A Kalmus Classic Edition

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VIARDOT

AN HOUR OF STUDY

EXERCISES FOR THE VOICE

BOOK I

K 09190

"AN HOUR OF STUDY."

Adopted by the Paris National Conservatory of Music.

1. In the first place, care should be taken that the Piano-forte is at the correct pitch and perfectly in tune.

2. If the pupil accompanies herself, she should be seated as high as possible: and a small mirror should be placed on the desk so that she can observe her features, as well as the movement of her mouth. She should sit upright, the head slightly raised.

3. If the pupil is sufficiently a musician, and has an ear correct enough not to require her to play all the accompaniment, it is preferable, so soon as the exercise is well understood, that she should sing standing. In so doing, she must take care to hold herself erect, a little arched backwards, the head should be slightly elevated, the eyes looking straight forward, and the body resting firmly on the feet without swaying backwards and forwards, or from side to side.

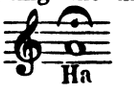
To avoid these two equally ungraceful motions, the feet should be placed somewhat in the second position in dancing: the weight of the body on the backward foot.

4. The pupil must breathe very slowly and very deeply, *through the nose*, with the mouth closed; and the breath must be held a moment before commencing to sing each exercise. Too much pains cannot be bestowed to the habit of taking a long respiration through the nose.

There are several advantages to be derived by breathing through the nose. First: the air is less cold when it reaches the larynx, which is thereby not rendered dry. Secondly; the opening of the mouth unnecessarily is avoided, as well as that noise in breathing which is so painful and unmusical. Later, when it becomes requisite to inhale a deep breath very quickly, the lips may be opened so that the air may be taken through both the nose and the mouth at the same time. But, at first, it is all important to become accustomed to breathe through the nose.

5 Great care must be taken to avoid any rising of the root of the tongue, or its becoming rigid while singing.

6. The mouth must be moderately and naturally open; and the jaw, as well as the head must remain without movement.

7. The note should always be attacked accurately and boldly; without any sort of gliding, but similar to a note struck on the piano; without forcing it from the chest, contracting the throat, or anticipating it with an aspiration which produces the bad effect following: 

8. The exercises must be sung with the full natural voice; without effort; without changing the vowel; with the same degree of power throughout the entire extent of the voice; and without any shading, except when indicated.

9. The pupil should not sing longer than a quarter of an hour at a time.

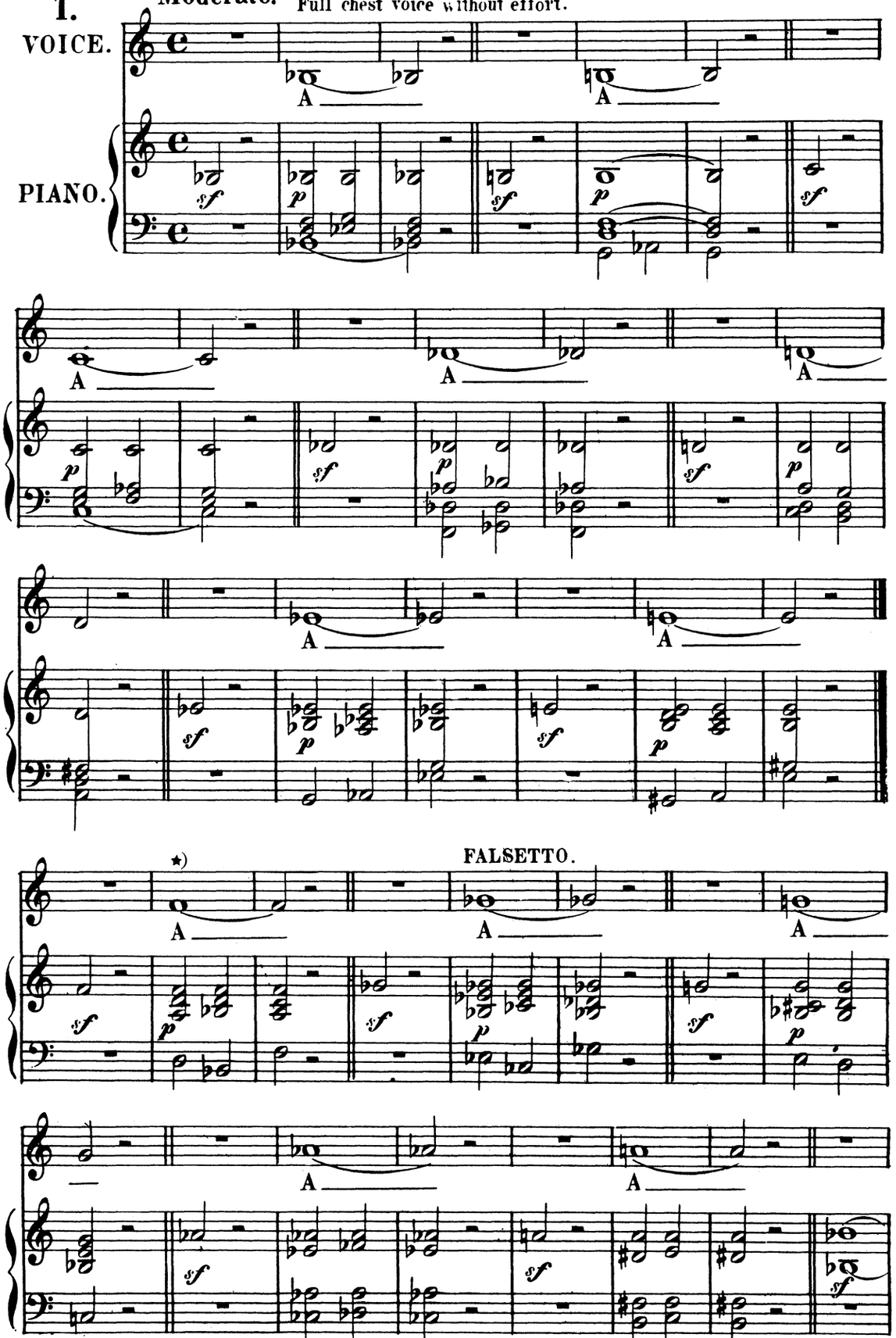
10. Whenever the pupil perceives that something is wrong: either that the intonation is not pure, the breath not properly taken, or that the quality of the tone is defective, she should immediately stop. When, after the lapse of a few seconds, during which the throat resumes its normal position, she should begin again; concentrating all her attention on the passage in which her singing was defective.

11. In fine, from the moment the pupil sits down to the piano, she should concentrate her mind on what she is about to study, and not permit her thoughts to wander from it. If she does not feel disposed to give it her undivided attention, it will be better to postpone the attempt.

Exercises.

1.

Moderato. Full chest voice without effort.



*) The F should be sung either in the chest voice or the falsetto.