Contents

Note from the publisher 5 Introductory remarks (André Isoir) 5

A. Introduction 7

- I. A look at organ playing today 7
- II. Conditioned habits and their effects on organ-playing 9
- III. Alternative ways of practising the organ 11
- IV. Historical features of practising the piano and organ 13
 - 1. Piano practising in the 19th century 13
 - 2. Organ practising in the 19th century 14
 - 3. Piano practising since the 20th century 15
 - 4. Organ practising since the 20th century 16
 - 5. Reasons for differences 17
- V. Conclusions 19

B. Practical exercises 21

About the instrument 21

Posture and playing techniques (André Isoir) 21

First essential steps towards learning a new piece 24

How to use this book 24

- I. Listening to the thumb 26
 - 1. Inaudible thumb-crossings in simple scales 26
 - 2. Inaudible thumb-crossings in sequential scale passages 30
 - 3. Thumb-crossings when leaping between intervals 32
 - 4. The thumb during non-changing hand position 32
 - 5. Trills and the thumb 36
- II. Hearing used for support when alternating between hands 39
 - 1. Rapid alternation of hands with non-changing hand-position 39
 - 2. Rapid alternation of hands with varying hand-position 42
 - 3. Rapid alternation of hands when crossed-over 44
- III. Special pedal exercises 49
 - 1. Introduction of an acoustic model 49
 - 2. Simple scales 50
 - 3. Sequential scale passages 51

- IV. Co-ordination of hands/hands-feet using hearing 53
 - 1. Uniformity 53
 - 2. Motor skills when playing purely semiquavers in hands and feet 56
 - 3. Polyphonic pedal 59
 - 4. Semiquaver motor skills versus sustained notes 60
- V. Overcoming movement-inhibitors in notes 63
 - 1. Rests 63
 - 2. Beaming of semiquavers 64
 - 3. Establishing reflexes for finger-/note-repetition 67
 - 4. Manual-change as a reflex 69
- VI. Relaxation and quality during lengthy, motor-demanding passages 72
 - 1. Polyphony/sustained notes 72
 - 2. Continuity/stamina 74
 - 3. "Inner elastic metronome" 79
- VII. Exercises without the organ 81
 - 1. For the "mind" 81
 - 2. For the body 81
 - 3. Individual physical disposition 81
- VIII. Practising, interpretation and recital 84
 - 1. Questions on practising and interpretation 84
 - 2. Preparation for a recital: pre-constructing 85

C. Appendix 87

- I. List of references 87
- II. Index 89
- III. List of works 91
- IV. Biographical details 91