

# PREFACE

A new edition of this popular technical study-book seems particularly useful as the approach to the mastery of such material has changed considerably. The former habit of endless repetition of the same exercise in order to “grind off” its inherent technical problems is practically outmoded nowadays. Instead one should endeavour to overcome faulty execution by singling out the individually varying problems and concentrating on these – often only one finger, a certain interval or a few phrases – in special exercises. This selective and special treatment of difficulties means efficient study, saves time, leads to quicker results, and, equally important, it enlivens the player’s work. This method of practice, however, demands constant concentration and puts an end to a mechanical “casual” way of playing. Different accentuation alone requires special attention, and rhythmication leads to complex demands on the ear. Contrary motion, imitation and different articulation for each hand, transposition etc., are musically demanding enough to be suggestive no longer of dry technical

exercises. Thus Hanon’s “Virtuoso Pianist” will come alive.

It is the task of the teacher or the intelligent student to select what they require from the given variants: not every student – sometimes not even both hands of the same student – will need the same variant.

Detailed instructions for the technique of touch have generally not been included in order not to restrict the possibilities of execution. Anyway, it is the teacher’s task to include these in the individual lesson.

One should aim to relate the exercises to their practical use. Sometimes fingering has been given for which the reason (apart from carrying out the instructions) will only become apparent in the context of more recent music, where it may simplify things.

Some instructions in the original edition have been retained on account of their “historical” value. On the whole, however, the order and sequence of the exercises remained unchanged.

OTTO WEINREICH

We quote the following passages from the original edition to illustrate the intentions of Hanon and his times:

“If the five fingers of each hand were developed equally, they would be able to perform everything written for this instrument, the only problem remaining being the fingering, which could be solved easily.”

“This work can be played through in one hour from beginning to end, and once mastered completely and repeated daily for a while all problems will vanish as if by magic.”

(Hanon)

# THE VIRTUOSO PIANIST

## PART ONE

Preparatory exercises to acquire agility, independence, strength and perfectly even development of the fingers.

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To practise the 20 finger-exercises in Part One start with the metronome set at 60 and gradually increase up to 108: hence the two metronome marks at the beginning of each exercise.

### No. 1

Separate and lift the fingers well to make every note audible as distinctly as possible.

M. ♩ = 60 - 108

The musical score for exercise No. 1 consists of five systems of piano notation. Each system contains two staves, a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system shows ascending and descending scales with fingerings 1-5 and 5-4. The second system shows ascending and descending scales with fingerings 1-2 and 5-4. The third system shows ascending and descending scales with fingerings 1-2 and 5-4. The fourth system shows ascending and descending scales with fingerings 1-2 and 5-4. The fifth system shows ascending and descending scales with fingerings 1-2 and 5-4. The score includes a large watermark 'PETERS' diagonally across the page.

*Important:* Proceed chromatically through all major keys!

4 Variations to exercise No. 1

1

2

3 In sixths or

4

5

descending

Exchange rhythms of right and left hand when descending.

6

*mf*

Practise also with hands crossed.

7

Similarly, practise the augmentation in the right hand, the variation in demisemiquavers in the left.

1st case or portamento

Contrary motion

8

With exaggerated rotary movement in alternating hands!

9 Very fast

10

Also with this rhythm!

Note: Whole tone scale (see p. 54)

11

# No. 39

## Major scales in octaves\*)

After all preceding exercises that dealt extensively with the special requirements of the scale – i.e. the smooth passing over and under and flowing change of position – the scales themselves cannot present any difficulties. Memorize the fingerings for the two groups 1–3 and 1–4 – not single fingers – and use different rhythmic patterns and accentuations to vary the exercises. Examples for this follow after the complete chart of the scales. The usefulness of applying dynamic nuances is demonstrated in many practical examples, and can be used to advantage for our exercises: ascending through several octaves a big crescendo, descending a decrescendo; different dynamics for both hands etc.

For the playing of scales the picture of the keyboard must now be subdivided in ever recurring identical groups. The higher technical goal to be aimed at is to make the feeling for the fingering correspond with the position and to remember it. This is the only way to get the scales flowing evenly, not the observation of individual fingers – (provided the basis is solid)!

More advanced students are advised to study scales after the following pattern. From every tone 6 scales accordingly:

The musical score for No. 39 consists of 12 staves, each representing a major scale. The scales are: C major, G major, D major, A major, E major, B major, F# major, C# major, F major, Bb major, Eb major, and Ab major. Each staff is divided into two parts: 'Right hand' and 'Left hand'. The scales are written in treble clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. Rhythmic patterns are shown with flags and stems. The scales are to be played through 2, 3, and 4 octaves with changing rhythm.

The musical score for the six minor scales consists of six staves. The scales are: Natural C major, Natural c minor, Harmonic C major, Harmonic c minor, Melodic C major, and Melodic c minor. Each staff is written in treble clef and includes fingerings and rhythmic markings.

\*) All scales to be played through 2, 3 and 4 octaves, with changing rhythm.