

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

THE encouragement I have met with in this City since I have had the honour to offer my services as a Teacher of Music, has far exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and the desire to justify the confidence reposed in me, induced me to look out for the most proper means of improvement for the Pupils entrusted to my care, in order that they might make such progress as their youth, their talents and application would admit of.

I thought that the most efficacious means to attain this object was, to provide my Pupils with such Books of Elementary Instruction as would induce them to cultivate an intimate acquaintance both with the theory and practice of Music.

I have for this purpose provided myself with various elementary works on Music, composed by the most eminent and celebrated Professors of the Science; but they have not altogether answered my expectations. These books, published by masters who certainly possess the most distinguished talents, embrace all the rules of the science, but they are written in a manner too scientific, in a style too elevated, and beyond the reach of the understanding of beginners, and are therefore more fit to perfect a Musician than to convey a knowledge of the elementary principles to a Learner; for, in order to understand them, a pupil must already have mastered the first difficulties in the science: consequently none of these works answer the purpose of young beginners.

I have therefore been emboldened to compose a course of elementary instructions, in a style more simple and familiar, so that the development of the rules may be easily understood by Pupils of tender age; and to render them more interesting, I have divided them into dialogues or conversations between a mother and her child. Every conversation develops that part of the rules which is assigned to it, and the Pupil, how little talent soever he may have, can, without the assistance of a Teacher, comprehend the signs and characters contained in a piece of music, and apply them to a Piano. The knowledge which a Pupil gains in one conversation, tends to facilitate the learning of the next, and the Pupil thus goes on progressively to the last conversation, without experiencing the fatigue and difficulties generally felt in acquiring the first principles of the science.

As far as I have judged it necessary, I have substituted for technical terms, words more adapted to the understanding of a beginner.

If this treatise has any merit, I owe part of it to several of my friends, who have favoured me with their assistance, and deserve to share with me the favor which the public may think me entitled to.

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