A55, B55, C#56, D56, E56, F#56, G#56, A56, B56, C#57, D57, E57, F#57, G#57, A57, B57, C#58, D58, E58, F#58, G#58, A58, B58, C#59, D59, E59, F#59, G#59, A59, B59, C#60, D60, E60, F#60, G#60, A60, B60, C#61, D61, E61, F#61, G#61, A61, B61, C#62, D62, E62, F#62, G#62, A62, B62, C#63, D63, E63, F#63, G#63, A63, B63, C#64, D64, E64, F#64, G#64, A64, B64, C#65, D65, E65, F#65, G#65, A65, B65, C#66, D66, E66, F#66, G#66, A66, B66, C#67, D67, E67, F#67, G#67, A67, B67, C#68, D68, E68, F#68, G#68, A68, B68, C#69, D69, E69, F#69, G#69, A69, B69, C#70, D70, E70, F#70, G#70, A70, B70, C#71, D71, E71, F#71, G#71, A71, B71, C#72, D72, E72, F#72, G#72, A72, B72, C#73, D73, E73, F#73, G#73, A73, B73, C#74, D74, E74, F#74, G#74, A74, B74, C#75, D75, E75, F#75, G#75, A75, B75, C#76, D76, E76, F#76, G#76, A76, B76, C#77, D77, E77, F#77, G#77, A77, B77, C#78, D78, E78, F#78, G#78, A78, B78, C#79, D79, E79, F#79, G#79, A79, B79, C#80, D80, E80, F#80, G#80, A80, B80, C#81, D81, E81, F#81, G#81, A81, B81, C#82, D82, E82, F#82, G#82, A82, B82, C#83, D83, E83, F#83, G#83, A83, B83, C#84, D84, E84, F#84, G#84, A84, B84, C#85, D85, E85, F#85, G#85, A85, B85, C#86, D86, E86, F#86, G#86, A86, B86, C#87, D87, E87, F#87, G#87, A87, B87, C#88, D88, E88, F#88, G#88, A88, B88, C#89, D89, E89, F#89, G#89, A89, B89, C#90, D90, E90, F#90, G#90, A90, B90, C#91, D91, E91, F#91, G#91, A91, B91, C#92, D92, E92, F#92, G#92, A92, B92, C#93, D93, E93, F#93, G#93, A93, B93, C#94, D94, E94, F#94, G#94, A94, B94, C#95, D95, E95, F#95, G#95, A95, B95, C#96, D96, E96, F#96, G#96, A96, B96, C#97, D97, E97, F#97, G#97, A97, B97, C#98, D98, E98, F#98, G#98, A98, B98, C#99, D99, E99, F#99, G#99, A99, B99, C#100, D100, E100, F#100, G#100, A100, B100, C#101, D101, E101, F#101, G#101, A101, B101, C#102, D102, E102, F#102, G#102, A102, B102, C#103, D103, E103, F#103, G#103, A103, B103, C#104, D104, E104, F#104, G#104, A104, B104, C#105, D105, E105, F#105, G#105, A105, B105, C#106, D106, E106, F#106, G#106, A106, B106, C#107, D107, E107, F#107, G#107, A107, B107, C#108, D108, E108, F#108, G#108, A108, B108, C#109, D109, E109, F#109, G#109, A109, B109, C#110, D110, E110, F#110, G#110, A110, B110, C#111, D111, E111, F#111, G#111, A111, B111, C#112, D112, E112, F#112, G#112, A112, B112, C#113, D113, E113, F#113, G#113, A113, B113, C#114, D114, E114, F#114, G#114, A114, B114, C#115, D115, E115, F#115, G#115, A115, B115, C#116, D116, E116, F#116, G#116, A116, B116, C#117, D117, E117, F#117, G#117, A117, B117, C#118, D118, E118, F#118, G#118, A118, B118, C#119, D119, E119, F#119, G#119, A119, B119, C#120, D120, E120, F#120, G#120, A120, B120, C#121, D121, E121, F#121, G#121, A121, B121, C#122, D122, E122, F#122, G#122, A122, B122, C#123, D123, E123, F#123, G#123, A123, B123, C#124, D124, E124, F#124, G#124, A124, B124, C#125, D125, E125, F#125, G#125, A125, B125, C#126, D126, E126, F#126, G#126, A126, B126, C#127, D127, E127, F#127, G#127, A127, B127, C#128, D128, E128, F#128, G#128, A128, B128, C#129, D129, E129, F#129, G#129, A129, B129, C#130, D130, E130, F#130, G#130, A130, B130, C#131, D131, E131, F#131, G#131, A131, B131, C#132, D132, E132, F#132, G#132, A132, B132, C#133, D133, E133, F#133, G#133, A133, B133, C#134, D134, E134, F#134, G#134, A134, B134, C#135, D135, E135, F#135, G#135, A135, B135, C#136, D136, E136, F#136, G#136, A136, B136, C#137, D137, E137, F#137, G#137, A137, B137, C#138, D138, E138, F#138, G#138, A138, B138, C#139, D139, E139, F#139, G#139, A139, B139, C#140, D140, E140, F#140, G#140, A140, B140, C#141, D141, E141, F#141, G#141, A141, B141, C#142, D142, E142, F#142, G#142, A142, B142, C#143, D143, E143, F#143, G#143, A143, B143, C#144, D144, E144, F#144, G#144, A144, B144, C#145, D145, E145, F#145, G#145, A145, B145, C#146, D146, E146, F#146, G#146, A146, B146, C#147, D147, E147, F#147, G#147, A147, B147, C#148, D148, E148, F#148, G#148, A148, B148, C#149, D149, E149, F#149, G#149, A149, B149, C#150, D150, E150, F#150, G#150, A150, B150, C#151, D151, E151, F#151, G#151, A151, B151, C#152, D152, E152, F#152, G#152, A152, B152, C#153, D153, E153, F#153, G#153, A153, B153, C#154, D154, E154, F#154, G#154, A154, B154, C#155, D155, E155, F#155, G#155, A155, B155, C#156, D156, E156, F#156, G#156, A156, B156, C#157, D157, E157, F#157, G#157, A157, B157, C#158, D158, E158, F#158, G#158, A158, B158, C#159, D159, E159, F#159, G#159, A159, B159, C#160, D160, E160, F#160, G#160, A160, B160, C#161, D161, E161, F#161, G#161, A161, B161, C#162, D162, E162, F#162, G#162, A162, B162, C#163, D163, E163, F#163, G#163, A163, B163, C#164, D164, E164, F#164, G#164, A164, B164, C#165, D165, E165, F#165, G#165, A165, B165, C#166, D166, E166, F#166, G#166, A166, B166, C#167, D167, E167, F#167, G#167, A167, B167, C#168, D168, E168, F#168, G#168, A168, B168, C#169, D169, E169, F#169, G#169, A169, B169, C#170, D170, E170, F#170, G#170, A170, B170, C#171, D171, E171, F#171, G#171, A171, B171, C#172, D172, E172, F#172, G#172, A172, B172, C#173, D173, E173, F#173, G#173, A173, B173, C#174, D174, E174, F#174, G#174, A174, B174, C#175, D175, E175, F#175, G#175, A175, B175, C#176, D176, E176, F#176, G#176, A176, B176, C#177, D177, E177, F#177, G#177, A177, B177, C#178, D178, E178, F#178, G#178, A178, B178, C#179, D179, E179, F#179, G#179, A179, B179, C#180, D180, E180, F#180, G#180, A180, B180, C#181, D181, E181, F#181, G#181, A181, B181, C#182, D182, E182, F#182, G#182, A182, B182, C#183, D183, E183, F#183, G#183, A183, B183, C#184, D184, E184, F#184, G#184, A184, B184, C#185, D185, E185, F#185, G#185, A185, B185, C#186, D186, E186, F#186, G#186, A186, B186, C#187, D187, E187, F#187, G#187, A187, B187, C#188, D188, E188, F#188, G#188, A188, B188, C#189, D189, E189, F#189, G#189, A189, B189, C#190, D190, E190, F#190, G#190, A190, B190, C#191, D191, E191, F#191, G#191, A191, B191, C#192, D192, E192, F#192, G#192, A192, B192, C#193, D193, E193, F#193, G#193, A193, B193, C#194, D194, E194, F#194, G#194, A194, B194, C#195, D195, E195, F#195, G#195, A195, B195, C#196, D196, E196, F#196, G#196, A196, B196, C#197, D197, E197, F#197, G#197, A197, B197, C#198, D198, E198, F#198, G#198, A198, B198, C#199, D199, E199, F#199, G#199, A199, B199, C#200, D200, E200, F#200, G#200, A200, B200, C#201, D201, E201, F#201, G#201, A201, B201, C#202, D202, E202, F#202, G#202, A202, B202, C#203, D203, E203, F#203, G#203, A203, B203, C#204, D204, E204, F#204, G#204, A204, B204, C#205, D205, E205, F#205, G#205, A205, B205, C#206, D206, E206, F#206, G#206, A206, B206, C#207, D207, E207, F#207, G#207, A207, B207, C#208, D208, E208, F#208, G#208, A208, B208, C#209, D209, E209, F#209, G#209, A209, B209, C#210, D210, E210, F#210, G#210, A210, B210, C#211, D211, E211, F#211, G#211, A211, B211, C#212, D212, E212, F#212, G#212, A212, B212, C#213, D213, E213, F#213, G#213, A213, B213, C#214, D214, E214, F#214, G#214, A214, B214, C#215, D215, E215, F#215, G#215, A215, B215, C#216, D216, E216, F#216, G#216, A216, B216, C#217, D217, E217, F#217, G#217, A217, B217, C#218, D218, E218, F#218, G#218, A218, B218, C#219, D219, E219, F#219, G#219, A219, B219, C#220, D220, E220, F#220, G#220, A220, B220, C#221, D221, E221, F#221, G#221, A221, B221, C#222, D222, E222, F#222, G#222, A222, B222, C#223, D223, E223, F#223, G#223, A223, B223, C#224, D224, E224, F#224, G#224, A224, B224, C#225, D225, E225, F#225, G#225, A225, B225, C#226, D226, E226, F#226, G#226, A226, B226, C#227, D227, E227, F#227, G#227, A227, B227, C#228, D228, E228, F#228, G#228, A228, B228, C#229, D229, E229, F#229, G#229, A229, B229, C#230, D230, E230, F#230, G#230, A230, B230, C#231, D231, E231, F#231, G#231, A231, B231, C#232, D232, E232, F#232, G#232, A232, B232, C#233, D233, E233, F#233, G#233, A233, B233, C#234, D234, E234, F#234, G#234, A234, B234, C#235, D235, E235, F#235, G#235, A235, B235, C#236, D236, E236, F#236, G#236, A236, B236, C#237, D237, E237, F#237, G#237, A237, B237, C#238, D238, E238, F#238, G#238, A238, B238, C#239, D239, E239, F#239, G#239, A239, B239, C#240, D240, E240, F#240, G#240, A240, B240, C#241, D241, E241, F#241, G#241, A241, B241, C#242, D242, E242, F#242, G#242, A242, B242, C#243, D243, E243, F#243, G#243, A243, B243, C#244, D244, E244, F#244, G#244, A244, B244, C#245, D245, E245, F#245, G#245, A245, B245, C#246, D246, E246, F#246, G#246, A246, B246, C#247, D247, E247, F#247, G#247, A247, B247, C#248, D248, E248, F#248, G#248, A248, B248, C#249, D249, E249, F#249, G#249, A249, B249, C#250, D250, E250, F#250, G#250, A250, B250, C#251, D251, E251, F#251, G#251, A251, B251, C#252, D252, E252, F#252, G#252, A252, B252, C#253, D253, E253, F#253, G#253, A253, B253, C#254, D254, E254, F#254, G#254, A254, B254, C#255, D255, E255, F#255, G#255, A255, B255, C#256, D256, E256, F#256, G#256, A256, B256, C#257, D257, E257, F#257, G#257, A257, B257, C#258, D258, E258, F#258, G#258, A258, B258, C#259, D259, E259, F#259, G#259, A259, B259, C#260, D260, E260, F#260, G#260, A260, B260, C#261, D261, E261, F#261, G#261, A261, B261, C#262, D262, E262, F#262, G#262, A262, B262, C#263, D263, E263, F#263, G#263, A263, B263, C#264, D264, E264, F#264, G#264, A264, B264, C#265, D265, E265, F#265, G#265, A265, B265, C#266, D266, E266, F#266, G#266, A266, B266, C#267, D267, E267, F#267, G#267, A267, B267, C#268, D268, E268, F#268, G#268, A268, B268, C#269, D269, E269, F#269, G#269, A269, B269, C#270, D270, E270, F#270, G#270, A270, B270, C#271, D271, E271, F#271, G#271, A271, B271, C#272, D272, E272, F#272, G#272, A272, B272, C#273, D273, E273, F#273, G#273, A273, B273, C#274, D274, E274, F#274, G#274, A274, B274, C#275, D275, E275, F#275, G#275, A275, B275, C#276, D276, E276, F#276, G#276, A276, B276, C#277, D277, E277, F#277, G#277, A277, B277, C#278, D278, E278, F#278, G#278, A278, B278, C#279, D279, E279, F#279, G#279, A279, B279, C#280, D280, E280, F#280, G#280, A280, B280, C#281, D281, E281, F#281, G#281, A281, B281, C#282, D282, E282, F#282, G#282, A282, B282, C#283, D283, E283, F#283, G#283, A283, B283, C#284, D284, E284, F#284, G#284, A284, B284, C#285, D285, E285, F#285, G#285, A285, B285, C#286, D286, E286, F#286, G#286, A286, B286, C#287, D287, E287, F#287, G#287, A287, B287, C#288, D288, E288, F#288, G#288, A288, B288, C#289, D289, E289, F#289, G#289, A289, B289, C#290, D290, E290, F#290, G#290, A290, B290, C#291, D291, E291, F#291, G#291, A291, B291, C#292, D292, E292, F#292, G#292, A292, B292, C#293, D293, E293, F#293, G#293, A293, B293, C#294, D294, E294, F#294, G#294, A294, B294, C#295, D295, E295, F#295, G#295, A295, B295, C#296, D296, E296, F#296, G#296, A296, B296, C#297, D297, E297, F#297, G#297, A297, B297, C#298, D298, E298, F#298, G#298, A298, B298, C#299, D299, E299, F#299, G#299, A299, B299, C#300, D300, E300, F#300, G#300, A300, B300, C#301, D301, E301, F#301, G#301, A301, B301, C#302, D302, E302, F#302, G#302, A302, B302, C#303, D303, E303, F#303, G#303, A303, B303, C#304, D304, E304, F#304, G#304, A304, B304, C#305, D305, E305, F#305, G#305, A305, B305, C#306, D306, E306, F#306, G#306, A306, B306, C#307, D307, E307, F#307, G#307, A307, B307, C#308, D308, E308, F#308, G#308, A308, B308, C#309, D309, E309, F#309, G#309, A309, B309, C#310, D310, E310, F#310, G#310, A310, B310, C#311, D311, E311, F#311, G#311, A311, B311, C#312, D312, E312, F#312, G#312, A312, B312, C#313, D313, E313, F#313, G#313, A313, B313, C#314, D314, E314, F#314, G#314, A314, B314, C#315, D315, E315, F#315, G#315, A315, B315, C#316, D316, E316, F#316, G#316, A316, B316, C#317, D317, E317, F#317, G#317, A317, B317, C#318, D318, E318, F#318, G#318, A318, B318, C#319, D319, E319, F#319, G#319, A319, B319, C#320, D320, E320, F#320, G#320, A320, B320, C#321, D321, E321, F#321, G#321, A321, B321, C#322, D322, E322, F#322, G#322, A322, B322, C#323, D323, E323, F#323, G#323, A323, B323, C#324, D324, E324, F#324, G#324, A324, B324, C#325, D325, E325, F#325, G#325, A325, B325, C#326, D326, E326, F#326, G#326, A326, B326, C#327, D327, E327, F#327, G#327, A327, B327, C#328, D328, E328, F#328, G#328, A328, B328, C#329, D329, E329, F#329, G#329, A329, B329, C#330, D330, E330, F#330, G#330, A330, B330, C#331, D331, E331, F#331, G#331, A331, B331, C#332, D332, E332, F#332, G#332, A332, B332, C#333, D333, E333, F#333, G#333, A333, B333, C#334, D334, E334, F#334, G#334, A334, B334, C#335, D335, E335, F#335, G#335, A335, B335, C#336, D336, E336, F#336, G#336, A336, B336, C#337, D337, E337, F#337, G#337, A337, B337, C#338, D338, E338, F#338, G#338, A338, B338, C#339, D339, E339, F#339, G#339, A339, B339, C#340, D340, E340, F#340, G#340, A3

results of unrelated harmonies that would be blended by pedal retention.



The effect of retaining the pedal through this series of close chromatic arpeggios for the sake of the pedal octave (E flat) would be particularly discordant and objectionable. The advice offered here, which is supported by the authority of the Peters' edition, is that the lower E flat should be sacrificed at the first chord change and the upper E flat retained by changing from the first to the fifth finger, the pedal to be changed (or if preferred, half changed) at each new harmony.



## CHAPTER VII

### HALF PEDALLING AND TREMOLO PEDALLING.

#### HALF PEDALLING.

NOTHING shows how inadequately the art of pedalling has hitherto been treated as the fact that in no edition of any well-known composer's works, as far as can be discovered, are any directions included for the employment of half pedalling, nor does there even exist a generally recognised sign to indicate that such an effect is required.

All that the majority of students are ever taught about pedal depression and release is that it must be put down as far as it will go, where a pedal effect is needed, and rise to its full extent where it is necessary for it to come up. That it should occasionally be partially depressed and frequently partially released is a fact of which they mostly remain in complete ignorance, although the majority of professional pianists depend very largely, if often intuitively, upon this device to produce subtle shades of tone-colouring and atmosphere.

As has already been seen, the depression of the pedal removes the dampers as far from the strings

as possible, giving the latter a considerable space in which to vibrate after having been struck. When the pedal is only partially depressed, the dampers remain nearer to the strings, and thereby check, without actually stopping the vibrations, and a much fainter blur or harmonic background is generated than would be the case under the ordinary conditions of pedalling.

There are innumerable instances of phrases where the pedal as usually employed, or the entire absence of pedal would be equally undesirable. The half-pedal, whilst not creating an absolutely ideal condition of affairs, constitutes a fairly satisfactory compromise, and in fact provides the only means of approximating to the composer's intentions.

Half-depression of the pedal is used but rarely, although it is unequalled for the production of weak vibrations and a thin harmonic atmosphere. But what is generally understood by half pedalling is complete *depression* and half *release*. This should take place where the presence of antagonistic chords or passing-notes makes it necessary to weaken even the supporting harmony in order to avoid unnecessary discord.

The student who has read the previous chapters will have noticed that several illustrations of this effect have already been given. The type of



passage into which it has been introduced should make it reasonably clear under what circumstances it should be resorted to, so that examples need not be multiplied in the present chapter.

A few modern composers indicate definitely their wishes as to the application of half pedalling to certain phrases. Mr. York Bowen in particular provides some characteristic examples in his pianoforte works, from one of which a quotation is given below.

*Valse-Rêverie*

The image shows a musical score for 'Valse-Rêverie' in bass clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The score is divided into two measures. The first measure contains a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a half pedalling marking (*Ped. 1/2*) indicated by a dashed line. The second measure contains a half pedalling marking (*Ped. 1/2*) and a second half pedalling marking (*1/2*) also indicated by a dashed line. The notation includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

96 *Ped. 1/2* *Ped. 1/2 1/2*

*As marked by the composer.*

One further illustration of this device must suffice for the present.

*Rhapsodie in B minor - Brahms*

The image shows a musical score for 'Rhapsodie in B minor' by Brahms in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F-sharp, C-sharp). The score is divided into two measures. The first measure contains a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The second measure contains a 'con pedale' marking, indicated by a solid line with a wavy bottom edge. The notation includes a melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand.

97  
*marked by composer con pedale*

The "murmuring of innumerable B's" should permeate these bars, and it is not easy to suggest this except by some corresponding murmurous pedal effect such as is provided by half pedalling, with its continual partial release and depression as shown above.

TREMOLO PEDALLING.

This has also been referred to and illustrated in an earlier example (No. 76, p. 93). It consists of a very rapid series of movements of the foot upon the pedal, pressure and release succeeding each other as closely as possible. It is doubtful if the pedal ever rises to its fullest extent. It may do so in the case of a pedal capable only of very shallow depression. But as it has to move up and down as quickly as can conveniently be managed, the actual distance that it rises is quite immaterial.

The aim in view is to produce little supporting waves of sound wherever, as in the case of half

98

Nocturne in B<sup>b</sup> - Field

The image shows a musical score for the Nocturne in B-flat by Frédéric Chopin, specifically measures 98 and 99. The score is written for piano and features a treble and bass clef. The key signature is two flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The tempo is marked 'p' (piano). The title 'Nocturne in B<sup>b</sup> - Field' is written above the staff. The number '98' is in the top left corner. The first measure (measure 98) shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a harmonic accompaniment in the bass clef. The second measure (measure 99) continues the melodic line and accompaniment. Below the staff, there are two horizontal lines representing the pedal. The first line is labeled 'usual pedalling' and shows a single downward stroke with a small 'a' below it. The second line is labeled 'Tremolo pedalling' and shows a rapid, continuous series of small downward strokes, representing the tremolo effect.

pedalling, continued retention and complete release would be equally inappropriate. Tremolo pedalling is usually adopted in chromatic passages.

The above extract, simple and unpretentious as it is, will yet repay a little careful analysis.

The need for pedal is felt instinctively, and the adoption of the conventional method (*a*) will not produce any actually objectionable result. But it does not explore the pedal possibilities of these and similar phrases to the extent obtainable by the tremolo method (*b*).

Every time pedal depression takes place, a little tonal wave is added to the music, and is checked or weakened as the foot rises. A little wave of sound added to each one of the quavers in the bars just quoted materially accentuates the phrasing by bringing into greater prominence the semi-staccato character of the treble notes, whilst as the dampers are never upon the strings long enough for the sound to be completely cut off, the bass is not deprived of its proper harmonic support.

Sometimes, even when the suggestion of chord support is of the slightest, a passage that would hardly stand the ordinary continued pedal depression, requires more resonance than can be imparted by the hands alone. In cases like this tremolo pedalling can often be resorted to successfully.

*All<sup>o</sup>* *Prel. Aria and Finale.. C. Franck.  
(last movement)*

99

In this number this effect can be reserved, if desired, for the crescendo, which starts a few bars later.

Many pianists employ tremolo pedalling very successfully in the ordinary free Cadenza, especially if it has chord support, the idea being to add a kind of shimmering effect to the rapid notes of the Cadenza and at the same time to give the proper harmonic support without overweighting the music with too strong a blend of passing notes.

It is not easy of accomplishment.

In a free, rapid passage of single notes, whether supported by a sustained chord or not, the tendency of the pedal gradations to become uneven and spasmodic is thrown into much greater prominence than when both hands are occupied with chords, changing harmonies or chromatic scale passages. A Cadenza, too, so often affords a welcome opportunity for relief after much previous pedalling that one is inclined more to discountenance the device under these conditions than to encourage it. As in many other forms of human endeavour, complete success is the only justification for its adoption.

## CHAPTER VIII

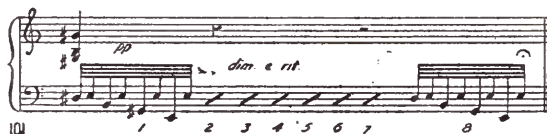
### SOME LESS-KNOWN PEDAL EFFECTS.

THERE are many effects well-known to professional pianists and much in favour with some of them that are never indicated in the printed copy, and are totally unknown to the average student. Sometimes a sustained or pedal effect is required, and ordinary pedalling, owing to the presence of passing-notes, or to some other reason, is not entirely satisfactory—then various devices are resorted to, very often with extremely happy results.

One of the very simplest of these is the release of the pedal after the hands have come to rest upon a chord which concludes either a piece, a passage, or a phrase. An example has already been given in No. 19, p. 34, where pedal release is suggested in order to relieve the heaviness of the vibrations in the bass. It can be used with equally good effect to free a passage from its incidental passing-notes.



This is an effect that without any special thought might easily be applied unconsciously and intuitively by any pianist, but the elimination of passing-notes is not always so easy of accomplishment. Sometimes a little technical adaptation is needed to achieve the desired result. The final bar of the slow movement of Schubert's Fantasia in C, is a case in point.



If the pedal is not used the bar will be lacking in fullness of tone and harmonic support, whilst pedal retention throws the shadow of a disturbing seventh (D sharp) over the closing harmony of the tonic. Retention by the fingers of the essential notes, and of these only, provides a very simple escape from the dilemma. If seven groups are played as written, the eighth can be altered as follows:—



As soon as the pedal, which should be pressed down at the beginning of the bar, is raised, the sound of the D sharp disappears, whilst the harmony of the tonic is retained by the fingers holding down the notes of the chord.

#### A DIFFICULT PASSAGE TO PEDAL EFFECTIVELY.

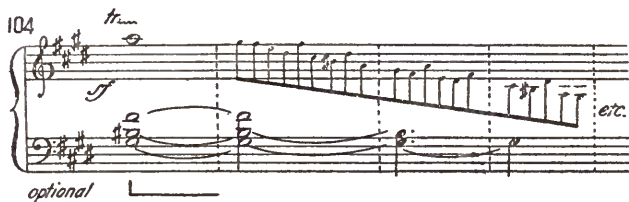
The problem of a continually recurring minor ninth in the first movement of the "Appassionata" is one that is not always solved satisfactorily. Beethoven, who wished the harmony to be retained at all costs, marked the pedal to be kept down for the whole passage. This, on the very powerful instruments in use to-day, tends to become a little overwhelming. One cannot forbid any student to follow the markings of the great composers, but it is allowable to call attention to an alternative method which sacrifices nothing essential, and at the same time enables the very important diminuendo to be more successfully accomplished. The alteration is of the slightest, merely that of playing the first note only instead of the first five, with the left hand, and holding it down as long as the supporting harmony is needed.

The pedal can be raised at or after the ninth (D flat), at the pleasure of the pianist, or half pedalling can be substituted if preferred.

The chief point is that, by holding down C with the left hand, some measure of pedal relief can be obtained without sacrificing the harmonic support or the root of the chord. The passage, which occurs just before the "piu Allegro" at the end of the movement, will be easily recognised, even from the accompanying short extract.



The above effect—that of the sustained bass note, and appropriate pedal release—is fairly well-known in connection with this passage. The next, from the C# Minor Sonata (Op. 27), may be more of a novelty.



† The pedal has to be put down at the beginning of the *previous* bar, but there is no occasion to include this bar in the present extract.



A little harmonic support can be given to this by holding down the bass chord till forced to release the fingers one by one as the descending treble encroaches upon the space they occupy. Rubinstein adopted tremolo pedalling for this Cadenza, but reasons have been given why students should be chary of attempting it in this or similar cases, and the above alternative is suggested for consideration.

#### SILENT PRESSURE.

Amongst all these unorthodox devices, none is more effective, or by some pianists more frequently resorted to, than the pedal effect obtained by the silent depression of certain notes and chords. But to appreciate this it is necessary to realise the principle of the sympathetic vibrations of related intervals to which references have already been made.

If a bass note were struck powerfully enough on the pianoforte, and all the strings left free to vibrate, an abnormally keen ear might be able to detect many of the notes of the natural harmonic chord. In ordinary pianoforte playing a shadowy echo of fifths and octaves is all that is added to the music, too faint to be individually recognisable, although they make their presence felt by adding

richness to the harmonic atmosphere. When, however, experiments are made with single notes and chords, the vibrations from related intervals are clearly audible.

### MANNER OF INDICATING SILENT PRESSURE.

For the sake of convenience the mark for down bow upon stringed instruments  $\lrcorner$  will be used to indicate that any note or chord over which it is written must be pressed down silently, that is the strings must be freed from the dampers without the hammers being allowed to strike them.

### SOME ILLUSTRATIONS.

The upper note or octave, pressed down silently will be heard quite distinctly after the note, or octave, below it has been released.

The same result will be achieved if a fifth below is substituted for the octave.

106 *ff* ( $\overline{\text{F}} \text{A} \text{C}$ )

106<sup>a</sup> *ff*  $\overline{\text{F}} \text{A} \text{C}$  or  $\overline{\text{F}} \text{A} \text{C}$

The experiment is equally successful if single notes and octaves are replaced by full chords.

107 *ff* ( $\overline{\text{F}\#} \text{A} \text{C}$ )

107<sup>a</sup> *ff*  $\overline{\text{F}\#} \text{A} \text{C}$  or  $\overline{\text{F}\#} \text{A} \text{C}$

This silent pressure can be transferred to the bass and an ingenious pedal effect be obtained in the following manner.

108 *Andte* *p* *f*

A chord of the subdominant, a fifth below, is equally effective. An example is given in a minor key.



The effect is particularly grateful when the right hand passage is played staccato, for whilst the silent pressure of the bass chord provides adequate harmonic support, the articulate detachment of each right hand note or chord is far more apparent than if that support were supplied by the pedal.

Although many beautiful effects can be obtained by these means, it is disappointing to find that composers have, with almost complete unanimity, neglected to exploit the possibilities of the piano-forte in this direction, and all attempts to utilise them must, therefore, be a matter of individual responsibility.

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SILENT PRESSURE.

The same two reasons exist for the application of silent pressure as for the chord retention and pedal

release already described in this chapter, the first being to relieve a phrase or passage of some of its heavier vibrations, and incidentally to assist a diminuendo where required, and the second to enable the harmony to be sustained unclouded by the retention of passing-notes.

(1) *Diminuendo Improved by Silent Pressure and Pedal Release.*

An example of the first is taken from the concluding bars of the first movement of the "Appassionata." It is often overlooked that this is not a long drawn out diminuendo from *ff* to *pp*, but whilst the first beat is played *ff*, the second changes abruptly to *p*. To assist this the pedal may be changed very rapidly at the second beat. Even then and with the music diminishing in tone from piano to as soft a pianissimo as possible the ear will still be conscious of a considerable amount of heavy vibration when the final chord is sounded. Relief from this can be obtained, if desired, by silently adding two notes to the third in the right hand, and an octave to the left hand note, and as

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The score is divided into three measures. The first measure starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and contains a series of eighth notes. The second measure begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains a series of eighth notes. The third measure contains a final chord with a pianissimo (*ppp*) dynamic. Annotations include "Simile 3 bars till" above the second measure, "pupiano" below the second measure, and "ppp" below the third measure. A note at the bottom right indicates "Silent pressure & pedal release" with a small diagram of a hand on a key.

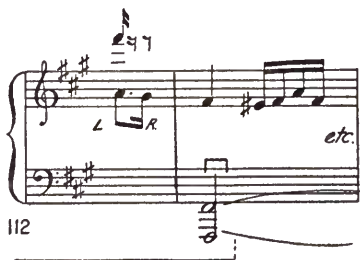
in previous cases, releasing the pedal as soon as the hand is at rest upon the keys.

(2) *An Alternative to Pedalled Passing Notes.*

The second reason for adopting silent pressure, that is the opportunity it affords of playing unpedalled passing notes without sacrificing harmonic support, can be illustrated by an extract from Chopin's Nocturne in E flat. In the Cadenza towards the end most of the notes in the right hand are in the register not actually operated upon by the pedal. Yet, if it be kept down for the whole passage, many sympathetic intervals will be set vibrating. It is usually only when this piece is played on the violin or 'cello that it is possible to hear an absolutely clean cadenza, the pedal effect, introduced at the discretion of the accompanist, being kept quite free of the passing notes played by the soloist. A similar result can be obtained upon the pianoforte by the silent pressure of a chord of the dominant seventh of E flat in the left hand.

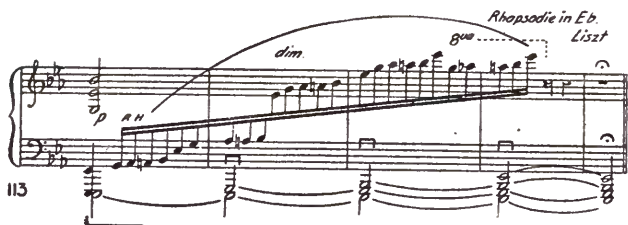
The image shows a musical score for a cadenza section. The right hand (treble clef) has a melodic line with a fermata over a chord. The left hand (bass clef) has a bass line with a fermata over a chord. A dashed line indicates the end of the section. A note at the bottom right says "Silent pressure and pedal release".

A very difficult pedal situation at the end of the Andante in Mendelssohn's F sharp Minor Capriccio can be relieved by depressing silently an octave F sharp in the left hand before releasing the pedal.

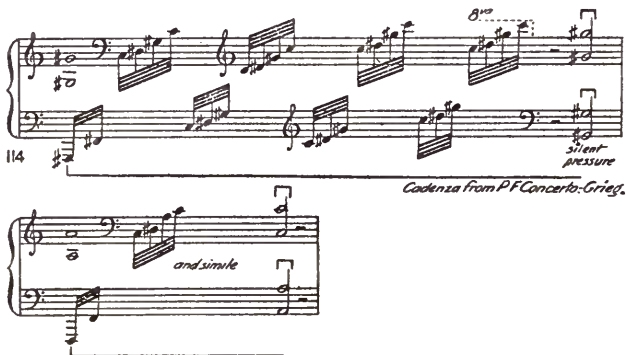


The passage is much too long to quote in detail. The original pedal marking, evidently by Mendelssohn himself, has given rise to much discussion, and is frequently ignored on account of the confusion that would be created by holding down the pedal for fourteen consecutive bars, through the harmonies of F sharp Major, B Minor, F sharp Minor, and incidental passing-notes.

In order to produce a sustained effect, and to evade the confusion of pedalled passing notes over a wide compass, a chord can be *completed* by silent pressure after the foundation note has been played in the ordinary way.



The retention by silent pressure, not only of chords, but of single notes and octaves, was illustrated earlier in this chapter. The following affords an example, not so much of the retention, as the recapture of an octave by this method. Its value is enhanced by doubling it, and its substitution for the half-bar rest given by the composer is a liberty that hardly needs an apology.



It is almost identical with the example given on p. 105, where it was suggested that an octave should be substituted for a single note in the bass, and after



being retained by the pedal should be recaptured by silent pressure and allowed to vibrate through a bar filled only by a rest. This has been used by at least one well-known pianist in the Grieg Concerto, and by another in the "Papillons" without any consultation or interchange of ideas. There must be something to be said in favour of any effect which though not indicated in the printed copy, has occurred independently to two well-known concert artists. A variation of this effect can be adopted at the end of the "Paganini" number in Schumann's "Carneval."

115

a. Usual pedalling  
 b. Suggested alteration  
 or  
 c.

The image shows a musical score for piano, numbered 115. It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, with a grand staff bracket on the left. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music starts with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a single note. The final chord is marked ppp (pianississimo). Below the score, a diagram illustrates three pedalling options (a, b, c) for the final chord. Option a is the usual pedalling, option b is the suggested alteration, and option c is another variation. The diagram shows the duration of the pedal for each option, with option b being the longest and most dramatic.

If the pedal be used as marked at *b*, the dominant seventh chord of A flat will seem to emerge mysteriously from the echoes of the F Minor chord just previously played. The new chord must be pressed down almost inaudibly. In fact, silent pressure could be resorted to except that the G octave in the right hand would not be heard. This, however, can be played as pianississimo as possible, and the rest

of the chord in both hands be depressed silently if desired. It is of little importance whether or no the pedal is put down again after the hands are at rest upon the chord.

#### PEDALLING FOR SINGLE NOTES.

This does not refer to the pedalling of repeated single notes, a favourite device with some pianists, nor to the pedalling of single notes, which if sounded together would form the notes of a chord, but to a melodic or thematic phrase, where, if the pedal be used at all, it must be changed at or after each note.

*Prelude (from Prel. Ch. & Finale) C. Franck.*



Many pianists pedal this as marked, others dislike the effect and refuse to acknowledge that phrases of this kind need pedal support. The two schools of pedalling mentioned on p. 37 are typified by the divergence of opinion on this point. An argument in favour of a perfectly clear performance in the present instance is that, previous to the bars quoted, the music is of a type that needs pedal assistance on a rather generous scale, and this phrase

of quiet single notes may be taken as an opportunity for a little welcome relief.

There is one other effect favoured by pianists, but hardly within the scope of any but a very well equipped student. It is produced, not as in earlier cases, by the hands with no assistance from the pedal, but by the pedal with no assistance from the hands.

If a shake or any passage of rapidly repeated notes is started *f* or *ff*, and played with a tone diminishing to *pp* or *ppp*, the hands can, at the very softest point, momentarily cease playing, and on a good instrument, the vibration of the notes that have been just played will be heard faintly, but quite distinctly.

After a very brief interval the hands must resume, naturally as softly as possible, and increase the volume of tone according to the printed directions, or the fancy of the executant. Those listening will receive the impression of having heard a quite remarkable diminuendo and crescendo.

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The music is divided into two measures. In the first measure, the treble staff has a series of notes with a wavy line above them, indicating a tremolo or shake. The dynamic marking is *ff dim. till ppp*. In the second measure, the treble staff has a few notes, and the dynamic marking is *ppp* with a wedge-shaped symbol pointing to the right, indicating a crescendo. Below the staves, there is a note: *with ped. down vibrations of trill still audible*. The page number 117 is written at the bottom left.

An opportunity for the introduction of this effect occurs at the end of the Cadenza in Scriabine's "Nocturne for the Left Hand," just prior to the return of the subject, although in this case the trill is not supported by a chord in the bass.

There is a story of Meyerbeer, who, when conducting the rehearsal of one of his operas, kept stopping the orchestra to tell the drummer he was not playing softly enough. The poor player tried several times without being able to satisfy the great man, till at last Meyerbeer said, "Now you have the exact effect I want, why couldn't you get it before?"

The player said, "Well, sir, before this I only played as softly as I could; but this last time, when you were quite satisfied, I didn't play at all."

The point of this anecdote is supposed to lie in the fact that a musician as eminent as Meyerbeer was unable to detect the fact that the drummer had ceased playing. But it is often forgotten that a kettle drum will continue to vibrate after being struck, unless stopped by pressure upon the parchment. The (possibly apocryphal) drummer was unintentionally producing a kindred effect to the one recommended above for the pianist.

This "not playing at all" can be used to some purpose in Godard's Second Mazurka in B flat, where, in place of a trill it can be applied to a repeated

group of four notes. As before, the pressure should *start fortissimo* and diminish gradually to an extreme *pianissimo*, with the pedal held down. If at the very softest point the hands are lifted from the keyboard, but the pedal is not released, the impression will be created that the little four note phrase, as in the case of the trill, is still being played, and the hands can resume without their temporary cessation of activity having been noticed. It will be found necessary to take a slight liberty and increase the number of repetitions of this group of notes to avoid too abrupt a transition from *f* or *ff* to an extreme *pp*, but in so free a passage this is of little importance.

118

*All°*  
 L.H. *A.H.* *repeat ad lib. diminuendo f. ff* *ppp* *(Vibrations audible though notes not played)*  
*Ped. retained* *roll*  
*pp* *a. tem.*

## CHAPTER IX

### SOME VARIETIES OF PEDAL MECHANISM.

THERE are few pianists who have not, at one time or another, experienced a slight feeling of resentment at the tyranny of the pedal, which, in removing the dampers from the strings, is compelled to do so over the whole compass of the instrument. It often happens that the notes or chords played by one hand seem to need pedal support which is ill-adapted to the notes or chords played by the other.

This is another problem with which pianists are continually called upon to deal.

Pianoforte makers have, in one or two instances, attempted to broaden the scope of pedal effects, but so far the innovations introduced have not been widely adopted.

### THE PEDAL KEYBOARD.

Instruments with pedal keyboards have frequently been constructed, and some have enjoyed a fair measure of popularity. J. S. Bach used to play his Trios upon a harpsichord containing two rows of keys, as well as pedals.

Pleyel Wolff et Cie invented a bass pianoforte to be played by pedals only, and to be used with an ordinary pianoforte.

A pedal keyboard was attached to a pianoforte made for Schumann, who wrote for it a series of Studies and Sketches.

Messrs. Broadwood also made an instrument of similar design, a Pedalier Grand Pianoforte for M. Delaborde, of Paris, who played upon it in London in 1871.

All these inventions, however, merely added another keyboard to the instrument, although as they allowed of the retention of notes by the feet, a pedal effect was procurable which did not embrace the whole compass of the instrument.

#### THE SUSTAINING PEDAL.

This was the invention of a blind man, Montal, of Paris, and was exhibited by him in London in 1862. It was afterwards adopted by Messrs. Steinway, and is still fitted to their instruments. The characteristic feature of this pedal is that it is able to sustain any individual note or chord to which it is applied without affecting subsequent notes or chords played whilst it is held down. Its only disadvantage is that a brief but appreciable space of time must be allowed in which to depress

this pedal, which must be accomplished after sounding the note or notes which have to be sustained, and *before* sounding the note or notes following. It can be used in works like the "Prelude of Rachmaninoff" and the "Cathédrale" of Debussy, but not in the Finale of Schumann's "Papillons," or in any work which does not permit of a short pause after playing the note that has to be sustained.

#### THE DIVIDED PEDAL.

But the most serious attempt to widen the range of pedal effects has been made by The Chappell Piano Co., 50, New Bond Street, W., who have introduced a "divided" pedal into their latest instruments. This invention, which is of an extremely simple nature, is, as its name implies, a device by which the treble and the bass can be pedalled separately or together, the division being made at middle C. If one hand, especially the left hand, has chords, or passages of chord outline, whilst the other is engaged with passing-notes, the chords can be pedalled and the passing-notes left free of any pedal effect, except the slight vibration of sympathetic intervals.

To find a practical illustration of this, the student is referred first to the two little ornamental passages in Chopin's Nocturne in F sharp Major. If he wishes



to try the effect of the divided pedal he should play these bars (or any of similar outline) with another pianist on two pianos, one performer playing *only the bass* and using the pedal, and the other playing *only the treble* and not using the pedal at all. No. 48, p. 65, affords another example, the pedal effect being quite inappropriate to the chromatic scale in the right hand, but absolutely needed for the chords in the left hand. It is impossible to spare enough space to multiply examples, but two bars are given taken from the first movement of the "Waldstein" Sonata, which will serve further to illustrate the possibilities of this invention.

119  
*Left ped only*

120  
*L. ped only*

## CHAPTER X

### THE SOFT PEDAL.

THE management of the soft pedal is a comparatively simple matter—the chief fault to be guarded against is a tendency that some students have to fly to it upon every indication that the music has to be played softly. They use it frequently upon the mere appearance of *p*, almost invariably for *pp*, and relentlessly for *ppp*.

The soft pedal should never be called upon in this indiscriminate fashion. Some teachers strongly recommend their pupils to ignore it altogether, with which advice it is possible cordially to sympathise. But as it is affixed to every pianoforte almost without exception, some attention must be paid to it, and some suggestions offered as to its treatment.

To appreciate its capabilities and to know when to employ it to advantage, it is necessary to understand the mechanism by which it is operated, and to realise the difference between the effect that it is supposed to produce—viz., that of merely making the music softer, and the effect that it actually does

produce, that is, materially altering the quality of the tone, in addition to weakening it.

The latter result is caused by the fact that in spite of many experiments, no really satisfactory mechanism has yet been discovered by which the music can be made softer without changing its quality.

There are three methods in use at the present time, the "Celeste" pedal, the "Una corda" mechanism, and the "Half-blow."

By the first method (the "Celeste" pedal) the depression of the soft pedal raises a piece of felt between the hammers and the strings.

By the second one ("Una corda"), it shifts the keyboard slightly to the right, so that in the trichord portion of the instrument only two of the three strings are struck by the hammers—one string instead of two in the bichord portion, and the single strings in the lowest register are struck by the side and not the centre of the hammers.

By the third method ("Half-blow") the hammers are raised nearer to the strings, so that having a shorter distance to travel, the tone when produced is much weaker.

The first of these is the least satisfactory. The thickness of the felt when new is sufficient to muffle the sound to such an extent that it is sometimes

necessary to increase the pressure on the keys to counteract it. Later on the felt becomes worn more in some places than in others, the middle of the pianoforte much more than the extreme ends, so that it becomes impossible to procure a pianissimo of even tone with the soft pedal down, and unexpected and undesirable effects of crescendo and diminuendo are introduced contrary, not only to the intention of the composer, but to the desire of the performer.

The mechanism of the shifting keyboard, which is fitted to many Uprights and to nearly all Grands, is preferable to the above, but that is the best that can be said for it. It produces an individual but not very agreeable quality of tone, a counterpart of the thin, misty, somewhat reedy quality that issues from a muted violin. This severely limits the opportunities for the introduction of soft pedal effects, as in the majority of pianissimo phrases a change of tone colour is either unnecessary or actually inappropriate.

The third form of mechanism is the most satisfactory, as it merely moves the hammers nearer to the strings. There must naturally be some difference between the character of the tone weakened by a purely mechanical contrivance, and that in which the softer playing is due to more delicate finger pressure, but in the method under discussion at

present the change of tone colour is far less noticeable than that produced by any other contrivance by which the soft pedal is worked. A serious difficulty is that only a proportion of Uprights are fitted with this mechanism, and as far as can be discovered it is not used at all in Grands.

#### WHERE THE SOFT PEDAL MAY LEGITIMATELY BE USED.

This can be divided into two sections :—

First where the peculiar timbre associated with its operation may be ignored in the endeavour to procure a softer tone than that obtainable by finger pressure alone.

Secondly—where it is used with the express purpose of exploiting this characteristic change of tone colour.

Under the first heading come those non-melodic or non-thematic portions of a work where something a good deal softer than an ordinary pianissimo is needed. Delicate arpeggios of merely technical interest, as well as many of the little ornamental cadenzas in the work of Chopin and other composers, can be included in this category. Also where it is desired to enhance the effect of a diminuendo, more particularly in the closing bars of a piece. Under either of the above conditions, the latter especially,

the unavoidable change of timbre need not be considered. It would only be faintly recognisable and would have no detrimental effect upon the music.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS.

Before describing some of the special effects of tone colour for which the soft pedal is responsible, it must be stated that, unless some such effect is required, it is not expedient to press it down for the *enunciation of a theme or melody* however softly marked. The themes of the Nocturnes of Chopin, the Lieder of Mendelssohn, and the generality of pieces of this type need very clear articulation. It is often overlooked that the notes of a melody should never be played softly, at least on its first appearance, though the accompaniment generally must be.

But on its second, or some subsequent appearance, if *pp* is marked by the composer or desired by the performer, the soft pedal can legitimately be brought into play. The music benefits by the change of tone colour imparted to it, and the suggestion of an echo effect—a reminiscence of something previously heard—falls gratefully on the ear. It can also be used effectively in the very softest passages of little characteristic pieces like “*Une vieille boîte à*

musique " of de Severac, or " The Little Shepherd " of Debussy.

### ECHO EFFECTS.

A genuine echo effect, that is the soft repetition of a phrase, not necessarily in the same octave, can often be assisted by the soft pedal.

121

The musical notation for example 121 consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and features a melodic phrase of eighth notes. A slur covers the first two notes, and a second slur covers the remaining notes. The phrase is repeated in a higher octave, indicated by a brace and the word *etc.* The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, showing a corresponding bass line. A bracket below the lower staff indicates the application of the soft pedal.

121a

*Arabesque... Debussy*

The musical notation for example 121a consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. It begins with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic marking and features a melodic phrase of eighth notes. A slur covers the first two notes, and a second slur covers the remaining notes. The phrase is repeated in a higher octave, indicated by a brace and the word *etc.* The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, showing a corresponding bass line. A bracket below the lower staff indicates the application of the soft pedal, with the text *Soft ped. ....* written below it.

### WEIRD OR MYSTERIOUS EFFECTS.

Any attempt to depict a weird, uncanny or mysterious scene in music can be helped materially by the soft pedal. Opportunities occur in parts of

the so-called "ghost" movement in Beethoven's D Major Trio. But it is in modern music, chiefly of the French school, that most of the examples will be found. The "Cathédrale Engloutie," already referred to, affords one illustration. Another can be seen in "Le Gibet" of Ravel, where the composer has written "Sourdine durant toute la pièce."

The soft pedal is also useful in helping to create a suggestion of muffled drums and muted strings in Funeral Marches and other music of a solemn and impressive nature, but it should be employed sparingly and only in the very softest passages.

All composers occasionally give directions for the use of the soft pedal, but soft pedal effects are not limited to those phrases marked "una corda," or with some corresponding expression, by the composer nor, if it may be said so without disrespect, the soft pedal need not invariably be used, even when so indicated. Sometimes the quality and condition of the pianoforte render it inadvisable. Beethoven very seldom marked the soft pedal to be used, but he did so in the slow movement of the B flat Sonata (Op. 106), and in the Introduction to the Slow movement of the A flat Sonata (Op. 110), taking great care in the latter to mark the places for the release of the soft pedal as well as for its depression.



A GENUINE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE INTRODUCTION  
OF THE SOFT PEDAL.

There is one class of composition to which the soft pedal effect is peculiarly adapted—that is a piece which is supposed to be descriptive of a band, first heard in the distance, then approaching the listeners, and eventually disappearing in an opposite direction. The Turkish Patrol (Michaelis), although not originally written for the pianoforte, is a very characteristic example. Another is Rubinstein's arrangement of Beethoven's "March from the Ruins of Athens." The former, when played on the orchestra, begins and finishes almost inaudibly, an effect unobtainable upon the pianoforte except with the help of the soft pedal. The latter piece is only marked to begin *pp*, and the use of the soft pedal is optional, but there is a very long drawn out diminuendo at the end. In passages of this character the application of the soft pedal should be reserved till the fingers are producing the lightest and most delicate tone of which they are capable. Then the addition of the soft pedal becomes of real benefit, increasing the value of the diminuendo, and, by muffling or veiling the tone, helping to deepen the impression of the music fading away into the distance.

Schubert's little "Moment Musical in F Minor" is sometimes played with this effect of gradual crescendo, followed by gradual diminuendo. Even if this liberty be not taken, and the original markings for *f*, *p*, etc., are adhered to, it does not materially alter the situation. The end is built on a rather long drawn diminuendo, and the soft pedal may well be brought in as a legitimate accessory to the fact. It will perhaps be helpful if the advice given in this chapter is summarised briefly thus :—

(1) In the purely technical portion of a work diminuendo and pianissimo effects can be aided by a judicious employment of the soft pedal, but only when softer effects are needed than it is possible to obtain otherwise.

(2) In the thematic portions of a work, the soft pedal should only be introduced for the purpose of producing one of the special effects described above, and not in any case unless the unavoidable change of timbre is either desirable, or at least, not in any way opposed to the spirit of the music.

## PART III

# SPECIAL PEDAL TREATMENT REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN PERIODS AND CERTAIN COMPOSERS

### INTRODUCTORY.

THE chapters in this concluding portion must not be looked upon as an endeavour to deal comprehensively with the pedalling required in the music of any particular period or school, or of any special composer. It would not be possible for instance to give anything like adequate pedalling for the music of Bach or Beethoven without issuing an edition of their works marked in detail. Even to suggest the main outlines of the pedalling that is desirable or permissible, supported by a sufficient number of quotations, would extend the scope of this work beyond justifiable limits. All that will be attempted will be to give as concisely as possible a few general principles, illustrated by extracts from the period or composer under discussion.

SECTION I  
THE PRE-BEETHOVEN ERA

*(A—Instruments that preceded the Pianoforte.)*

The music of this period must be divided into two classes—(a) that written for instruments of an earlier date than the pianoforte, and (b) that written for the pianoforte itself.

The chief points of difference between the ancient and modern instruments are that in the former not only was there no pedal attachment, but in very few of them was there any mechanism by which the strings could be operated upon in a manner which would allow the vibrations to continue for any appreciable length of time. There were two exceptions:

(1) *The Clavichord*.—This was a keyed instrument in which the strings were set in vibration by brass tangents, and there consequently ensued a slight but recognisable duration of sound.

(2) *The Dulcimer*.—This instrument, which is played by two wooden hammers, derives great importance from the fact that it is supposed to have first suggested the idea of modern pianoforte mechanism. It was known many years ago, both in Persia and Arabia, and is, or was until recently, included in Hungarian bands.

But most of the earlier music that is now played upon the pianoforte was written, not for either of these instruments, but for the Spinet, and, later on, for the Harpsichord.

#### THE SPINET (OR VIRGINAL).

The "spines" which plucked the strings gave this instrument its name. It was in general use for over two hundred and fifty years (1500-1760).

#### THE HARPSICHORD.

This first appeared in 1611. It was more elaborate than any keyed instrument then in existence and was responsible for the introduction of passages of much greater difficulty than any that had been previously attempted. This can be verified by comparing the music written for the harpsichord with those works composed for and restricted to the capacities of the spinet.

*Its construction.*—It had two keyboards, and a mechanism which allowed the performer to play either softly or loudly.

*Its limitations.*—But it allowed of no gradations of tone, nor could anything in the way of cantabile or legato playing be obtained from it.

It seems then as if it would be totally inappropriate to introduce pedal effects into music written for

those instruments, yet this is hardly the case. Music written for a spinet or harpsichord and played upon the pianoforte undergoes a species of translation. Rapid passages that, owing to the construction of the earlier instruments, could only sound staccato, now, subservient to the mechanism of the modern instrument, become transformed into legato. The actual atmosphere of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries cannot be re-created by playing all passages with a detached touch, the tone quality of the modern pianoforte precludes this, even were it technically feasible. So that, having to translate spinet or harpsichord tone into pianoforte tone, and staccato phrases into legato and cantabile phrases, one must not deprive an occasional appropriate passage of the support afforded by the pedal, although the greatest economy must be employed in its application.

As had been pointed out earlier, the mere fact that a passage is made up of the notes of the common chord and is entirely devoid of passing-notes, is not, in itself, an invariable justification for using the pedal. But in the class of music at present under discussion, chords written *f* or *ff*, especially at the close of a work or of some portion of it, can usually be pedalled with safety. An arpeggio marked *f* or *crescendo*, can often be similarly treated, and

sometimes, but less frequently, a cantabile phrase with a simple chord or arpeggio accompaniment. In the compositions of the earlier writers—such as Couperin, Rameau, Byrd, Gibbons and Bull—works written mainly for the spinet, pedal effects can be almost entirely eliminated or restricted to an occasional judicious touch. In the music of Arne, Purcell, Scarlatti and other writers for the harpsichord, rather more freedom is allowed.

*Arpeggio* *Sonata in G (1<sup>st</sup> mov<sup>t</sup>) Arne*

122

played

123

(B—Music written for the early days of the  
pianoforte.)

Of the composers for the pianoforte who preceded Beethoven, it is only Mozart and Haydn whose music

still retains its hold upon the public, and is still included in the programmes of recital givers. In spite of the simple chord construction of the majority of their passages and the comparative scarcity of passing notes, the pedal should be used very lightly and with much discretion.

### A FEW EXAMPLES FROM MOZART'S SONATAS.

The notes of a chord passage in the bass pedalled individually and not collectively.

*All.<sup>o</sup>* *Sonata in D. (1<sup>st</sup> mov<sup>t</sup>)*

124

*cres.*

*or*

In a more modern work the pedal would be sustained for the whole of each bar. It might justifiably be so treated in the present case, particularly in the fourth bar, with a view to helping the crescendo. But in the Franklin Taylor edition the pedal is written as shown, to be changed for each beat, with the object of preserving the clearness of outline so essential to the music of this period. The chord support supplied by the pedal always robs notes of a little of their individual significance.



## DETACHED CHORDS.

For detached chords marked *f* or *ff*, the pedalling recommended in Chapter II., p. 40, is meant to apply to music of all schools, but, like all pedal effects, its need is far less imperative in music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than in that of a later date, and may sometimes be dispensed with altogether.

## ARPEGGIO PASSAGES.

Arpeggios of the common chord may often be played unpedalled, for no other reason than that it is impossible to achieve the crystal clearness which should characterise the interpretation of this school of music if too frequent recourse be had to the pedal, which wraps all phrases in a kind of harmonic cloud. As against this must be placed passages, also in arpeggio form, from which the pedal should, on no account, be withheld. The following will serve as an illustration.

*Presto* *N<sup>o</sup>. V. in G (Finale)*

125

## MELODY WITH BROKEN CHORD ACCOMPANIMENT.

It is not always easy to decide how much pedalling, if any, is required for the typical Mozart melody and accompaniment, but it is always safe to err on the side of caution and restraint.

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. The top staff is the melody, marked *Andte* and *No V in G (2nd movt)*. The bottom staff is the broken chord accompaniment, marked *p*. The score is numbered 126. Below the accompaniment, four pedaling options are shown, labeled a, b, c, and d. Option a is labeled "a - no ped." and shows no pedaling. Option b shows a single pedaling stroke under the first measure. Option c shows pedaling strokes under the first and second measures. Option d shows pedaling strokes under the first, second, and third measures.

The above need not be pedalled at all, as suggested at *a*, but the other methods are all allowable, though that given at *d* had better be reserved for a later appearance of the melody, when a fuller tone is desirable.

## THE TRILL WITH SIMILAR ACCOMPANIMENT.

The right-hand trill over a left-hand broken chord, usually the penultimate bar of a cadential ending, should, as a rule, be pedalled, but invariably when marked *f* or *ff*.

A musical score for a piano piece, labeled "No. VII in C." and page number "127". The score is written for a grand piano, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating the key of C major. The music begins with a forte dynamic marking (*f*). The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score is divided into two measures by a bar line.

## THE PIANOFORTE SONATAS OF HAYDN.

Owing to their greater breadth of treatment, these works, though resembling those of Mozart in their main structural and harmonic outlines, lend themselves to a more generous scheme of pedalling. A single extract must suffice for illustration.

A musical score for a piano piece, labeled "Sonata in Eb (1<sup>st</sup> movt)" and page number "128". The score is written for a grand piano, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is two flats (Bb, Eb), indicating the key of E-flat major. The music begins with a forte dynamic marking (*f*). The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score is divided into two measures by a bar line.

SECTION II  
THE SPECIAL PEDAL REQUIREMENTS OF  
INDIVIDUAL COMPOSERS

CHAPTER I

BACH.

ALTHOUGH Bach lived prior to the age of Mozart and Haydn, the interpretation of his works needs, within limits, a certain freedom and modernity of treatment. The same remark applies with almost equal force to the works of Handel.

So much is this the case that no separate advice will be offered with regard to the latter composer, and this chapter will deal exclusively with the works of Bach that are now played upon the pianoforte, these covering a much wider field both in numbers and musical interest than the works of his great contemporary.

An idea that is all too prevalent is that no pedal effects should be introduced into any work of Bach. The reason for this probably is that in hardly any edition of the Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues, the works with which the student is brought most

into contact, is there to be found a single pedal mark, even in editions in which the greatest attention is paid to all details of phrasing and of light and shade. The student who feels that such drastic avoidance of the pedal is unnecessary may still hesitate before assuming the responsibility of introducing effects which are nowhere indicated in the printed copy. If one were to seek the most apposite expression, the actual *mot juste* to describe a great deal of the music of Bach, the word "prophetic" could hardly be bettered. There is scarcely a technical effect in pianoforte music, even in the most pianistic passages of Liszt and Chopin, that Bach has not somewhere anticipated, and what makes it more remarkable, has done so in music written before the pianoforte was invented. Therefore, many effects that seem the exclusive prerogative of the more modern schools will be found surprisingly appropriate in interpreting the works of Bach. Amongst these effects pedalling must be included.

But this must be remembered. As the modern effects that he so prophetically introduced into his works consist mainly of hints and suggestions, the full fruition being deferred to a later generation, so must the pedal support be chiefly restricted to hints and suggestions also. Some advice as to the manner in which this can be carried out is now given,

accompanied by a few quotations from the first book of the "Forty-Eight."

### THE PRELUDES, SUITES, ETC.

In these works the pedal may be used in the non-contrapuntal passages, though not to the extent that would be justifiable in compositions of a more recent date.

In some of them considerable freedom is allowed in the selection of bars for pedal treatment. For instance, in the Prelude in C sharp Major, in the first book, the pedal may be used from the first bar or be postponed till the later crescendo and forte passages.

There is less freedom of choice with regard to the following bars from the same Prelude. In the first extract it is recommended that the pedal should be used only for the first beat, with a view to accentuating the phrasing, whilst in the second it should be retained for the whole bar in order to give the tonal support that is necessitated by the forte (f) mark.



129



130

In some cases there is hardly room for diversity of opinion. In the latter part of the Prelude in B flat (No. 21), pedalling in the chord and arpeggio passages is not only advisable, but as nearly compulsory as anything can be in a work of this school and period.

The final bar of this Prelude presents some difficulty. Without the pedal the end sounds very abrupt. Yet the harmonic support is a little too heavy if the pedal is held down from the beginning of the bar to the end. Czerny, in an endeavour to find a satisfactory solution of this problem, added an octave B flat in the bass. A simpler method, that of introducing the pedal at the highest instead of the lowest note of the tonic chord in the bass, is here suggested.



### THE PRESENCE OF PASSING-NOTES.

A figure of chord outline need not be deprived of pedal support because it is interspersed with passing-notes if the treble and bass are a reasonable distance apart. (The passing notes in the next extract are written in smaller type.)

*All<sup>o</sup>*

132

*a*  
*b*  
*c*

It matters little at the start which of the above methods is adopted, but the same pattern should not be repeated for too many bars in succession. When the hands draw closer together (bar 17 and segue), a touch of pedal at the first and third beats will suffice, and even this may be dispensed with.

The following suggestion is offered for pedalling in the G Minor Prelude (No. 16). The passage quoted differs in character from those already dealt with.

*Lento moderato*  
*tr.*

133

*simile*

This extract belongs to the same category as the middle section of Brahms's B Minor Rhapsody



(No. 97, p. 116) as regards its suggested pedal treatment.

### THE FUGUES.

In these or other works in which each of the parts has a separate contrapuntal existence, pedalling, as has been already pointed out, is, as a rule, undesirable but it is a rule that admits of many exceptions. The pedal should be avoided

(1) In any piece or portion of a piece written in strict Canon form ; and

(2) Invariably in the *first statement* of a Fugue subject.

In this class of composition, very slight and occasional pedalling are all that are needed, but, with the exceptions just mentioned, many an accent and many a crescendo can be assisted, and many a legato, otherwise unobtainable, can be procured by just a pedal touch at the right moment, although the parts move contrapuntally and independently.

A passage of such simple outline as the following may advantageously be pedalled as marked.

*Fugue in Eb N<sup>o</sup> 7*

134

In the next illustration, whether octaves or single notes be played, a pedal effect is welcome on account of the cadential nature of the phrase, the forte mark and the almost total absence of passing-notes.

*Fugue in C minor No. 2.*

135

The smoothness of many of the phrases in the Fugues, of which the following, from the one in G Minor, may serve as an example, will be enhanced by pedal support.

136

(optional)

The closing cadence of a Fugue should generally be pedalled. In the accompanying example the

chords immediately preceding those quoted also need pedal support.



Judgment must always be employed in these cadential endings, as to whether syncopated or ordinary pedalling be the more appropriate.

### THE LONGER WORKS.

No attempt can be made to indicate the pedalling required in the longer pianoforte works of Bach, such as the Italian Concerto and the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, nor would a few selected bars prove of much assistance. But in these as in the shorter works :—

(1) Pedal retention should nearly always be of short duration.

(2) It should never be permitted to obscure the clearness of contrapuntal passages ; and

(3) It is needed far less frequently than in music of more modern construction.

If the student bears these principles in mind he ought not to have much difficulty in introducing appropriate pedal effects into the chords and arpeggios, and even into an infrequent scale passage, if either a crescendo mark or chord support in the other hand seems to justify it.

## CHAPTER II

BEETHOVEN.

THE SONATAS.

It is in the works of Beethoven that the pedal, for the first time, takes an important place in the tonal colour scheme of pianoforte effects. Unfortunately in the majority of editions the pedal marking, though not neglected to the extent it is in the works of Bach, is still of a slight and often of a very perfunctory nature, and although some sort of agreement may be supposed to exist as to the phrases that do or do not need pedal assistance, it will be found upon investigation that the pedal marking in one edition seldom corresponds with the pedal marking in another. The student will thus not only be thrown very largely on his own resources, but will often find very confusing the dissimilarities of the pedal indications in even the most authoritative editions.

THE FIRST SUBJECT OF THE OPENING MOVEMENT.

It is often advisable to treat the chief subject of the ordinary allegro development movement in the

same manner that one would treat a Fugue subject, that is, to let it make its first appearance in as distinct and clear cut fashion as possible by avoiding the pedal, at least in the opening bars. Two examples have already been given (Op. 2, No. 1, and Op. 57), both in F Minor. To these may be added the first subject of No. 2 Op. 2. in A ; No. 3 Op. 2 in C (although the pedal may be needed in the third bar to sustain the lowest bass note) ; No. 2 Op. 10 in F (very light pedalling permissible, but hardly needed) ; No. 3 Op. 10 in D ; Op. 22 in B flat (pedal not required till fourth (complete) bar) ; Op. 31, No. 1 in G (a touch of pedal at the left-hand chord if desired) ; and Op. 31, No. 3 in E flat (advisable in this to withhold pedal till third bar). It must be thoroughly understood that only the *first appearance* of the first subject in the ordinary development movement is referred to. The pedalling required for its subsequent appearances as well as for the whole of the rest of the movement must be governed by the ordinary rules of pedalling, or by the composer's definitely expressed instructions.

#### THE MINUETS, SCHERZOS, ETC.

These movements should, in nearly every case, be *introduced* unpedalled. After the first appearance

of the subject, pedalling is generally needed, but it must be applied very lightly and tactfully. On the other hand, the Trios must sometimes be pedalled very fully and completely. The trio of the Minuet from the Sonata in C, Op. 2, No. 3, is a case in point.

#### THE SLOW MOVEMENTS AND FINALES.

These vary too much in character for any comprehensive ruling to be offered, but this must be remembered. The development that took place in the construction of the Sonata in all its movements in the hands of Beethoven must be accompanied in their performance by a corresponding development in all interpretative effects. The more nearly his works approximate to the Mozart and Haydn model, the more must all those effects, including pedalling, conform to the simple methods applicable to the works of those masters, a fuller scheme of pedalling being required for the works of his middle and later period.

#### BEETHOVEN'S OWN PEDAL-MARKING.

Beethoven wrote a few pedal directions himself in the Sonatas, but only in those phrases where a pianist would not be likely to use the pedal in exactly that fashion unless with the composer's sanction. A few examples have already been given

of the pedal being marked to be retained through rests, which might normally have furnished an opportunity for pedal release. But in one instance he went much farther in the way of unexpected pedal retention than anything previously quoted, marking the pedal to be used entirely *in accordance with the phrase outline*, with complete disregard of the harmonic outline. This particular problem has already been discussed in Chapter VI, but no more striking example can be found than in Beethoven's own pedal marking of the subject of the Rondo of the "Waldstein" Sonata (Op. 53). So contrary is it to what is generally accepted as accurate pedalling that it is omitted, changed or very materially modified in all but a very few editions.

The Sonatas are so easily accessible that quotations are not included in the present chapter, the student with a copy before him can easily verify all references. In the movement now under discussion Beethoven marks the pedal to be held down for the whole of the first phrase of eight bars, then, for the following short phrase of four bars, and immediately after that for ten consecutive bars, putting the sign for pedal release after the first beat in the eleventh bar.

This adaptation of pedal support to the phrase outline ignores not only the intermingling of tonic



and dominant, but in the latter part, also that of tonic major and tonic minor. In the days when these Sonatas were written, the vibratory power of the pianoforte was much less than it is at present, and harmonies that would clash upon a modern instrument would tend to mingle more amicably upon one of weaker tone. But, taking every factor into consideration, one could wish that the original pedal marking were included in every edition, which could be supplemented by any editorial emendation deemed necessary. The suggestion offered here is that a rapid change of pedal should be made between the fourth and fifth bars, thus dividing the eight bar phrase for pedal purposes into two phrases of four bars each. The pedal should be held down for the third group of four bars, that is as Beethoven marked it. The blending of tonic and dominant, especially when played pianissimo, will not be found to be objectionable. On the contrary, it is a characteristic Beethoven device used with much effect in a well-known passage in the Eroica Symphony. In the long ten-bar phrase the harmonic situation can be relieved without absolutely losing the foundation note G, by half-peddalling or by occasional very rapid pedal changes. It is evident that Beethoven wished the harmonic support given by the pedal to correspond with the phrase outline

because on several subsequent appearances of the subject the pedalling is carefully marked upon the same basis.

It may be that the student will feel that the resonance of a modern pianoforte is unsuited to this system of pedalling, and will prefer to follow the marking given in one of the standard editions, but it is right that he should have his attention called to the method that Beethoven in his own day wished to be adopted.

## CHAPTER III

### SCHUMANN—BRAHMS—LISZT.

THERE are few problems concerning the pedal treatment required in the works of Chopin, Schubert, Mendelssohn or Weber, to which some part of the advice offered in the previous chapters does not apply, either in an individual or a general sense, but there are characteristics in the three composers mentioned at the head of this chapter which justify a few supplementary remarks, sketchy and incomplete as these must necessarily be.

#### SCHUMANN.

The direction "pedale," or "con pedale," found at the beginning of so many Schumann numbers must not be taken to mean continual pedal depression throughout such numbers. It is more in the nature of a suggestion which might be interpreted, "This number needs some pedal assistance," or "Don't omit to use the pedal during this number," not necessarily bar after bar, or even for the majority of bars, but either continuously, moderately, or very slightly, according to the character of the music

and what, in the judgment of the performer seem to be its pedal necessities.

### BRAHMS.

There are phrases in many of the pianoforte works of Brahms of a peculiarly wistful, appealing nature, very simple in construction and harmonic outline which, for some reason difficult to explain, seem to make a more intimate appeal if not surrounded, or only as lightly as possible by the overtones and harmonics generated by pedal depression. The middle section of the Intermezzo in E (Op. 116) offers one of the most characteristic examples.



138

A little pedalling is needed for marks of *f*, *cres.*, *etc.*, otherwise the naïve, simple, typically Brahms-like character of this theme seems to be accentuated more by pedal avoidance than by pedal depression. Many phrases of a similar nature can be found, chiefly in the Intermezzi. But it is not only these simple, wistful themes that benefit by pedal

abstention ; a careful student of Brahms cannot help observing how often, even in the most important works, only the very lightest pedalling is needed. It is partly due to the fact that many passages are written in two-part harmony with the hands often widely separated. *This is nearly always a sign that the pedal can be dispensed with—partially or wholly.*

It is the fashion sometimes to compare musical composers with their supposed literary prototypes, to contrast, for instance, Beethoven with Shakespeare, Bach with Milton, and Mendelssohn with Tennyson. If such comparisons be permissible Brahms certainly finds his literary counterpart in Browning. In the works of both, the intellectual element is as deeply marked as the emotional element. In both are seen the same consistently lofty standard, the same avoidance of the frivolous and the meretricious, the same philosophic outlook, but the occasional obscurity of the poet is hardly reflected in the musician. Brahms wrote no *Sordello*. One can hardly help one's fancy playing round the idea that it is partially on account of the rarefied atmosphere typical of both the poet and composer, that, in interpreting the works of the latter it is better in certain characteristic phrases to avoid anything so cloudy and disturbing as the atmosphere created by the pedal.

The student must not conclude from this that the pedal should be avoided through the greater portion of most of the pianoforte works of Brahms. On the contrary, the effect that these unpedalled passages make is enhanced by the fact that, as a rule, the remainder of the work in which they occur needs ample pedal support. For instance, although the tragic phrases of the first and last portions of the "Edward" Ballade gain in intensity by the avoidance of any but the lightest pedalling, the middle section must be very fully pedalled, and has been so indicated by the composer himself. Other works in which these sombre, wistful, or reflective phrases are not so prominent, and in which very little two-part harmony occurs, such, for example, as the Rhapsodies, Valses, the G Minor Ballade, the Capriccios, etc., need just the same full and varied pedalling that would be accorded to works of a similar nature by Chopin or Schumann, the Valses, Ballades and Polonaises of the former, or the Carneval Scenes, Etudes Symphoniques, the Noveletten, etc., of the latter.

#### LISZT.

It need only be pointed out that Liszt's instructions for pedalling passages of great technical display such as rapid scales, both diatonic and

chromatic, in single notes and thirds, in similar as well as in contrary motion, and his directions for pedalling long Cadenzas written partially or wholly in the bass clef, must be treated as *special Liszt effects*, appropriate to a certain type of virtuoso passage, but not generally applicable to the works of other composers.

An example of a pedalled scale in a Liszt transcription has already been given (No. 57, p. 74). A typical passage can be seen in the series of descending chromatic scales in double octaves—marked by Liszt to be pedalled—in the Etude in G Minor entitled “Vision.” But for extreme examples of Liszt’s pedal methods the student is referred to the Fantasia on Don Juan and to the Cadenzas from the Fantasia on Lucia, and from the “Mazeppa” Etude, the latter beginning in the following manner,



rising gradually to the highest F octave on the keyboard, and then descending to the octave from which it started, no sign for pedal release being marked during the whole of its progress. In the

Don Juan Fantasia, the original pedal marking has been modified in some of the later editions, and some of the pedal marks omitted. The presentation of a Bowdlerised version is, however, of doubtful wisdom. In this type of music it is better in performance to preserve all the effects marked by the composer if the surroundings are sufficiently spacious, although works of such technical difficulty should never be attempted by any student whose tone and technique are not fully up to the virtuoso standard.



## CHAPTER IV

### SOME MODERN COMPOSERS AND THEIR PEDAL METHODS.

#### CONCLUSION.

THE rule that the pedal should, in nearly every case, be changed at a change of harmony has far less force in music of the modern romantic school than in that of any other school or period.

The effect of overlapping harmonies, which the pianist usually does his best to avoid, is often needed in modern music to create a tonal colour scheme, otherwise unobtainable. When one remembers that pedal depression always creates an "atmospheric" effect by slightly clouding the technical outline of all musical phrases to which it is applied, it is clear that it is particularly applicable to works whose atmospheric nature is proclaimed by such titles as the following: *Ombres* (Florent Schmitt), *Lunar Rainbows* (Leo Livens), *Baigneuses au Soleil* (de Severac), *Jardin sous la pluie* and *Reflets dans l'eau* (Debussy), etc.

In compositions of this nature the occasional interweaving of harmonies is justified by the character of the music and the pedalling needed to produce this result is often indicated by the composer.

So highly do some modern composers rate the value of accurate pedal marking that they give directions with a thoroughness of detail that relieves the performer of all responsibility in the matter. The pedal markings in the first three pieces mentioned above will repay study as will those in the Allegro de Concierto of E. Granados.

Musical examples will not be included in this chapter on account of the elaborate technical and harmonic character of the works from which it would be necessary to quote.

The most remarkable of these from a pedal point of view is the *Baigneuses au Soleil* (de Severac) mentioned above. It affords an example of detailed pedal instruction almost unparalled in pianoforte music. Even without musical illustrations an idea can be gained of the completeness of the system used by quoting a few of the directions given by the composer. These, which are found in nearly every bar, include such varieties of pedal marking as : *Ped. Sourdine seule. Enlevez la sourdine. Ped à chaque temps. Laissez vibrer* and *ne quittez pas la pédale.*

In Ombres (Florent Schmitt) the author has added to his other instructions: "*Gardez la pédale* and *Quittez insensiblement la pédale*."

Amongst English composers Mr. York Bowen is almost the only one who devotes the same care to his pedal marking that he does to the marking of the light and shade, expression, variations of tempo, etc. Nor does he restrict himself to ordinary pedalling, which he gives in great detail; but adds with much care many instructions for half pedalling and tremolo pedalling. The reader is strongly recommended to take an opportunity of becoming acquainted with his study on pedal effects in his book of Twelve Studies recently published by Messrs. Ascherberg. He has adopted in these a method not wholly dissimilar to that used in this work, but a little more elaborate, thus,

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_↑

Apart from composers who give pedal directions with the completeness described above, writers for the pianoforte may be divided into two classes: (1) Those who leave their compositions devoid of all pedal marking; and (2) Those who put occasional pedal markings into their works.

With regard to the former, their omissions have mostly been rectified by subsequent editors, whose

instructions, although they can usually be followed with safety, do not preclude the exercise of the pianist's own judgment and discretion.

With regard to the latter, who constitute the majority of composers, it is hardly possible for the student to help wondering now and then if these occasional pedal markings should be treated with reverential observance, or if, under any circumstance they may be disregarded or modified.

It can hardly be deemed disrespectful to say that, at times, the pedal markings given by the great composers seem more prompted by the impulse of the moment than by any reasoned and definite desire for a particular effect. It is difficult otherwise to explain some of the pedal instructions that they have written in their pianoforte works. Schumann, for instance, sometimes writes the direction "Con pedale" in canonical and other imitation passages of four-part harmony.\* Brahms, in one of his *Intermezzos*, marks the pedal to be changed in the course of a slow concluding arpeggio of E Major, thus sacrificing the foundation note without, as far as one can see, any sufficient justification, and although he very seldom marks the soft pedal to be used, even in passages written to be played *ppp* and

\* A characteristic example can be seen in the "Paganini" No. in the "Carnival."

sotto voce, he takes pains to mark it for the end of the G Minor Ballade, which does not seem to require either a veiled tone or any softer playing than can be achieved by the hands alone.

Many other examples could be cited, but to little purpose. The advice offered, and it is of general as well as individual application, is this :

If the rules and principles of pedalling have been carefully assimilated and the indications given by composers and editors attentively studied, the exercise of a little private judgment in doubtful cases need neither be forbidden nor discouraged, provided that no deviations are made lightly, nor rules and markings ignored without what seem to be firm and adequate reasons for the course adopted.

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