

A Kalmus Classic Edition

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BERINGER

DAILY TECHNICAL STUDIES

FOR PIANO

K 02045



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PREFACE

This collection is intended to serve as an exhaustive prefatory course to Carl Tausig's "Daily Studies" and to bridge over certain gaps occurring in that work. Tausig assumed students had already mastered the normal position of the hand on the keyboard, thus offering studies for extension and compression only.

Sections I and II of this book are compiled to meet this deficiency. Section III contains four preliminary studies only. A complete manual of scales and arpeggios is found beginning on page 92.

Octave studies are intentionally omitted in Tausig's scheme. It was his opinion that Kullak's "Octave School" embraced and finally exhausted every difficulty in that branch of technique and rendered further illustrations superfluous. A tolerably wide experience has however convinced me that but few young pianists possess sufficient courage and energy to tackle Kullak's voluminous and somewhat alarming work. I have therefore included this important, essential part of piano technique as an integral part of this collection. Studies in thirds, sixths and chord combinations, a branch hitherto much neglected, also form a special feature in this collection.

A system of fingering is used in these studies which is daily becoming more generally adopted in modern piano playing. It consists of using the same fingering throughout all tonalities, regardless of black keys, and results in a command of the keyboard attainable by no other method. Chopin's advent knocked the first nail into the coffin of the Clementi and Cramer system of fingering. It has now become entirely inadequate and obsolete for rendering the works of modern composers of piano music. Where an apparent awkwardness of fingering occurs in this collection it must be kept in mind that the sole aim has been to endow all fingers with equal strength and, as a consequence, equal efficiency.

Tempo marks have been entirely omitted as the studies must, at first, be played slowly, then gradually faster. It is essential that the studies, except as marked, should be practiced in every key. Nearly all technical exercises, except scales and arpeggios, have been written and played in the key of C major. This key, consisting of only white keys, cannot prepare the hand for passages alternating between black and white keys. A glance at the keyboard will conclusively prove the necessity for exercising the hand in all possible positions.

The system of transposition from key to key is so simple in this work that, after one or two exercises, students will readily transpose any of the studies. Modulatory examples (found on page 146) have been provided to assist the student. These examples have been assigned letters corresponding to those found within the text, thus rendering misapprehension impossible.

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Section I.

Five finger Studies.

The Studies in this section must be practised with three different qualities of touch.

1st, Legato:— The hand to be held quiescent, the fingers well rounded, the nails short, that the keys may be struck with the *ball* of the fingers. The fall of the finger must be quick and decided, great care being taken that the *rise* of one finger takes place *simultaneously* with the *fall* of the next; the motive power must emanate solely from the knuckle joint.

Special care must be taken to avoid falling into the very common, and fatal error of assisting the 1st finger (thumb) in its striking action by the lower arm; the arm must remain absolutely passive.

2nd, Hand (Wrist) Staccato:— The wrist, the chief factor in this quality of touch, claims our first attention, it must be held perfectly *loose* that the hand may rise and fall without let or hindrance.

The arm must be raised higher than for finger work; the wrist about half an inch above the keys.

The tone must be produced by a fall of the hand from the wrist, not by *hitting* the keys.

The speed of the fall must be regulated according to the amount of tone required. The quicker the fall the louder the tone. The raising of the hand in every case, however, must take place instantly after tone production.

The difficulty, with regard to this quality of touch is the achievement of lightness, in this case, a proof of strength, considerable muscular control being required to prevent the hand falling with its whole weight on the keys. The lower arm must remain as passive as possible. The fingers must be well rounded, as in the *Legato* touch, their movement very slight.

Studies 1-52, may be practised in this manner.

3rd, Finger Staccato:— This touch is principally employed for light and rapid passages, in which extreme *distinctness* is required. It is mainly produced from the middle joint of the fingers, assisted by the first joint; the wrist remains quiescent. The fingers must be held but *slightly* rounded and, in the act of depressing the key, must draw quickly —almost spasmodically— back towards the palm of the hand. This movement must be very rapid, or the required effect will not be produced.

Studies 1-60 may be practised in this manner.

The Student must have thoroughly mastered the whole of this section with the *Legato* touch, the foundation of all touches, before attempting to produce either *Wrist*, or *Finger Staccato*.

1. A. The two first Studies are written out in full, throughout all keys.

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The first study is written in G major (one flat) and 2/4 time. It consists of two staves. The right hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1, followed by 5 2 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2. The left hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4, followed by 5 1 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4.

The second study is written in D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. It consists of two staves. The right hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 1 etc., followed by 1 etc. The left hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 5 1 etc., followed by 1 etc.

The third study is written in G major (one flat) and 2/4 time. It consists of two staves. The right hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1, followed by 5 2 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2. The left hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4, followed by 5 1 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4.