

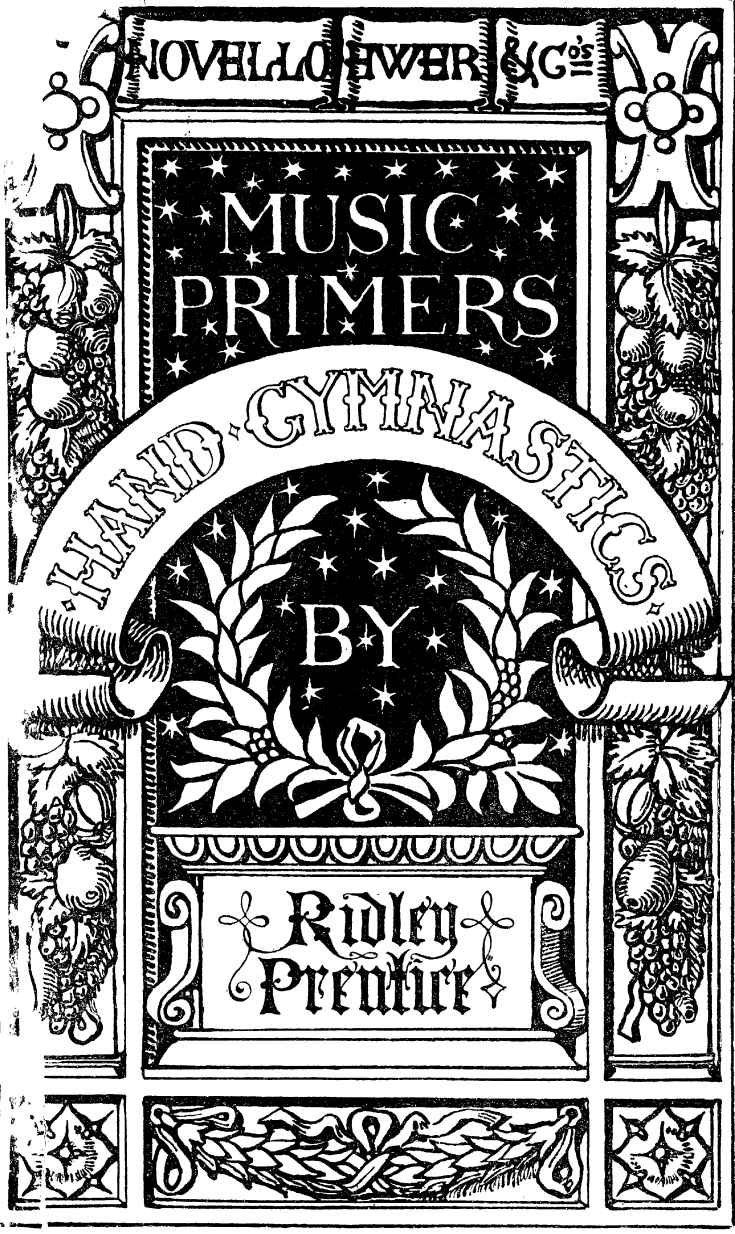
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HAND-GYMNASTICS

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NOVELLO, EWER & CO.'S MUSIC PRIMERS.  
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# HAND GYMNASTICS

For the Scientific Development of the Muscles used  
in Playing the Pianoforte

BY

RIDLEY PRENTICE

*Author of "The Musician," &c.*

*Warner Collection of Music*

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## PREFACE.

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THE aim in this little book has been to sketch out a course of gymnastics suitable for use in schools and classes. I have tried, on the one hand, to render it so complete that the various sets of muscles in the wrist, the hand, the fingers, and to a certain extent in the arm also, should receive due development. On the other hand, I have kept constantly in view the necessity of avoiding any exercise in which there could be the slightest chance of danger owing to carelessness or misunderstanding of the directions given.

Several schemes for gymnastic training of the hand have been already put forward, the chief being Miss Leffler Arnim's "Wrist and Finger Gymnastics" and Mr. Ward Jackson's "Gymnastics for the Fingers and Wrist." Miss Arnim gives three classes of exercises: Active, Duplicate and Passive. In the Duplicate exercises the fingers of one hand have not merely to perform certain motions, but have, in addition, to overcome the resistance of the other hand. This seems to me decidedly dangerous, because it is impossible to ensure that pupils should sufficiently modify the opposing force.

Mr. Ward Jackson gives, besides the free exercises for hand and fingers, a series to be performed whilst holding cork cylinders between the fingers, and another series in which the finger-tips are to be placed upon a notched stick. These exercises are very ingenious, but his system is based upon the idea that the chief source of stiffness is in the transverse ligaments lying at the back of the hand, and he does not, I think, sufficiently insist on the importance of training the extensor muscles.

In using the present manual in schools and classes the exercises can of course be directed by any one of the teachers, as no musical capacity is needed; but I would strongly insist on the necessity of a thorough comprehension of the elementary principles of muscular action as described in the second chapter, so that the directions given may be clear, and any deviation from the proper performance of the exercises at once detected.

The illustrations are drawn from photographs taken by MESSRS. WINDOW & GROVE, Baker Street.

R. P.



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## CHAPTER I.

INCREASING DEMANDS UPON *TECHNIQUE*—DANGER OF EXCESSIVE PRACTICE—THE REMEDY—OBJECTORS TO PURELY TECHNICAL WORK—NECESSITY FOR REGULAR AND SCIENTIFIC GYMNAS TIC TRAINING—THIS MUST BE INTELLIGENT, NOT MECHANICAL— SHOULD BEGIN WITH, OR BEFORE, THE FIRST ATTEMPTS AT PLAYING.

THE demands made by composers upon the executive abilities of players constitute an ever-increasing quantity. Of this fact three representative names—Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt—furnish sufficient proof. Students are accordingly obliged to devote more and more attention to mere technical study, to the training of the implement they are to work with. This would be a most serious matter had we only to consider the loss of time involved; for to the student every moment is precious, and the day far too short for the work to be done. Still more lamentable is the muscular and nervous strain which is the inevitable result, a strain leading often to a complete breakdown, or to a deadening of the artistic perceptions and faculties; the latter being perhaps a greater, because a less recognised, danger. One of our cleverest young pianoforte professors has told me that he used to devote regularly four or five hours a day to mere technical study, with the result that in the evening his muscles were in a state of collapse and refused altogether to do their work. I am bound to say he has by this means attained a very fine *technique*, but not without serious apparent loss in other respects.

One hears more and more of students who have developed some weakness in finger, hand or arm, owing to excessive practice at the keyboard, and have consequently been compelled to take three or six months' rest. Now this means, not only the loss of so much precious time, which can never be made up, but also a probable return of the weakness at some critical moment of strain and effort, when, as a consequence, it is not unlikely that the opportunity of becoming distinguished as a performer will be lost for ever.

The question for us is: "Is there no remedy for this state of things?" The remedy, I venture to say, lies ready to our hand, if we will only take it.

In order to perform the varied and intricate movements needed in pianoforte-playing, the fingers and hand must be in a state of perfect development and training. Hitherto, as explained in the following chapter, we have endeavoured to secure this training solely by exercise at the keyboard; in many cases with fatal results, owing to the undoubted fact that this was never intended to serve the purpose of a gymnastic apparatus. The consequence has been a vast waste of time, and, in countless instances, severe injury to the delicate mechanism with which we work.

A well-known English musician has declared that "All these ugly things are a mistake" (referring to technical studies), and in one sense he was right in his opinion. Madame Schumann says that technical exercises are used to the extent of dragging all the music out of the pupil's brain. Von Bülow maintains that the flexibility gained by the practice of monotonous five-finger exercises is acquired at the cost of a loss of musical intelligence. "Involuntarily," he says, "the performer loses all thought of what he is playing. The lack of charm and interest in the task produces absent-mindedness, and, finally, utter thoughtlessness. The player becomes a mere machine."

If, however, we are to abandon the bad method, and lessen the amount of time devoted to these exercises, we must find a good method to take its place. The hand should undoubtedly be subjected to a simple, yet scientific, course of gymnastic exercises before any attempt is made at playing, and this training should be persevered in afterwards, during the years of musical study, accompanying and supplementing technical exercises on the keyboard. In the ordinary employments of life the fingers receive remarkably little training, except in the simple action of grasping; and even in the best developed hands there is generally a lack of controlling power over the various sets of muscles, so that it is almost impossible to make them act singly.

A simple experiment will prove this. Take a class of a dozen girls and make them try Exercise 22, holding the hand straight out with fingers close together, and then opening between the middle and ring fingers; probably half of them will be unable to do it freely. If that is the case with such a simple motion, how can we expect that the intricate motions required at the keyboard can be executed except as the result of incessant labour accompanied by a quite unnecessary amount of friction and consequently of danger?

In our gymnasiums this fact of the lack of training for the hand seems, curiously enough, to have been overlooked; though provision is made for the development of all other parts of the body, the fingers have received no attention. In only one instance have I found an apparatus for their use, and that was merely a set of keys, resembling those of the pianoforte, with weights attached.

It must always be borne in mind that full benefit can only be derived from these exercises if they are performed intelligently and thoughtfully. Mere mechanical motion of hand or of finger will effect nothing; the attention must be firmly and unwaveringly directed towards the accomplishment of the action exactly in the prescribed way—*e.g.*, in Exercise 17, towards preventing the slightest motion or even trembling of the fingers not intended to be moved.

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## CHAPTER II.

PROCESSES INVOLVED IN PLAYING—BALANCE OF OPPOSING MUSCLES  
—BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MUSCLES—THE KEYBOARD UNSUIT-  
ABLE AS A GYMNASTIC APPARATUS—DANGER OF MECHANICAL  
PRACTICE—MR. WALTER PYE ON HÄMMERMAN'S AND WRITER'S  
CRAMP—CONTROL THE CHIEF OBJECT OF MUSCULAR TRAINING.

THE art of pianoforte playing, like all other arts, has to depend for the accomplishment of its intellectual ends on physical means.

Without using any technical terms we may describe the process of playing as follows: The brain receives certain impressions and wills that certain motions shall take place. A message is conveyed by the motor nerves from the brain to the muscles, whereupon these contract or relax themselves (as the case may be) and produce the blows upon the keys. The ear acts as a gauge or tell-tale as to whether the muscles have done their work properly and carried out the intentions of the brain. Thus the motor nerves and the muscles together constitute a delicate and sensitive instrument essential to our purpose. If this instrument is defective or untrained the result must be bad, no matter how finely organised may be the brain and the sense of hearing.

This is surely an unanswerable reply to objectors who say that no mechanical training is of any use, that all exercise must be artistic. Formed as we are we can work only through mechanical means. A great conductor studies a score and hears the music perfectly in his mind, but he cannot express it on the keyboard, owing to a lack of mechanical muscular training. His brain is trained to originate, his ear to act as a tell-tale, but nerves and muscles are undeveloped in the particular direction needed. So with an untrained, or imperfectly trained, pianist: his ear is perpetually informing his brain that its messages have not been properly delivered and acted upon. This irritates and confuses the brain, so that it

in turn becomes unable to act with the requisite decision and delicacy; and thus the whole artistic nature of the player suffers, owing entirely to a lack of scientific mechanical training.

Now, it will be readily admitted that the keyboard has no pretensions to be a gymnastic apparatus suitable for this scientific training; it was not invented for any such purpose. The player's hand and arm remain practically always in the same position, subject of course to innumerable slight changes, which do not however affect the argument. The set of muscles exercised is always the same. Here is at once a source of weakness. All motions of the limbs, all positions of the limbs, even in a state of rest, are the result of a balance between two opposing sets of muscles. If one set is strengthened unduly, the other set becomes too weak for its work, and gives way. In the great majority of cases where weakness is due to excessive practice it shows itself at the back of the hand and just above the wrist. To understand the reason of this, let us glance briefly at the muscles employed.

For our present purpose those of the upper arm need not be separately considered. Taking the muscles of the fore-arm and hand we find two broad divisions—the flexors and extensors. As the reader probably knows, the flexors lie on the front of the fore-arm, taking their rise, some from the elbow and some from the bones of the fore-arm. They connect with tendons, some of which pass through the wrist and are attached to the front surfaces of the finger bones, while others are attached at the wrist itself. When these flexor muscles contract they bend the wrist and fingers. The extensors lie at the back of the fore-arm, their tendons being similarly attached to the back surfaces of the wrist and finger-bones. Their office is to straighten the wrist and fingers. It is evident therefore that any motion, any position even, of the hand is the result of a balance between these two opposing sets of muscles, the flexors and the extensors. If the extensors were absent the hand would remain firmly closed; we should have no power of opening it. On the other hand, if the flexors were absent we should have no power of closing it. It is easy to perceive the vital importance to a pianist of an equal development of each set of muscles.

The numerous muscles in the hand need not be particularised, if we bear in mind that this same principle of opposing forces applies in every case. They are briefly—muscles which move the fingers sideways (these lie between the bones of the hand); small muscles which connect the extensors and flexors and serve to steady the fingers; muscles for moving the thumb freely in all directions and for enabling it to grasp (these lie in the

fleshy part at the base of the thumb); muscles which act on the little finger (these lie in the fleshy mass at the inside of the hand).

All exercise at the keyboard develops the flexors more than the extensors; for the flexors have not merely to bend the wrist and fingers, but also to resist the blow upon the key. This fact condemns the keyboard as a gymnastic and muscle-training apparatus. It is not merely that the flexors have more work to do, but that more attention is devoted to their action in striking the note than is given to that of the extensors in lifting the fingers.

This brings us to the important principle of muscular action, which must form the foundation of all successful physical training. Each exercise must be intelligently and thoughtfully performed, with the attention firmly fixed upon the desired end; otherwise the muscles will waste instead of continuing to grow. This point is brought out clearly by Mr. Walter Pye, surgeon to St. Mary's Hospital, whom I may be allowed to quote as speaking on such a subject with authority beyond that of any musician. At a meeting of the Musical Association he said:—

“Directly the will and intelligence are separated from the muscular performance we find at first an increased mechanical efficiency, and then, if the movement is persevered in, we get a gradual inefficiency, which ends frequently in absolute loss of power. Hammerman's cramp is a striking example of this. The manipulation of nails and bolts involves hundreds of separate, extremely rapid, movements of the wrist and arm. A good hammerman will go on improving for some time, and then gradually will find his power of performing these movements become ill-regulated, ill-directed, until at last he loses the capacity of guiding his blows at all. On investigation it is found that the contraction of these muscles, acting purely as they have got to do by long course of habit without the intervention and control of the will, instead of being done with the head, is done mechanically with the hand and wrist, and this has had a degenerating influence upon the muscles until they actually waste.” Mr. Pye then refers to the case of writer's cramp, and to a method of curing it by means of certain carefully-devised movements of the muscles affected, performed intelligently and thoughtfully, and sums up as follows: “If we are to use our muscles properly we must use them with our heads.”

The object of muscular training of the hand is threefold, viz. : the gaining, (1) of strength, (2) of flexibility, and (3) of control. It is in the third of these that finger-board training is so defective; the reason being that perfect control can only be secured by an

equal and thorough development of all the different sets of muscles, which we have already shown to be impossible on the keyboard. In the performance of the following exercises, then, two things should be constantly remembered :—

1. All movements must be intelligently and thoughtfully performed.

2. The main object is the gaining of control over the various sets of muscles.

Suppose a pupil has hitherto devoted an hour a day to purely technical work at the keyboard ; and that, in place of that, half-an-hour is spent at the keyboard and ten minutes, twice a day, at gymnastic exercises, at least double the amount of progress will be manifest ; while results will be gained as regards muscular control which no amount of work at the keyboard would ever give. Speaking generally, gymnastics and keyboard exercise combined will give more than double the results obtainable from keyboard exercise alone.

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## CHAPTER III.

### CLASSIFICATION OF EXERCISES—VALUE OF GYMNASTICS IN THE INTERVALS OF PRACTICE—SELECTED SERIES OF EXERCISES—CAUTIONS.

THE exercises described in the following chapters are classed under five heads: those for developing the muscles of the arm, wrist, hand, fingers, and thumb. The division is to a certain extent arbitrary, because the action of the various sets of muscles is not altogether independent; the bending and straightening of the fingers, for example, being mainly accomplished by muscles which lie in the fore-arm; and it will be seen that finger exercises are united with the arm exercises. Still, this classification is essential as conducing to simplicity, and as a help to the student in keeping ever in mind the paramount importance of a concentration of all the powers of the intelligence upon the particular object in view. Everything depends upon the way in which the various exercises are performed; a single thoughtful performance being of more avail than innumerable careless mechanical repetitions.

It will be found advantageous to go through a few gymnastic exercises in the intervals of practice, where the time devoted to it is long. For this purpose Exercise 1 has special value as tending to open the chest and make the lungs act more vigorously. The practice of simple breathing is also very useful; drawing in the breath with moderate quickness and letting it out again as slowly and gently as possible. The three methods of distending the lungs must be carefully distinguished. The greatest capacity of the lungs is at their lowest part, as they are here broadest; consequently the best method of breathing is the abdominal, in which the diaphragm, a membrane lying just under the lungs, is lowered, drawing the bottom of the lungs with it. This method causes a slight swelling at the pit of the stomach at the moment of inhaling.



The costal method, depending upon a stretching of the elastic tissues connecting the ribs, is useful as an auxiliary to the abdominal. The scapular method, consisting of a raising of the shoulder-blades, should never be used, as it inflates only the top or smallest part of the lungs.

Where only a short time is available for the lesson, care must be taken by the teacher to make suitable selections from the exercises so as to secure variety and, at the same time, to prevent any exercises from being altogether omitted.

The following may serve as a model for six short lessons, in the course of which all the exercises are introduced, the more important ones being given twice. The teacher should, of course, devote extra time to any exercise presenting special difficulty either to a class or to an individual pupil.

#### FIRST LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 2.
" " wrist	...	Nos. 5 " 9.
" " hand	...	No. 11.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 16, 19, 22, and 25.
" " thumb	...	No. 31.

#### SECOND LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 2 (variation).
" " wrist	...	Nos. 6 " 8.
" " hand	...	No. 12.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 17, 23, 26, and 29.
" " thumb	...	No. 32.

#### THIRD LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 3.
" " wrist	...	Nos. 7 " 9.
" " hand	...	No. 15.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 18, 21, 24, and 27.
" " thumb	...	No. 33.

#### FOURTH LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 2 (variation).
" " wrist	...	Nos. 4 " 6.
" " hand	...	No. 14.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 16, 25, 26, and 28.
" " thumb	...	No. 34.

## FIFTH LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 3.
" " wrist	...	Nos. 9 " 10.
" " hand	...	No. 13.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 17, 20, 22, and 24.
" " thumb	...	No. 32.

## SIXTH LESSON.

Exercises for the arm	...	Nos. 1 and 2.
" " wrist	...	Nos. 6 " 10.
" " hand	...	No. 15.
" " fingers	...	Nos. 16, 18, 29, and 30.
" " thumb	...	No. 33.

The importance of an intelligent performance of the various exercises is so great, and the necessity of impressing it on the pupil's mind so imperative, that it may be well to sum up briefly, in the shape of a series of cautions, the conditions of success :—

1. Each exercise has a definite object.
2. All exercises must be performed thoughtfully and most of them slowly.
3. They must be performed exactly the prescribed number of times.
4. They should produce a feeling of warmth and of slight fatigue in the muscles exercised.
5. If the least aching or pain is felt it is a sign that the exercise has been too vigorously performed.
6. The exercises must be performed by one hand at a time except where the contrary is expressly stated.
7. The object being to thoroughly train all the muscles and to render the hand a perfect instrument, a great variety of exercises is essential.
8. For the same reason the movements which differ most from those performed at the keyboard will probably be found to be of greatest value.
9. The mouth must be kept shut and the head erect.
10. The best results are obtained by the oft-repeated performance of easy exercises, not by any strain or effort.

These cautions must be constantly borne in mind both by teacher and pupil.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EXERCISES FOR THE ARM.

#### FIRST EXERCISE.

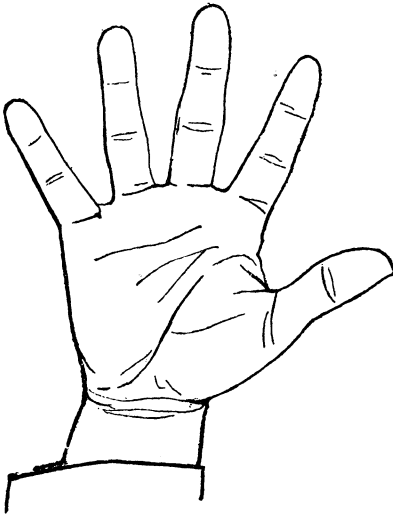


FIG. 1, a.

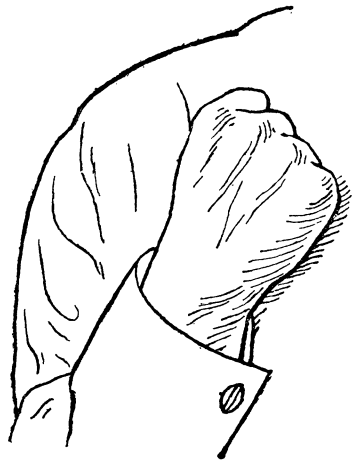


FIG. 1, b.

(a.) STAND upright, with the heels together and the toes turned outwards. Stretch out the arms in front of the body, with the palms of the hands facing one another; at the same moment let the hands be stretched and fingers separated as widely as possible. See that the distances between each pair of fingers are equal. As the arms and hands are thrust forward count *one*; retain the position while counting *two*, *three*, if possible increasing the stretch (Fig. 1, a.)

(b.) Bring the elbows back to the side of the body, bend them, close the fist tightly and bring it in front of the shoulder so that the knuckles touch the body. As the motion is

performed count *one*; retain the position while counting *two*, *three*, pressing the fingers always more and more tightly into the palm of the hand (Fig. 1, *b*).

(*c.*) From this position stretch the arms out sideways level with the shoulder, opening and stretching the hands and fingers as in the first position, keeping the palms in front. Count as before.

(*d.*) Return to the second position (*b*), still counting.

The actual motions should be rapid, but the rate of counting should be slow, about sixty to the minute, so that the whole exercise may be performed thoughtfully.

Repeat the four movements, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, first with the palms downwards, then with the palms upwards, and, finally, with the backs of the hands together.

#### SECOND EXERCISE.

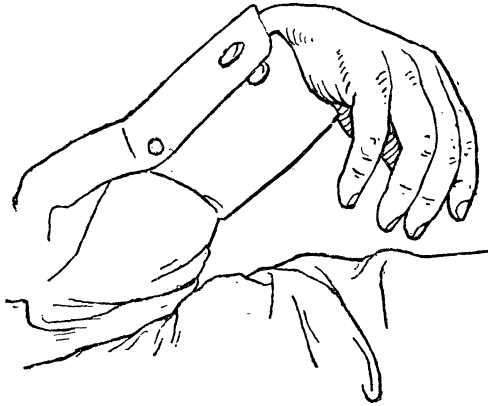


FIG. 2.

(*a.*) Stretch the right arm out sideways, as in the third position of Exercise 1, palms in front (Fig. 1, *a*).

(*b.*) Keeping the upper arm fixed, bend the elbow, half close the hand and bring it up level with the ear, letting it droop a little from the wrist (Fig. 2).

(*c.*) Stretch out the right arm three times, with the palm first up, then down, and finally behind; return after each movement of position *b*.

Go through the same motions with the left arm.

In every case count *one* at the moment of performing the exercise, and count *two* at the moment of rest. Should the exercise be carelessly or incorrectly performed, the period of rest must be doubled by counting three, as in Exercise 1. If performed properly this Exercise is somewhat tiring; it will be well therefore to practise the arms separately, as recommended above.

#### VARIATION OF SECOND EXERCISE.

As a useful variation of this exercise, close the fist when the arm is stretched out, knuckles downwards, and open it when the arm is bent; but in this case the hand must not be stretched out tightly, but hang loosely from the wrist.

#### THIRD EXERCISE.

Stretch the right arm out sideways, palm upwards. Keeping the upper arm still, let the hand describe a circle, horizontally, with the elbow as centre, all the muscles being as relaxed as possible. When the hand is farthest from the body the palm will be upwards, when nearest, the palm will be downwards. Repeat four times, and then reverse the motion. Go through the same motions with the left arm.

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CHAPTER V.  
EXERCISES FOR THE WRIST.

FOURTH EXERCISE.

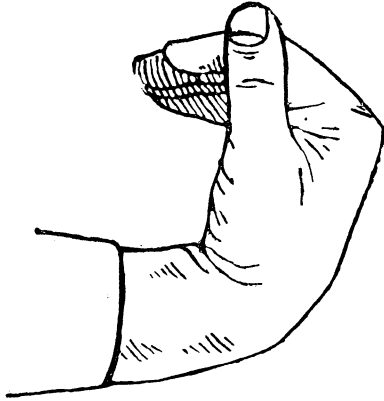


FIG 3, *a*.

(*a*.) BEND the hands up from the wrist, keeping the fingers curved (Fig. 3, *a*). Straighten the fingers, stretching out the whole hand; then relax again and return to the original position.

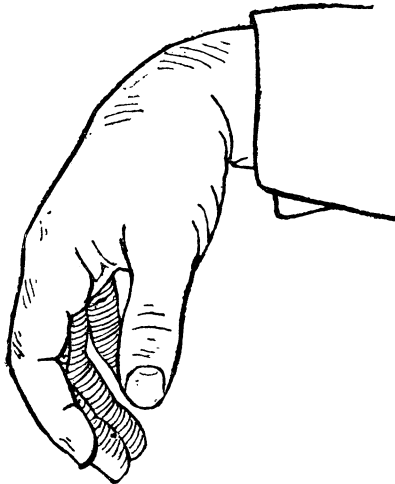
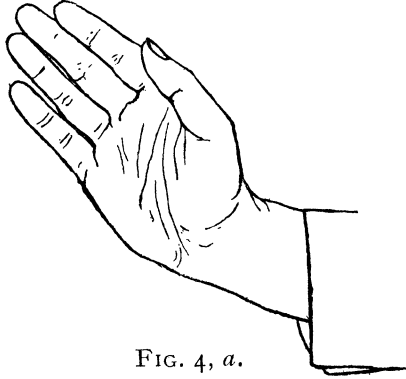
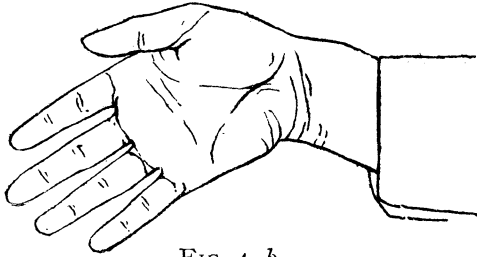


FIG. 3, *b*.

(*b.*) Drop the hands so that they hang down loosely from the wrist, with the fingers curved (Fig. 3, *b*). Straighten the fingers, stretching out the whole hand; then relax again and return to the bent position of the fingers. Repeat these motions four times. Care should be taken, when straightening the fingers, to keep the wrist bent.

## FIFTH EXERCISE.

FIG. 4, *a.*FIG. 4, *b.*

Turn the hands from side to side at the wrist, so that they may point first upwards (Fig. 4, *a*), then downwards (Fig 4, *b*). Repeat twelve times with moderate quickness, counting *one* at the movement, and *two* when the hands are at rest at either side.

After the muscles are developed this exercise may with advantage be done rapidly.

## SIXTH EXERCISE.

Keeping the fingers curved and the whole hand relaxed, bend the hands round slowly from the wrist, so that they may describe a circle, first from right to left eight times, then from left to right eight times.

## SEVENTH EXERCISE.

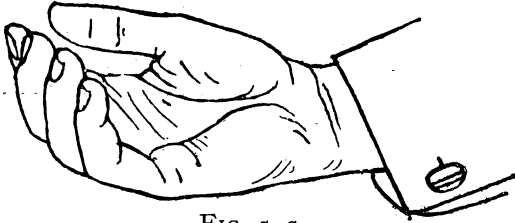


FIG. 5, a.

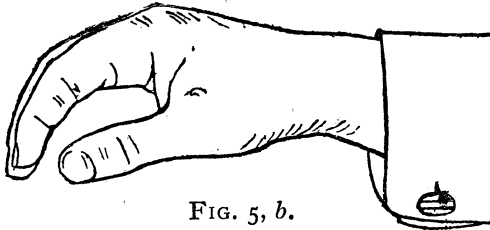


FIG. 5, b.

Hold the hands quite loosely, palm upwards, with fingers and thumb bent so as to form a hollow (Fig. 5, a). Turn the hands round on the wrists, so that they come palm downwards and with the thumbs together (Fig. 5, b).

Repeat four times slowly and eight times quickly.

## EIGHTH EXERCISE.

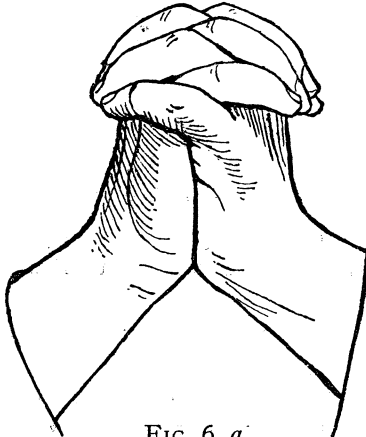
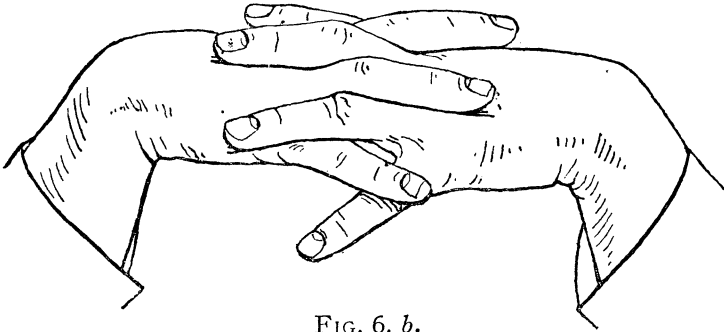


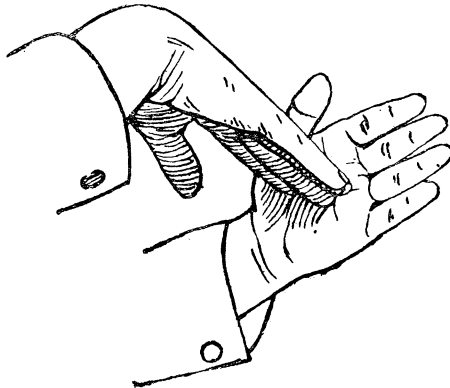
FIG. 6, a.



FIG. 6, *b*.

Clasp the hands loosely together with the fingers interlaced and the right-hand thumb outside the left; approach and retire the wrists (Fig. 6, *a* and *b*) twelve times.  
Repeat exercise with left-hand thumb outside.

## NINTH EXERCISE.

FIG. 7, *a*.FIG. 7, *b*.

Hold the left hand straight out with the thumb at the top. With the right hand palm downwards, place the end of the middle finger against the centre of the palm of the left hand, then keeping the left hand and consequently the end of the finger against it still, and also the right elbow still, alternately raise and depress the right wrist (Fig. 7, *a* and *b*), four times very slowly and eight times quickly.

Repeat, reversing the hands—*i.e.*, bending the left wrist.

Where convenient this exercise may be done even more easily by resting the finger-tips on a table; care being taken that the table is at the same height as the elbow.

#### TENTH EXERCISE.

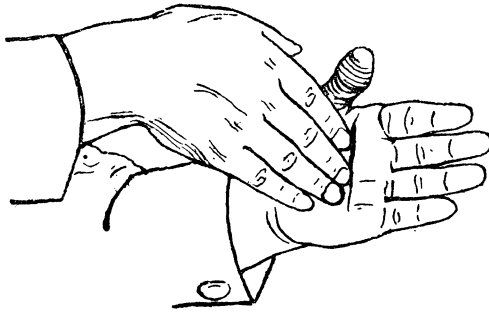


FIG. 8, *a*.

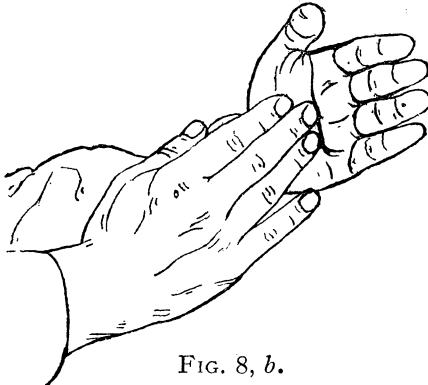


FIG. 8, *b*.

The motion here is similar to that in Exercise 9, but the hand is held sideways, and the wrist bent upwards and downwards in that position.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EXERCISES FOR STRETCHING THE HAND.

#### ELEVENTH EXERCISE.

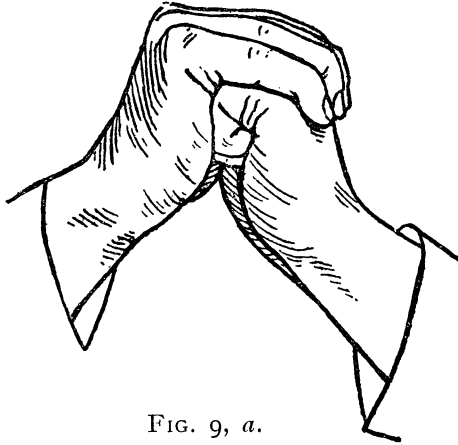


FIG. 9, *a*.

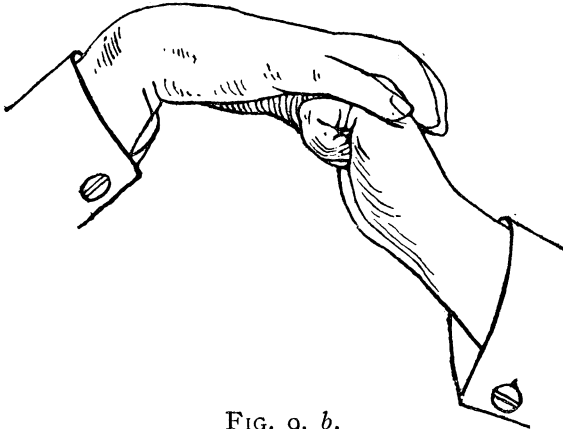


FIG. 9, *b*.

CLOSE the left hand tightly. Clasp it with the right hand; placing the right thumb over the left thumb, and letting the right-hand fingers lie upon the fingers of the left hand, the small joints being bent round between the knuckles of the left

hand. The right wrist will now be pressed forward against the left fingers (Fig. 9, *a*). Relax the grasp, without letting go, and raise the right wrist. Repeat ten times, rather quickly, taking care that the second-joint knuckles of the left hand press into the palm of the right.

Repeat with the hands reversed.

#### TWELFTH EXERCISE.

Clasp the hands tightly, in the same way as in Fig. 6, *a*, having the right thumb outside. Let the finger-tips press firmly into the back of the opposing hand. Straighten out the fingers, still keeping them interlaced, and the thumbs bent. Alternately bend and straighten the fingers six times, taking special care that, during both motions, the fingers press one another firmly at their roots (close to the large knuckles); this last is a very important point.

Repeat the motions with the left thumb outside.

#### THIRTEENTH EXERCISE.

Clasp the hands tightly as in Fig. 6, *a*, right thumb outside. Relax the grasp and throw the hands apart to a distance of about a foot. Alternately grasp and relax eight times, but let the grasp always be firm, pressing the fingers at the roots.

Repeat with left thumb outside.

#### FOURTEENTH EXERCISE.

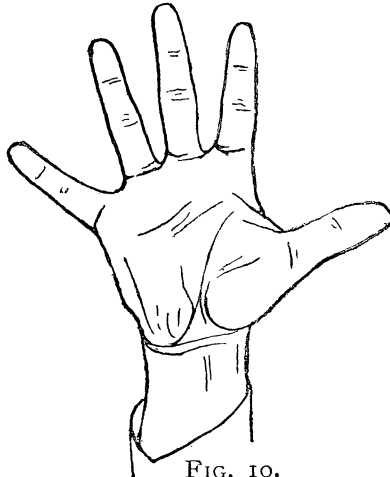


FIG. 10.

Stretch the hands out perfectly flat, making the fingers even bend backwards a little, if possible. Widen the distance

between the tip of the thumb and that of the little finger to the utmost extent, keeping the other fingers at equal distances one from another (Fig. 10).

Repeat, fixing the attention upon the stretch—first between the ring finger and thumb (the ring and little fingers will then be close together); next between the middle finger and thumb (the middle, ring, and little fingers close together); and, lastly, between the index finger and thumb.

FIFTEENTH EXERCISE.

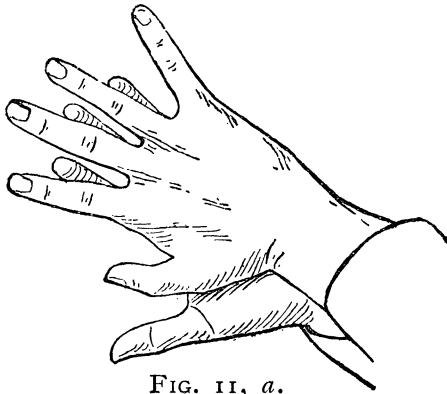


FIG. 11, a.

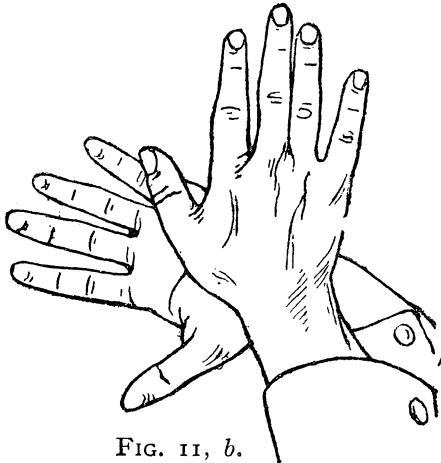


FIG. 11, b.

Stretch both hands out flat, with the fingers bent slightly backwards, left hand palm upwards, right hand palm downwards. Press the lump formed by the muscles at the root of the right thumb into the hollow of the left palm (Fig. 11, *a*). Keeping the hands rather bent back at the wrist, twist them round, in opposite directions, through a quarter of a circle (Fig. 11, *b*), and then back again.

Repeat six times.

The same, with the position of the hands reversed.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### EXERCISES FOR THE FINGERS.

#### SIXTEENTH EXERCISE.

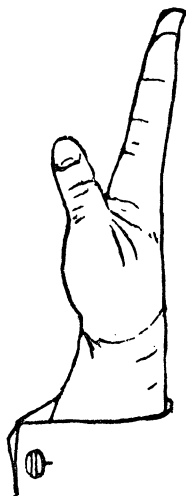


FIG. 12, *a*.

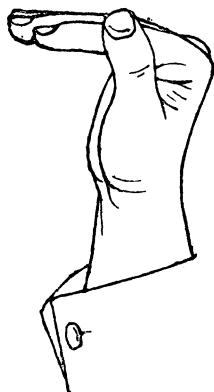


FIG. 12, *b*.

HOLD the right hand upright with the fingers close together and bent a little backwards so as to exercise the extensor muscles (Fig. 12, *a*). Bring the fingers forward at right angles to their former position, bending only the knuckle joints (Fig. 12, *b*). The thumb must retain, throughout, a slightly bent position, so as to avoid any involuntary motion in sympathy with the fingers.

Repeat four times slowly.

The same with the left hand.

#### SEVENTEENTH EXERCISE.

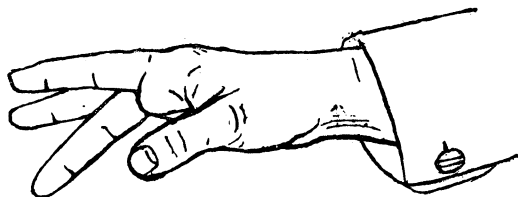


FIG. 13.

Hold the right hand upright as in the preceding exercise, but with the fingers not quite touching one another, and bend one finger at a time forward from the knuckle joint; the motion will now only be through about an eighth of a circle (Fig. 13). Be careful to avoid any sympathetic movement of the other fingers or of the thumb. Move each finger six times.

The same with the left hand.

#### EIGHTEENTH EXERCISE.



FIG. 14.

Again holding the hand upright, as in Fig. 12, *a*, bend the fingers forward from the middle joints (Fig. 14). It is impossible to avoid bending also the end joints, but the exercise must be done very slowly and thoughtfully so as to reduce the motion of these to a minimum.

Repeat four times. The large knuckle-joints must be kept straight.

The same with the left hand.

#### NINETEENTH EXERCISE.

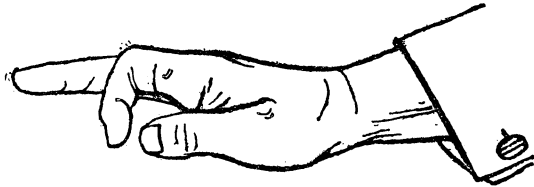


FIG. 15.



Holding the hand as in Fig. 12, *a*, bend the index finger forward from the middle joint, taking care the other fingers and the thumb remain unmoved.

Repeat four times, and then do the same with the other fingers in succession. The ring finger will probably move only half as far as the others.

The same with the left hand.

#### TWENTIETH EXERCISE.



FIG. 16, *a*.

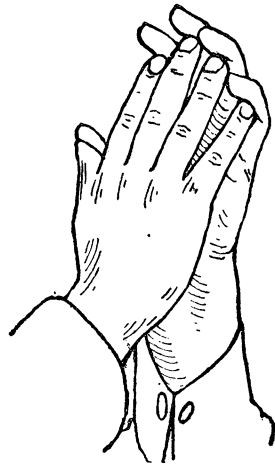


FIG. 16, *b*.

Place the hands as in Fig. 16, *a*, the left-hand fingers projecting about an inch beyond those of the right hand. Very slowly bend the left-hand finger tips, using only the end joints (Fig. 16, *b*).

Repeat six times, then reverse the hands.

#### TWENTY-FIRST EXERCISE.

This is the same as Exercise 20, but each finger is to be moved separately, from the end joint, six times backwards and forwards.

## TWENTY-SECOND EXERCISE.

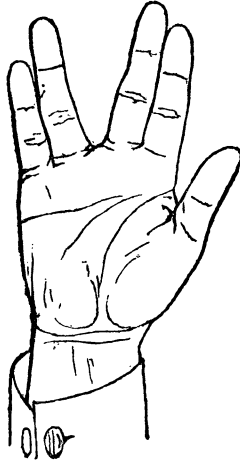


FIG. 17.

Stretch the hand out flat as in Fig. 12, *a*. Separate as widely as possible the index and middle fingers, keeping the middle, ring, and little fingers close together.

Repeat six times.

Do the same, having the space first between the middle and ring fingers (Fig. 17), the most difficult position; and then between the ring and little finger.

Separate simultaneously the index and middle fingers, and the ring and little fingers, keeping the middle and ring fingers close together.

## TWENTY-THIRD EXERCISE.

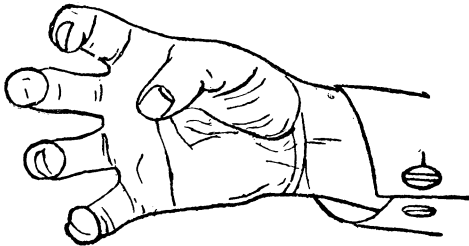


FIG. 18.

Hold the right hand with the fingers separated and bent at the middle and end joints (Fig. 18). Move the middle finger slowly from side to side six times so that it touches alternately the index and ring fingers. Then move the ring finger in the same way so that it touches the middle and little fingers alternately. The knuckle-joints must be kept straight, the thumb muscles relaxed, and all sympathetic motion of the thumb and of the index and little fingers avoided.

The same with the left hand.

#### TWENTY-FOURTH EXERCISE.

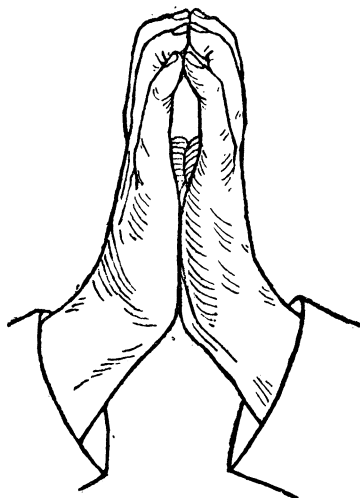
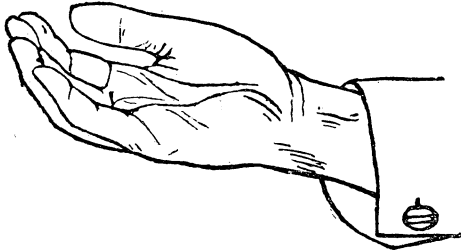
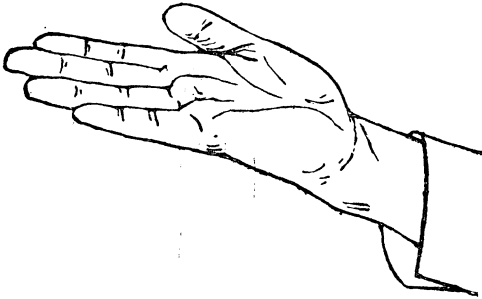


FIG. 19.

Place the hands with the palms, fingers, and thumbs firmly pressed together. Bend the end joints of the fingers, keeping the palms together and the thumbs straight (Fig. 19).

Repeat six times.

## TWENTY-FIFTH EXERCISE.

FIG. 20, *a*.FIG. 20, *b*.

Hold the right hand open but with the muscles slightly relaxed (Fig. 20, *a*). Stretch out so that fingers and thumb project slightly backward from the line of the hand (Fig. 20, *b*); the fingers not quite close together.

Repeat six times.

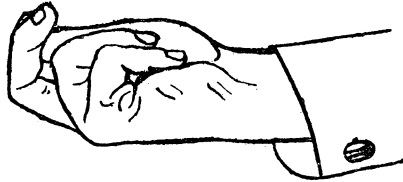
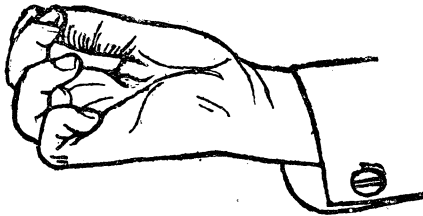
The same with the left hand.

Where it is convenient this exercise should be done at a table; the palm of the hand being pressed firmly down, and then the fingers and thumb raised above the level of the table.

## TWENTY-SIXTH EXERCISE.

The same as Exercise 25, but with each finger straightened separately. Special care is needed in order to keep the whole of the palm, and the whole length of the fingers not being exercised, pressed flat upon the table.

## TWENTY-SEVENTH EXERCISE.

FIG. 21, *a*.FIG. 21, *b*.

Stretch the little finger of the right hand so that it touches the palm, as near the wrist as possible (Fig. 21, *a*); the other fingers will be more or less bent, but their tips must not touch the palm. Draw the little finger tip along the hand until it is as close as possible to the root (Fig. 21, *b*).

Repeat six times.

Treat the other fingers similarly; but the tips of these will not approach their roots so closely as did the tip of the little finger.

The same with the left hand.

## TWENTY-EIGHTH EXERCISE.

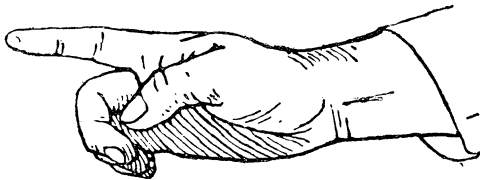


FIG. 22.

Hold the right hand as in Fig. 12, *a*, but with the fingers slightly separated. Keeping the index finger straight, bend the

other fingers from the second joints, and also bend the thumb (Fig. 22).

Repeat six times.

Then keep straight the middle, ring, and little fingers in succession; when the ring finger is kept straight, the others must be only slightly bent.

The same with the left hand.

#### TWENTY-NINTH EXERCISE.

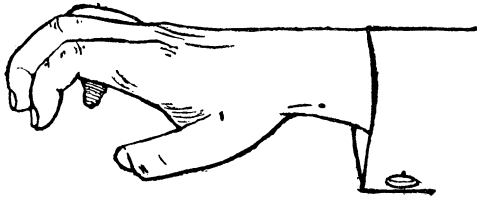


FIG 23.

Hold the right hand out so that the arm and the back of the hand form a straight line as far as the knuckle joints, the fingers separated and hanging loosely. Raise the fingers so that the second joints are higher than the knuckle joints (Fig. 23).

Repeat six times.

The same with the left hand.

#### THIRTIETH EXERCISE.

The same as Exercise 29, but each finger lifted separately.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### EXERCISES FOR THE THUMB.

#### THIRTY-FIRST EXERCISE.

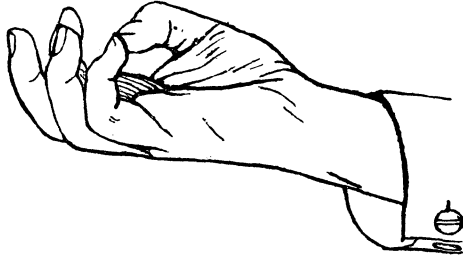


FIG. 24.

PLACE the tip of the right-hand thumb and that of the little finger together (Fig. 24). Move the former slowly backwards and forwards six times from the tip of the little finger to its root. Repeat with each finger in succession; but in the case of the index and middle fingers, the tip of the thumb must be brought down only as far as the second joint.

The same with the left hand.

#### THIRTY-SECOND EXERCISE.

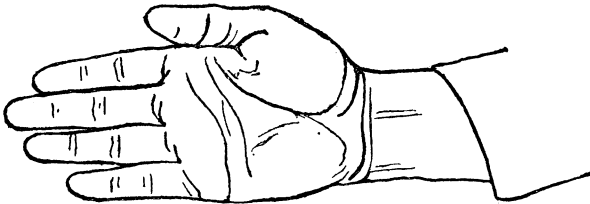


FIG. 25, *a*.

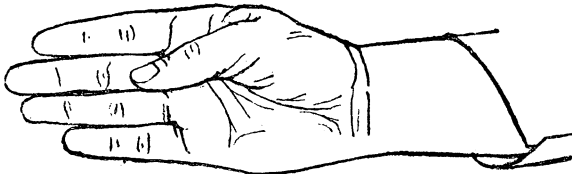


FIG. 25, *b*.

Hold the right hand flat, palm in front (Fig. 25, *a*). Keeping the fingers and the palm straight, move the mass of muscle which lies at the root of the thumb so that it may be completely over the palm (Fig. 25, *b*). Repeat six times, stretching this mass of muscle so that it increases the breadth of the hand as much as possible (Fig. 25, *a*).

The same with the left hand.

### THIRTY-THIRD EXERCISE.



FIG. 26.

Hold the right hand as in Fig. 25, *a*. Then move the mass of thumb muscle forwards, and slightly inwards, so that it projects as much as possible (Fig. 26).

Repeat six times.

The same with the left hand.

### THIRTY-FOURTH EXERCISE.

Let the mass of thumb muscle assume successively the positions shown in Figures 25, *a*; 25, *b*; 26. After doing this six times, reverse the order.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE TECHNICON.

THE foregoing chapters contain a complete course of exercises for the systematic training of the arm, the wrist, the hand and fingers. If, instead of devoting (say) half-an-hour a day to technical work at the keyboard, half that time is spent at the keyboard and half in the performance of gymnastic exercises, not only will at least double the result be obtained, but there will be an immense saving of time, because all these exercises can be performed in class. Selections from those given must of course be made, longer or shorter according to circumstances, and carefully varied so that no exercises may be neglected (see Chap. III., p. 15). Regularity is one great element of success: half-an-hour twice a week will not have the same effect as ten minutes daily in developing nerves and muscles, and so forming an instrument as fit as possible for the work it is called to perform.

With pupils of fifteen years old and upwards still more valuable results may be obtained by the use of the Technicon, an instrument invented by Mr. J. Brotherhood, of New York, for the scientific development of the muscles of the hand and arm. It would be foreign to the purpose of the present little book to go into detail on the subject of the Technicon, but in its construction two main principles have been observed—(a) that special training must be provided for the extensors; (b) that each individual muscle, or set of muscles, must be exercised separately, with the attention firmly fixed on the end desired, the result being the training at once of the muscle and the motor nerve which acts upon it. The chief effect of a regular course of gymnastic exercises on the Technicon is an increased power of control over the motions of the fingers, and thus a greater command of the finer gradations of tone. There also results more strength of finger, which in these days of thick strings and ever-increasing tension is a not unimportant consideration. As a frequent objection to the use of gymnastic exercises is that

they merely strengthen the muscles, it is necessary to emphasise this statement, that the most valuable result is an increase of control such as cannot possibly be gained at the keyboard.

Proofs are constantly accumulating that in the majority of cases inability to play quick passages arises, not from stiffness of muscles and joints, but simply from a lack of this power of control. What is needed is the ability to use one muscle, or set of muscles, while all the others are kept at rest and under control. I have discussed the matter with many medical men, to whom I have shown the Technicon, and they are all of opinion that it is a most valuable invention, doing what it professes to do—*i.e.*, developing and training each set of muscles individually and scientifically. They think further that it will be extensively used, and prove of immense service, in cases where there has been a partial loss of muscular and nervous energy.

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THE WISHING STONE (ditto) ...	...	2	6	MASS IN C ...	...	1	0
THE WATER FAIRIES (ditto) ...	...	2	6	COMMUNION SERVICE IN C ...	...	1	6
THE SILVER CLOUD (ditto) ...	...	2	6	MASS IN D ...	...	2	0
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<b>THOMAS ANDERTON.</b>				THE CALM SEA AND A PROSPEROUS VOYAGE ...	...	0	4
YULE TIDE ...	...	1	6	MEEK, AS THOU LIVEDST, HAST THOU DEPARTED ...	...	0	2
THE NORMAN BARON ...	...	1	0	<b>KAREL BENDL.</b>			
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<b>P. ARMES.</b>				<b>SIR JULIUS BENEDICT.</b>			
HEZEKIAH ...	...	2	6	ST. PETER ...	...	3	0
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST ...	...	2	6	THE LEGEND OF ST. CECILIA (SOL-FA, 1s. 6d.) ...	...	2	6
<b>E. ASPA.</b>				THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA (SOL-FA, 1s.) ...	...	3	0
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ENDYMION ...	...	4	0	<b>G. R. BETJEMANN.</b>			
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<b>BACH.</b>				ISRAEL RESTORED ...	...	4	0
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THE PASSION (S. JOHN) ...	...	2	0	<b>J. BRADFORD.</b>			
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MAGNIFICAT ...	...	1	0	PRaise THE LORD ...	...	2	0
GOD GOETH UP WITH SHOUTING ...	...	1	0	<b>W. F. BRADSHAW.</b>			
GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD ...	...	1	0	GASPAR BECERRA ...	...	1	6
GOD'S TIME IS THE BEST (SOL-FA, 6d.) ...	...	1	0	<b>J. BRAHMS.</b>			
MY SPIRIT WAS IN HEAVINESS ...	...	1	0	A SONG OF DESTINY ...	...	1	0
O LIGHT EVERLASTING ...	...	1	0	<b>CHARLES BRAUN.</b>			
BIDE WITH US ...	...	1	0	SIGURD ...	...	5	0
A STRONGHOLD SURE ...	...	1	0	<b>J. C. BRIDGE.</b>			
BE NOT AFRAID (SOL-FA, 4d.) ...	...	0	6	DANIEL ...	...	3	6
BLESSING, GLORY, AND WISDOM ...	...	0	6	<b>J. F. BRIDGE.</b>			
I WRESTLE AND PRAY (SOL-FA, 2d.) ...	...	0	4	ROCK OF AGES (LATIN AND ENGLISH) (SOL-FA, 4d.) ...	...	1	0
THOU GUIDE OF ISRAEL ...	...	1	0	BOADICEA ...	...	3	0
JESU, PRICELESS TREASURE ...	...	1	0	CALLIRHOË (SOL-FA, 1s. 6d.) ...	...	2	6
WHEN WILL GOD RECALL MY SPIRIT ...	...	1	0	NINEVEH ...	...	2	6
JESUS, NOW WILL WE PRAISE THEE ...	...	1	0	<b>DUDLEY BUCK.</b>			
<b>J. BARNEY.</b>				THE LIGHT OF ASIA ...	...	3	0
REBEKAH (SOL-FA, 9d.) ...	...	1	0	<b>EDWARD BUNNETT.</b>			
THE LORD IS KING (PSALM 97) ...	...	1	6	OUT OF THE DEEP (PSALM 130) ...	...	1	0
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THE BRIDAL DAY ...	...	2	6	MASS FOR FOUR VOICES ...	...	2	6
<b>J. F. BARNETT.</b>				<b>CARISSIMI.</b>			
THE ANCIENT MARINER (SOL-FA, 2s.) ...	...	3	6	JEPHTHAH ...	...	1	0
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PARADISE AND THE PERI ...	...	4	0				

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SINFONIA CANTATA (PSALM 116) ... ..	2 0	PSYCHE (SOL-FA, IS. 6d.) ... ..	2 6
<b>WILLIAM CARTER.</b>		SPRING'S MESSAGE (SOL-FA, 3d.) ... ..	0 8
PLACIDA ... ..	2 0	ERL-KING'S DAUGHTER (SOL-FA, gd.) ... ..	1 0
<b>CHERUBINI.</b>		ZION ... ..	1 0
REQUIEM MASS, C MINOR (LATIN AND ENGLISH) ... ..	1 0	THE CRUSADERS (SOL-FA, IS.) ... ..	2 0
SECOND MASS IN D MINOR ... ..	2 0	COMALA ... ..	2 0
THIRD MASS (CORONATION) ... ..	1 0	CHRISTMAS EVE (SOL-FA, 4d.) ... ..	1 0
FOURTH MASS IN C ... ..	1 0	<b>HENRY GADSBY.</b>	
<b>E. T. CHIPP.</b>		LORD OF THE ISLES (SOL-FA, IS. 6d.) ... ..	2 6
JOB ... ..	4 0	ALCESTIS (MALE VOICES) ... ..	4 0
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