

A Kalmus Classic Edition

**RIEMANN/
ARMBRUST
TECHNICAL STUDIES**

FOR ORGAN

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TECHNICAL STUDIES

Introduction and Practical Course.

I. Pedal Exercises.

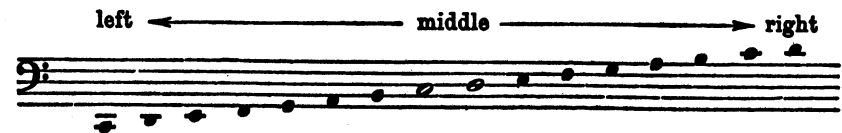
The chief novel difficulty felt by a pupil in passing from the pianoforte to the organ is, that his feet must likewise be used in playing; and this not, as with the pianoforte, to modify the power of tones produced by the hands, or to facilitate the *legato* in difficult passages by prolonging the tone, but to play an independent part upon a separate key-board. No aid, similar to that rendered by the piano-pedal in difficult *legato* passages, is found in organ-playing, and the hands are thus obliged to play everything which is to sound *legato* in a really smooth and connected manner. The pedal key-board having quite different dimensions from the manuals, it follows that the sense of distance or "gauge" must take a new development on the organ, which is again divided into two special branches:

- (1) To get the gauge of the pedal key-board itself, and to become accustomed to the position of the various tones and width of the intervals;
- (2) To become used to the opposition between the position of the pedal-keys and those of the manuals.

Familiarity must, of course, first be gained with the first branch. The principle of practicing with each hand separately, which has been proved of late years to be so extremely advantageous for piano-practice, gives for organ-playing the natural corollary, that the feet must first become thoroughly acquainted with the pedals by separate practice, so that they may be able to execute not only the easiest figures, such as skipping passages of thirds and sixths, with facility, but also to take with ease all kinds of skips, where the feet cross or are brought up to each other from wide intervals. But, besides these dry primary exercises, there is nothing to prevent taking up easy pieces, as in piano-practice, more especially those in homophonic style (e. g. Chorales, Hymn-tunes), in which the pedal co-operates in the simplest way by merely doubling the lowest part or playing it alone; indeed, such practice really belongs to a normal course. Only the properly technical studies must be considered, for the organ as for piano-practice, as a regular task to be performed exactly according to later directions.

The starting-point for finding the keys on the standard pedal key-board (reaching from great *C* to *d*¹) is *central C* (small *c*), which, though not lying precisely in the middle, is such a trifling distance to the left that it may stand

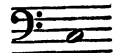
for the middle. But as we must also take care that no new difficulties arise later, when the playing of pedals and manuals is combined, the player must first and foremost sit down in front of the *centre of the manuals*. As the manuals regularly (at least ordinarily) extend from *C* to *f*³, the exact centre will be the line between *d*¹ and *d*¹ \sharp . Evidently the difference between the two centres is so inconsiderable that it may be treated as if non-existent (pedal *c* \sharp , manual *d*¹—*d*¹ \sharp); it is well to look upon the middle *c*¹—*f*¹ of the manual as lying just over the middle *c*—*d* of the pedal (which is very nearly exact), and from this starting-point to develop the sense of distance (or locality) to the right (above) and left (below). Therefore the chief work to be done in developing this sense is, to become accustomed to the fact, that on the organ-pedal not middle-*c* (*c*¹), but small *c*, forms the middle-point, whereas on the organ-manual, as on the piano, *c*¹ is the centre. The task is therefore to obtain a *double sense* for the *middle of the manual* and the *middle of the notes*, that is, a new sense for the organ-pedal besides that developed at the piano (see Riemann, Comparative Pianoforte School, I p. 1 ff.).



In order to learn the pedal from the start in its chief use as a 16-foot instrument (one of 16-foot tone), always practice the pedal-exercises with a 16' stop (register)—Sub-bass—to which, however, a bright and easy-speaking 8' stop should be coupled to make it speak more readily. It would seem hardly necessary to say that preliminary technical studies should not be practiced with loud stops; for firstly, one is glad to avoid making unnecessary noise with these dry exercises, and secondly, the judgment as to the exactness of the *legato* is less clear with loud registration. For the sense of tone the centre of gravity in pedal-playing will thus be lowered by an octave.



Here special notice must be taken, that the opposition between the two series of tones is essentially tempered by the fact, that the pedal key-board, intended for the lowest tones, is *below* the manuals, and is therefore really *lower*. In fact, new difficulties actually arise later on, when the pedal is called upon to take 4' or even 2' tones, and thus to execute a middle or even the highest part. We know, that the foot-pitch of the registers is not expressed by the notation; or rather, that the character of the various foot-pitches is exemplified precisely by their contradiction of the actual pitch represented by the notes, in that their pitch varies more or less upward or downward. For

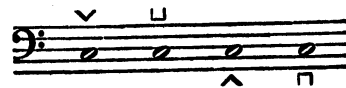
the manual, to be sure, the 8' tone is the positive standard; but, as remarked above, the organist must also accustom himself to play on one manual in 4' (or 16') tone while the other gives an 8' tone; or finally, he should be able to play in a Trio an 2' tone on the pedal, without becoming confused. Therefore the most practical course is, to consider the notes simply as *key-signs touch-signs*, whatever tones they may in reality stand for. Just as the clarinetist on the bass-clarinet, or the oboist on the English horn, always regulates his fingering according to the notes he reads, although the tones produced are not at all the same (an octave or fifth lower), in like manner the organist touches the middle pedal *c* without hesitation when he sees the note , whatever foot-tone may be registered, and whichever of the following tones may be produced:



The signs for *pedalling** employed in our exercises are, to begin with, the following:

∨ or ^ = toe
 □ or ▭ = heel

these signs being set with the closed side towards the notes:



Those *written above* call for the *right* foot, those *below* for the *left* foot; we therefore do not need the r. (right) and l. (left), or the French d. (droit) and g. (gauche), or the Italian d. (destra) and s. (sinistra). Where the feet are to change on a key which remains held down, we write thus:



which is quite as plain as the ordinary rl. and lr. The foot first pressing the key decides the position of the combined sign; thus ∨^ (= right foot presses, left takes) always stands above, ^∨ (= left foot presses, right takes) always below the notes. The shift from toe to heel, or reversely from heel to toe,

* The signs for pedalling here employed may be regarded as a further development of Haupt's method, but are so far completed that all varieties of touch, such as passing in front and behind, changing feet on a key, etc., are indicated with simple directness.

of the same foot on key while held down, seldom necessary, is shown quite as unequivocally by:



There is no fear that this sign can be confounded with the one given just before; because in the former case (where one foot relieves the other) we have like signs set facing two ways (∨ and ^), in the latter different signs (∨ and □) the same way, and the tie is likewise placed on the opposite side.

When the same foot is required to play a consecutive series of different notes, we indicate this briefly by a brace, and where needful by a sign showing whether heel or toe is to be taken first:



The *slide from toe to flat part of sole*, needed only for a succession of short keys to set the toe free for the next note, and likewise the *slide in the reverse direction*, we indicate by a combination of the two signs ∨ (toe) and (or) (sole):



these signs being written *with the open side towards the notes*.

Whether one foot is to pass *behind* or *in front* of the other to take a key on the opposite side, we indicate by a diagonal stroke before the sign, which stroke it is most practical to regard as a mark for that foot over or under which the other is to be passed:

∨ ∨ = pass over, ∨ ^ = pass under.

These signs are self-explanatory, and hardly require an exposition of their meaning.

The technical problems of pedalling, apart from the method of getting one's bearings and becoming accustomed to the distances between keys for the various intervals explained above, are:

(a) *Prompt lifting*, when the feet play alternately single notes of a series desired to be *legato*. As the pipes, especially the largest, require in any event a certain time to speak, the down-stroke must be executed as rapidly and de-