

Panseron

METHOD of Vocalization for Soprano and Tenor

Part 1, Scales and Exercises 1-40

PLAN OF THE METHOD.

A LOGICAL course of instruction is unquestionably one of the chief difficulties of study, and those teachers who are required to give lessons to basses, baritones, and contraltos, should experience this difficulty more than others, considering that no method has yet been written for these kinds of voices. They are obliged to take the existing works for soprano, or for tenor, and to transpose all the lessons and all the exercises. In this sort of work, a skilful teacher may, after all, be able to obviate the difficulties resulting from the high pitch; but what is he to do for the vocal infirmities inherent in the different voices? And, above all, what can the pupils study when the master is absent? All these reasons, and the requests of several teachers, as well as of a large number of students, have suggested to me the idea of adapting my complete method for soprano and tenor for the three varieties of low voices, by re-arranging my first work and adding some special articles to it. Hence, with these two editions, any singing-pupil, whether soprano, tenor, contralto, baritone, or bass, will find a complete method of vocalization conformable to his or her vocal study. Alongside of the good treatises on singing hitherto published, I have endeavored to present a series of brief, but well-founded, rules for the fundamental principles of the art of singing. I venture to promise that the work will provide a graded series of studies, from the simplest exercises up to extended pieces, and

subjects of study so numerous, and with such frequent changes of key, that the student will find sufficient material for practice in the exercises written out in full; for one should not imagine that a pupil always has the patience or the courage to transpose the lessons given in his method. It was my aim, by transposing into different keys, to conquer the negligence or indolence of pupils who sing only what they see written down.

As to the melody of the lessons in vocalization, I have always sought to render it easy of comprehension in all its developments, so that the articulation of the phrases, periods, and motives may be properly understood and expressed.

I think a certain superficial knowledge of piano-playing indispensable to singers. The accompaniments to the exercises were written conformably to this idea; the majority can even be played with two fingers of one hand. This is one of the advantages which my method has over those with only figured basses (which are frequently undecipherable, even for some teachers), or with figurate accompaniments whose execution demands a high order of talent.

The course laid down in this method is the same which I have followed for many years, both in class-teaching and private lessons.

The Second Part of the Method contains 42 lessons in vocalization, among them 12 very easy ones not found in the method for soprano and tenor.

INTRODUCTION TO THE METHOD.

ON THE PRODUCTION OF THE VOICE. (1)

The voice is a sound, of which the air is the material cause, and the true vocal cords,

the opening between which forms the glottis, are the efficient cause.

(1) Some persons may think these important details superfluous; I shall only remark, that a teacher of any wind-instrument usually gives, in his Method, a description of the instrument in question, and even explains the best way to clean it and keep it in order. Should it then be thought strange, that details concerning the production and preservation of the finest of all instruments, the human voice, are given here?—The following observations are based on various authorities on vocal science.

It is no unimportant matter, in the case of a child who is musically gifted, to provide frequent opportunity of hearing good music, but without any affectation or constraint, to the end that the child may ask of his own ac-

cord to take lessons, which must not be allowed to tire him at first. One may begin with two or three tones, gradually increasing the number until the scale is learned.

ON RESPIRATION, AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE SINGER.

In order to excel in singing, one must know how to take breath, i. e., to take a deep breath, and control it at pleasure. Respiration results from two acts of the organs governing the lungs and voice; the first, called inspiration, consists in drawing the air into the lungs to dilate them; the second, called expiration, consists in expelling the air inspired before. After having inspired a quantity of air sufficient for the presumable duration of the phrase or note which is to be executed without again taking breath, one should not expend it unskilfully, but always retain full control over the degree of force required by the tone. Noisy inspiration or vehement expulsion of the air, awkward efforts, contraction of the facial muscles, mark an unskilled singer who does not know how to take breath. Before attempting any modification in the intensity of the tone, one ought to learn how to produce equal tones of long duration, on all the natural and chromatic intervals.

Breath should be taken at the end of every phrase; if the phrase is too long, take breath at the half-cadence, or at some rhythmical or grammatical stop; if one has to take breath

during a swift passage in equal notes, do so at a disjunct rather than a conjunct interval, or after some note of longer time-value.

In singing verses, breath can generally be taken properly at the end of each verse; in the case of overlong Alexandrines, one may take breath at the *casura*; in ten-syllable verse, after the fourth syllable.

When singing words, take care not to aspirate the letter H roughly; it is a fault quite common among the French and Germans.

It is easier to breathe, and consequently easier to sing, when one is standing. When the pupil is singing under the master's supervision, he should stand fronting the latter, so that all his motions may be observed, and those faults of detail corrected which become incorrigible if neglected at the outset. Pupils are advised, above all, to stand straight and keep the shoulders back, so that the chest can give full and free play to the lungs.

Open the mouth in an unaffected manner, with a trace of smile on the lips, and always be careful to avoid all exaggerations in gesture or effect. The tongue should lie naturally in the mouth, lightly touching the teeth.

ON VOCALIZATION.

Vocalization is singing on a single vowel.

In vocalizing, the tones should be emitted in an equable manner, without facial distortion, moving neither the tongue nor the chin during the emission of a tone, as was observed in the preceding article.

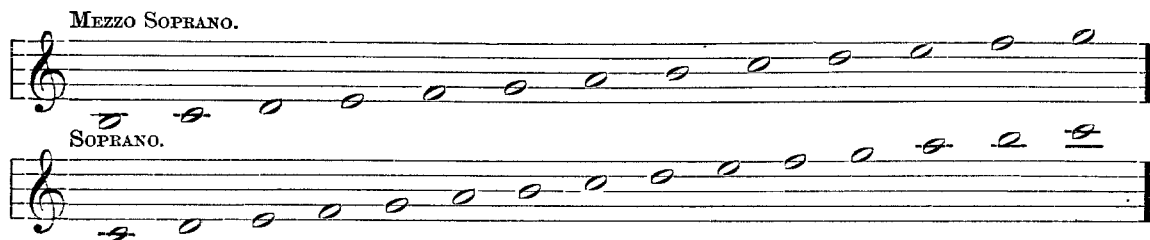
The tone should be attacked boldly, with pure intonation, and without dragging the voice from one tone to the next

I would mention, as a desideratum, perfect evenness in the scales.

ON THE *MESSA DI VOCE*.

To produce beautiful tones, and to sustain them purely, evenly, and true in pitch as

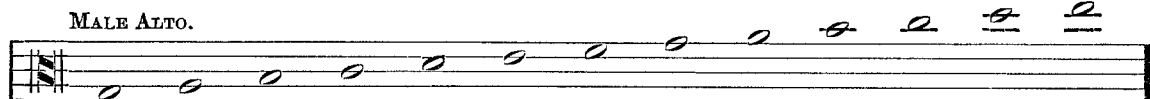
long as a full breath will permit, is a feat for a well-trained singer, for we must repeat



There is likewise a kind of tenor, called Male Alto, with a head-voice (or mixed voice)

extending up to D or E, like the voice for the rôle of *Orpheus* in Gluck's opera; but this kind of voice is very rare.

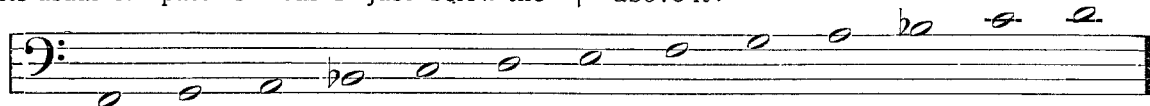
COMPASS OF THE MALE ALTO.



ON THE BASS VOICE.

The Bass is the deepest of men's voices; its usual compass is from F just below the

bass staff to D in the second leger-space above it:



Its range varies, however; it may have one or two tones more either below or above; and the compass of individual singers varies considerably.

We can no more find two voices that are exactly similar, than two leaves or two faces. Each differs from the other in some particular,—in compass, intensity, timbre, etc.

I cannot too strongly advise pupils who have bass voices, to practise the *messa di voce* and sustained even tones, in order to place their voices well; with this class of voice, agility is less requisite than for tenors or sopranos. But absolute purity of intonation is, if possible, even more desirable in basses than in others, for in *ensemble* pieces they form the bass of the fundamental harmony; and if this vocal part is not absolutely true, the other voices are forced to yield to the impulsion and deviation of this lowest part.

The pupil should, therefore, begin by plac-

ing his voice well with the *messa di voce*, and more especially in the scales, progressing upward from the lowest to the highest tone of his compass. Still, I advise him not to begin his studies by trying to bring out the two extremities of his vocal range. For instance, if he can take low F and high E, he ought to practise from low G to high D; later he may try to extend his compass by the practice of the extreme tones above and below. He should not even practise the notes of both extremes at the same time; the high tones have often been lost through striving after low ones, and *vice versa*. It is left to the teacher to exercise his discretion in hazardous cases.

A true bass voice sings throughout its diapason in a single register, namely, the chest-register. As to the head-voice, he should not think of employing it, unless the chest-voice is wanting in intensity in the high