

**THE PRINCIPLES OF
EXPRESSION IN
PIANOFORTE PLAYING**

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The Principles of Expression in Pianoforte Playing by Adolph F. Christiani

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ADOLPH F. CHRISTIANI

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IN PIANOFORTE PLAYING

ADOLPH F. CHRISTIANI

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TO

FRANZ LISZT

THE GREAT MAGICIAN OF THE PIANOFORTE

THIS WORK

IN ADMIRATION OF HIS MATCHLESS GENIUS

AND IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SYMPATHETIC KINDNESS

Is Devotely Inscribed

By A. F. CHRISTIANI

P R E F A C E .

I N writing this work, I had not only the object in view of providing for those interested in the subject a book of reference, containing a systematic exposition of the principles of expression in pianoforte playing, but I also wished to dispel the erroneous popular belief, that expression is a manifestation of feeling *only*, or that feeling is the sole basis of expression.

I shall endeavor to prove that intelligence, not feeling, is the chief requirement in expression.

Fully twenty years ago, when first the idea dawned upon me, that expression was based upon principles, and not merely upon emotional impulse or individual taste, I asked myself and others: What are those principles? How can I obtain a knowledge, where find a clear exposition of them?

My own teachers had never mentioned the subject, and I venture to say that the conditions of musical teaching, so far as expression goes, are pretty much the same to-day, as they were twenty years ago. Every artist and musician to whom I applied had only private opinions to give on the subject. I searched in German, French, and English literature for more substantial information, but was astonished at the almost total absence of any practical doctrine regarding the laws of expression.

For years I collected every scrap of obtainable information, and, in recording my own deductions, was careful throughout to be guided only by natural laws, avoiding absolutely (as every teacher should do) personal inclination. Sifting and classifying this material, I discovered logical connections between many apparent contradictions, and, gradually, succeeded in systematizing, for my own use in teaching, the leading principles of pianistic expression.

After a test of many years, in which the application of these principles has been most advantageous to myself and my pupils, and thinking that an amplified exposition of them might be useful to others, I determined upon the compilation of this work, which, during the last five years, has filled up the measure of my spare time.

Notwithstanding all the pains I have bestowed upon its preparation, I am fully aware of its numerous imperfections. But, as the higher the aim, the further removed must be the point of excellence aimed at, even as the more we learn, the wider the field of knowledge becomes, disclosing to us the infinitely small share of merit we may claim in any undertaking, I can only trust that this book may benefit those for whom it is written, and leave it to the fair judgment of critics, who, while they find it easy to detect faults, can also duly appreciate difficulties.

ADOLPH F. CHRISTIANI.

NEW YORK, *January*, 1885.

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