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# S. S. STEWARTS BANJO & GUITAR JOURNAL

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SLEIGH RIDE SCHOTTISCHE, Mandolin & Guitar .....	Frey
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## DON'T FRET.

Since the introduction to the banjo playing world of the improved banjeurine, (called the banjo-banjeurine) by the manufacturer, S. S. Stewart, and the "SPECIAL THOROUGHbred" Banjo, in the hands of A. A. Farland, there appears to have arisen a sort of "craze" on the subject of 22 fret banjos. Farland's Stewart Banjo, having a 10½ inch rim, with 19 inch finger-board, and fretted with 22 small raised frets, has already been made the model for imitators to copy. This is well—nobody in this part of the country ever thought of claiming a patent right on 22 frets, 24 frets, or 19½ frets. In fact, the fretting business is as "free as air" to all who wish to fret; so that it is now evident that we shall soon be favored with some remarkable exhibitions of short-sighted hindsight in the line of banjo fretting contests.

About twenty, or twenty-two years ago, the writer used the ordinary 11 inch rim banjo with 19 inch neck, and having 22 frets upon the finger-board. The trouble with such a fretting scale was then, as it is now, that with a banjo of this size, the BRIDGE must be placed too near the centre of the head in order to contract the scale, or shorten the distance between it and the nut. Now, no such difficulty or impediment is encountered with a banjo of, say, 10 inch rim and 19 inch neck; for on such size the 22 frets will come nicely within the range of the 19 inch finger-board. Increasing the diameter of the rim, say, ½ inch, leaving the length of the neck the same, is about all the "forcing" this scale will stand, without greatly reducing the musical character of the tone of the instrument, and therefore, while it is quite possible to construct a banjo with 11½ inch or 12 inch rim, and 19 inch neck, and to put 22 frets upon the finger-board of each, yet such a proceeding would appear so utterly absurd that we could only class it with

idiocy. Yet, there is no doubt that plenty of people would be readily "taken in" by claims of this character, thinking they had secured two or three extra frets for nothing.

Not long ago a would-be guitar player wanted to have a guitar constructed with the frets closer together, so that he would not be obliged to stretch his fingers so painfully in climbing from one fret to another.

Now, here is just the opportunity needed for some of our would-be inventors in the patent banjo line to embrace and show the public what they can do.

Why not take a guitar, and after removing the bridge, stick it on an inch or so nearer to the finger-board? By so doing, you can get more frets on. It won't matter much whether the guitar is spoiled, so far as tone goes; you'll have frets if you have nothing else.

Then there's the mandolin!

Some of our soloists need more frets. Why do not our banjo inventors go into the mandolin improvement business. There's plenty of room there if they go at it right. To put more notes on a mandolin, all one has to do is to get more frets on the finger-board.

Now, then, we are going to tell you how to do it. It is a great secret, but it can be done all the same, and may serve to catch some "gawk" who has surplus frets on the brain.

The following is the RULE for improving the mandolin:

First—Purge the finger-board of all frets.

Second—Take a hammer and remove the bridge; if a hammer is not within reach, a chisel will do.

Next, divide as short a scale as you please, and after fretting your neck with as many frets as may be desired, fix on the bridge in a new place. It don't matter where you put the bridge, so long as the 12th fret is half way between it and the nut, or the

"jumping off place" of the finger-board.

Although the foregoing may appear as somewhat absurd to the educated reader, yet it is nevertheless true that letters displaying just such ignorance are received in our mail, almost daily. No one would wonder at all why it was that so many cheap and rubbish like instruments were made and sold throughout the country, if they could but come in contact with many of those who make up the great majority of the buyers of such goods.

Banjo buyers to-day, of course, are better educated than the same class was twenty years ago, but had the matter been left in the hands of the cheap manufacturers, it is safe to say that the same system would be in existence to-day, that existed twenty-years ago.

## NEWTON'S GUITAR WORK.

P. W. Newton's Practical School of Harmony for the Guitar, has just been published by S. S. Stewart, 223 Church Street, Philadelphia, Pa. This work contains 55 music plate pages, is bound in boards, and will be sent by mail to any address, upon receipt of price, ONE DOLLAR. No work for the guitar, of this character, has ever been published before; it is a complete work on harmony and chord construction, as adapted to the guitar, and contains fully \$50.00 worth of instruction, all for the low price of \$1.00.

We have frequently been asked by amateurs and guitar students for a work containing all the CHORDS FOR GUITAR. Here we have it—and not only that, but all the details as to WHY and HOW chords are constructed and named. This work embraces every key, and one who has mastered all that is contained in this book, need seek no further for information as to the guitar finger-board. As a book of reference it cannot be equalled.

## NATURE AND THE VACUUM.

It has been affirmed that "Nature abhors a Vacuum," and there is a good reason to believe that—  
NATURE DETESTS AN IMITATOR.

When we look about us and see the number of "short-sighted hind-sights" now engaged in the business of musical instrument manufacturing, we are led to believe it was short-sighted hind-sight indeed that led the feet of some of these into the walks of life so far—so very far—from the calling which nature had evidently intended for them.

Can one become a writer, a painter, or an artist, merely by spending a few months apprenticeship to the art? Hardly!

Nature always has a word to say to this.

A clothopper is as likely to be transformed into a great financier as is a person lacking the possession of musical talent, at any time to become a successful musical instrument manufacturer, musician, or inventor of musical instruments.

There are to-day, (you can find them in nearly all of our cities,) "manufacturers" of banjos, mandolins, guitars and other instruments, who are no more fitted or adapted to the manufacture of such instruments, than a mule is to play the piano.

Nature has not fitted them for any service to the World of Music, and if the talent is lacking in them, surely they cannot succeed.

\* \* \* \* \*

For more than twenty years the manufacturer of the Stewart Banjo has given his time and attention to the work of improving and perfecting the banjo, and making it an acknowledged musical instrument.

In this labor he brought to his assistance a natural musical ability and a love for the work,—and often, while others slept, late in the hours of the night, this man labored on, experimenting, studying and practicing, with a certain aim in view.

It is well known to banjosts, that during these years, the "Banjo Club," by the assistance of Prof. T. J. Armstrong, was established on a musical basis, and is rapidly becoming a popular musical institution.

Now, after all these years of labor, we find those "short-sighted hind-sight" Vacuums of Nature, alluded to in the foregoing, making "banjos just as good as Stewart's," (in their vacuums), and with every part of the instrument copied piece by piece, as nearly as they are able to do so. But it is the old story of the Cremona Violin again repeated.

We see these same manufacturers—imitators of the work of others—sending out their "works of art," made piecemeal by hands they employ, but in which their minds (?)

do not enter,—copies of Stewart's Banjos, copies of well known maker's guitars, copies of the delicate mandolin,—copies of its shape only—but too often showing themselves devoid of all knowledge and entirely lacking in the experience necessary to season the wood so that the instrument will hold together even long enough to prepare for death.

Cheap copies of standard and reputable instruments are thus made and forced upon the market. The copyists have not spent years, nor months, in perfecting their work; but being merely copyists of other shapes, they must needs sell their wares cheaper than the original; for morally they have stolen the ideas of another, to the furthest extent in their power, and stolen ideas, like stolen goods, must always be disposed of a "little below the market price."

If the purchaser of such an instrument secures a good one (for even the cheapest rubbish occasionally turns up something of value) he is not sure even then that it will retain its tone for more than two or three months,—for if the maker (?) is a self-confessed ignoramus, never having studied the art, (which he surely must be, when he is unable to get up an original design) how can he guarantee or warrant the instrument?

Or if so, what is such a guarantee worth?

Think on these points, reader, and you will come to realize that there are those in the musical instrument business whose moral natures are several points lower "than they really ought to be."

It is amusing to hear such persons, when they get hold of a supposed customer, prate about the superiority of their copies. How much better they really are than Stewart's, and what is of so much more consequence, how much cheaper!

It is equivalent to saying:—"Here, don't you be fool enough to pay \$100.00 for that painting, you can get one just like it, around the corner, for \$1.25."

A Chinese artist was once employed to paint a portrait.

After daubing some paint upon a piece of canvas, he took it to his customer. But the party could not trace any resemblance to himself in the "likeness,"—whereupon the artist exclaimed:—"Why not you? Ain't it got eyes, nose, mouth, ears? What more you want?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, if a would-be manufacturer has not a practical knowledge of the banjo,—has never studied the instrument,—and cares nothing for it,—how is such a person to tell whether the banjos he sells are good for anything or good for nothing?

If such persons could but steal the autograph letters from the leading players of the world, received by Stewart during the past fifteen years, they might take a step over a great impediment to their financial and artistic success.

But alas! Even then it would prove a poor consolation, for such success must be short lived.

"Give us the manly foe."

We do not object to honest competition, either in business or in art, but "NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM."

## An Operation for Improving the Flexibility of the Third Finger.

Mr. George W. Gregory, of New York, writes that the operation performed upon his hand some weeks ago, has proved a complete success, and the result is, that he can now use the third finger of his right hand with greater facility than ever before; and, in fact, as freely as any other finger. With the letter, we received two photographs (which we reproduced) one taken before and the other after the operation, showing the increased mobility of the finger in question, the latter being flexed to the greatest possible extent in each picture.



BEFORE OPERATION

In 1890, Mr. Gregory, through excessive practice, brought on what is termed musicians' paralysis. Affecting the second finger to such a degree, that manipulation of the strings with that member, became not only painful, but laborious, and to such an extent that its use proved impracticable and finally had to be abandoned, except in the playing of chords or very simple arpeggio movements. A peculiar feature of this condition was, that while it incapacitated the finger for hard work on the banjo, there was no apparent injury to the muscles; the finger retained its strength for all other purposes, and there was no diminution of facility at the piano. This established the fact, that the seat of trouble lay in the nerves controlling the action of certain muscles. The best authorities on the subject of this peculiar ailment were consulted and a treatment of massage and electricity was prescribed and administered for some six weeks, resulting in the partial recovery of the use of the finger in playing.

The restoration was not permanent, however, and in the course of a few months





AFTER OPERATION

although great care had been taken not to over-work the finger, the trouble returned and the treatment had to be repeated. This occurred again and again until finally, about two years ago, it became advisable to train the third finger to take the place of the second. Then another difficulty arose; all movements played with the little finger resting upon the head of the banjo, were very awkward to manipulate, because the little ligaments connecting the cords of the third with those of the fourth finger, do not permit the former to be flexed to any great extent without carrying the latter with it.

Of course, years of training will very much extend the limit to which these fingers can be separated, but there is an easier and in the end, more satisfactory way of accomplishing the same result, and that is by an operation in surgery, called tenotomy.

This operation simply consists of cutting the small transverse muscles which bind the third finger to the second and fourth, and does not in any way affect the strength of the hand.

Mr. Gregory sought out Dr. C. Dana Hubbard, who has performed the same operation for a great many pianists, and had these muscles separated with the aforementioned result. The operation was not painful; took but ten minutes and the wound had entirely healed in four days. Mr. Gregory played in concert the fifth day after it had been performed.

## A. A. FARLAND.

The Banjo Virtuoso, who is now permanently located at 270 West 43d street, New York City, is meeting with very flattering artistic success wherever he appears, with his Special Thoroughbred Banjo.

His recent concert in Louisville, Ky., was surely a triumph, judging from the *Press* comments, if from nothing else. The following extract is taken from the *Courier Journal*:

"The concert given by Mr. Alfred A. Farland, known as the Paderewski of the banjo, was an artistic triumph. Mr. Farland has been heard once before in this city, and certainly convinced the majority of his audience that the banjo is capable of expressing the most classic compositions, as are the violin, violoncello and other stringed instruments.

The programme was made up of compositions of the masters, the Sonata, opus 30, No. 3, by Beethoven being the opening number. The second selection, Yradler's "La Paloma," was a perfect gem in its way, and was played with such a delicacy of shading and touch that it had to be repeated. While all of his numbers were played exquisitely, Hauser's "Wienlied," Schubert's "Serenata," and the "Overture to William Tell," were especially fine. Mr. Farland is a young man and of quite prepossessing appearance. His ease of manner and gesture while playing were generally remarked upon by his audience."

The following is the programme as rendered:

### PART I.

1. Sonata, Opus 30, { a Allegro assai, } Beethoven  
No. 3. { b Moderato,  
c Allegro Vivace }
2. La Paloma..... Yradler
3. Spanish Dances, 1, 2, 3..... Moszkowski
4. Home, Sweet Home—Variation..... Farland
5. "The Sweetest Story Ever Told".....  
(By special request)..... Stults  
MR. JAMES ARMSTRONG.
6. Second Mazurka..... Wieniawski
7. { a Wiegeliend..... Hauser  
b Serenata..... Schubert
8. Overture to William Tell—Allegro Vivace..... Rossini

### PART II.

1. Grande Valse Brillante, Opus 18..... Chopin
2. Nocturne..... Chopin
3. Hungarian Dance No. 5..... Brahms
4. Minuet a l'Antique..... Paderewski
5. Variations on "My Old Kentucky Home," Farland
6. In Old Madrid—By special request..... Bailey  
MR. JAMES ARMSTRONG.
7. Pizzicati—Ballet Music from Sylvia..... Delibes
8. 2me Polonaise Brillante..... Wieniawski

Mr. Farland made his first Public Concert Appearance in New York City, at Chickering Hall, on Tuesday evening, March 5th, the occasion being the "Eighth Annual Grand Banjo Concert," under the management of Phipps & Alpuente. Here Mr. Farland, although handicapped, so to speak, made the success of the evening. The management placed him on the programme, so that a number of other banjo players should appear first, and Mr. Farland did not appear until 10.25—an hour when it is customary at most concerts to find the audience dispersed. Whether the intentions of the management were to show off their own favorite banjo players first, so that the "shine" would not be taken from them in advance; or whether they feared the house might not remain through the long programme, unless Farland with his Stewart Banjo was reserved—it is, of course, difficult to determine. However, Mr. Farland rendered Beethoven's 8th Violin Sonata, Chopin's Nocturne, op. 9, No. 2, and Minuet a l'Antique, by Paderewski, and many in the audience thought they had never heard the banjo played before.

Those beautiful harp-like tones, that delicately shaded expressive music! Ah, here

is a player worthy the name of *Virtuoso*, the first and only.

New York *Herald* said:

"There were thunders of applause after the playing of Brooks, Denton and Ossman, and it was a toss up between the trio and the Doré, Farmer and Doré aggregation as to which won the honors. As one of the enthusiastic listeners put it, 'They both played double sixes; some one would have to throw double sevens to beat them.'

The special novelties of the evening were the first public appearances here of Signor Volpe, who played the mandolin with execution and expression that I never heard surpassed, and Mr. Alfred Farland, whose rendering on the banjo of Beethoven's eighth violin sonata, Paderewski's minuet and a nocturne by Chopin, surprised even the experienced banjoists present. His brilliancy of tone, technique and phrasing were simply marvelous."

It is plain to those who have sight that the banjo, as handled by Farland, is as capable a musical instrument as any other. That is, there are some banjos that are—others that are not. The music rendered by Farland could not be made so effective on any other banjo as on the Stewart Special Thoroughbred. It stands to reason that an instrument intended for crude music, such as the banjo *was*, some years ago, could not have been suited to the rendition of classical music.

Farland and his Stewart Banjo have no possible connection with the "Plantation Tub," or the "Plunker" of the past. They have opened up a newly discovered musical world.

From the New York *World*, March 6th:

"A large audience was present at the concert last evening at Chickering Hall. Many banjoists took part. Mr. Alfred A. Farland displayed a high degree of virtuosity in his solos, all of which were of high-class music.

Sig. Volpe, the mandolinist, demonstrated that the instrument permits of the interpretation by it of the music of a character not usually associated with picked strings. Sig. Valpe is certainly an artist in his way.

From the N.Y. *Musical Courier* March 13th:

"Mr. Alfred A. Farland's work on the banjo, on the occasion of his first public appearance in New York, Tuesday night, at Chickering Hall, was sufficient to convince the most skeptical that the instrument is unlimited, almost, when it comes to the interpretation of classical music. Mr. Farland, who has recently concluded a tour across the continent and is making preparations to take a professional trip South and West, gave some most interesting points on the banjo while conversing with a representative of the *Musical Courier*."

From the *Musical Trades*, New York:

"At the Eighth Annual Banjo Concert, given at Chickering Hall, on Tuesday evening, Mr. Alfred A. Farland made an immense sensation by showing the possibilities of the banjo as a solo instrument. The effects he produced were certainly astonishing, and far beyond anything hitherto attempted. The

instrument he used was made by S. S. Stewart, the renowned maker of Philadelphia, and in tone, resonance and singing quality far outdistanced the instruments used by all the other performers that evening."

Mr. Farland's proposed concerts at Newark, N. J., Rochester, N. Y., and a few other towns have been postponed until April and May. He expects also to play in Trenton, N. J., Richmond, Va., Charlotte, N. C., Westerly, R. I., Columbus, O., Cleveland, O., Chicago, Ill., and several other places during those months.

A FARLAND BANJO RECITAL is to be given at CARNEGIE HALL, New York City, early in April. Those interested in the banjo in New York, should apply to Mr. Farland for particulars. His address is 270 West 43d street, as announced at the beginning of this article.

## TEACHING "THE POSITIONS" ON THE GUITAR.

By C. S. DE LANO.

After a pupil has mastered the rudimentary work on the guitar, the study of the various positions confronts him, and doubtless no work which follows seems as difficult to comprehend as this. I have made the method of teaching the positions a special study, and if my experience in this line of work may aid any teacher who is starting in the profession, I shall be amply repaid for giving the following suggestions:

Many guitars of recent make have position marks inlaid in the finger-board, which aids the student very materially in the work. I have found that becoming perfectly familiar with each note on the finger-board results not only from careful study and constant practice, but also from a training of the eye; as a student may know that A comes on the seventh fret of the D string, yet he is unable to place the finger quickly on the required note without occasionally missing the fret.

My first step in teaching the position is to make a study of the chromatic scale on the E, B and G treble strings, from the first to the twelfth fret; these being used more than the bass strings; it opens the way more clearly to the study of the six strings.

Let us start with the fourth position: The first point to impress on the pupil's mind is the importance of correct fingering, as on this depends greatly the ease and rapidity of all future work. The scale fingering in all the positions being exactly the same, renders this part of the study very clear to the student. Next, have them notice carefully the lowest and highest note coming in the limit of the fourth position.

After a careful practice of the scale, I require my pupils to learn the notes on the fourth and seventh frets perfectly, which forms the lower and upper limit of the position. I have found where a pupil is required to learn the entire set of notes coming in range of the position without doing this, it is like trying to commit to

memory part of a dictionary, and results in the work seeming much harder than it really is.

When the notes on the fourth and seventh frets are at the pupil's command, the next step is to learn the intervening notes which is now an easy task. This illustrates the method used in teaching the sixth, seventh and ninth positions; as I have previously stated, the student may know perfectly what note comes on each fret, but he has difficulty in placing the finger on the required note without occasionally missing the fret. To overcome this the pupil should lay the guitar in the lap, or on a table, and drop the finger on the different frets at the suggestion of the teacher; this should be done rapidly, and then time taken to see if the finger has been placed on the right fret. In this way the eye is quickly trained in the art of spelling, and fewer mistakes are apt to be made in striking the right notes. I find it advisable to thoroughly master one position before another is attempted; if this is not done, the work is only half done.

Mastering the positions on the guitar is like becoming an expert in stenography, it takes time and a great amount of careful study; but when once learned, a student has the key to reading guitar music.

## BANJO CLUBS.

Those organizing banjo and guitar clubs should bear in mind that the leading and popular music for such organizations is arranged so that the BANJEURINE plays the leading part or parts. Therefore, without a banjeurine or tenor banjo in the club, it is useless to attempt the rendition of the popular music of the day.

Every organizer of a club should possess himself of a copy of T. J. Armstrong's book, BANJO ORCHESTRA MUSIC; OR, HINTS TO ARRANGERS AND LEADERS OF BANJO CLUBS. The price of this book is but 50 cents, and no other book or series of books can be had that contain the valuable information and instruction for the benefit of banjo and guitar clubs contained in this work of Mr. Armstrong's.

That great progress has been made in perfecting banjo and guitar organizations, during the past few years, is evident to all music lovers who live in the large cities. There are many, however, who reside in the smaller towns and cities far away from the banjo centre, who have not the opportunity of hearing the more advanced organizations. The books, "BANJO ORCHESTRA MUSIC," and "DIVIDED ACCOMPANIMENT," both by Thomas J. Armstrong, and published by S. S. Stewart, are therefore worth many times their price, of 50 cents each, to such teachers and performers as have any thought of starting a banjo club, or a banjo, mandolin and guitar club.

An ordinary quartette, made up of four banjos, or of three banjos and guitar, is a very good thing, in its way; but such an organization renders very "tame" music to those who have been accustomed to listening

to the modern banjo and guitar club, with its banjeurines, banjos, piccolo banjos, bass banjo and guitars. There is, perhaps, nowhere where so much can be accomplished in the musical line, with a little well directed effort, as among the organizations known as banjo and guitar clubs.

The Stewart, Armstrong and Gorton prize contests of banjo, mandolin and guitar clubs, given at the Philadelphia Academy of Music, during the years of 1893 and 1894, to the largest audiences ever assembled in the Academy, did much to advance musical organizations of this character, and to acquaint the musical public with the beauties of properly organized and well drilled banjo and guitar clubs. That the same character of musical entertainment was not given this year, was only because the management could not give the necessary time and attention to it, owing to other business engagements. The great number of letters, which have since been received, expressing regrets that the usual club contest and concert was not given, shows how deeply interesting and enjoyable these concerts were to the audience. There are always new people taking up the banjo, guitar and mandolin, and there are perhaps many now among our readers who know nothing of the club concerts spoken of here. To such we say, if you would like to read an account of these entertainments, and will send a 2 cent postage stamp, we will mail you a 132 page book on "The Banjo," containing, among other good things, a full account of these concerts, the prizes awarded, the names of the winners, and all about it.

The banjo was never so popular as now, and the coming five years should do much towards perfecting the BANJO CLUB. This will be done provided all take hold and work together towards that end. Nothing of any account can be accomplished singly or alone.

## THE DORÉ BROTHERS.

Will C. Doré, of the Doré Brothers, banjoists, New York City, writing under date of March 2d, says: "The Thoroughbred Banjo arrived safely. It has more volume of tone than any banjo I have ever played. Will have my brother get one shortly."

Mr. Doré also says: "We expect to play a return engagement to the Pacific coast in July, taking Mr. Farmer with us. Our new trio is a big success."

The Doré Brothers and W. B. Farmer announce a Testimonial Concert, for April 30th, at Fifth Avenue Hall, 27 West 42d Street, New York City, on which occasion many celebrated players will appear.

Tickets for sale at Doré Brothers' Studio, 666 Sixth Avenue.

## Reminiscences of a Banjo Player.

TWENTY-FIFTH LETTER.

BY A. BAUR.



Since writing my last letter my time has been so taken up with politics that I feared I should not be able to say even a few words in this issue of the JOURNAL. "Nothing succeeds like success," and as I was successful in the political campaign, I imagine that I am the wiser for it. So it is in all the different walks of life. Success always gives one courage to attempt schemes that had previously seemed impossible of accomplishment. This I find to apply particularly to the successful teacher and writer of banjo music. It keeps one busy now-a-days to "keep up with the procession," and as I have before remarked, I try to keep thoroughly posted in all matters pertaining to the banjo. What information I cannot gain through reading the different papers published in the interests of the banjo, and circulars issued by writers and publishers of banjo music, I learn through correspondence. Where there were only a dozen or so good, bad and indifferent writers of banjo music a few years ago, there are now hundreds of them, and the list is increasing daily. Like all branches of business which promise success there is a rush to secure the first place. All cannot succeed and unfortunately for the honest student many of the pieces published for the banjo are by writers who are totally unfit for the business, and who have not the slightest idea of what they are doing. It is only a question of time, and a short time at that, when these would-be writers must take a back seat. Meteor like, they come with a flash, and are soon gone. I notice that music publishers are becoming more particular as to the kind of music they publish for the banjo. It has always been the practice among music publishers to have a critic examine all music that was offered for publication, and with first class houses it was no easy matter to have a piece of music published without its being first critically examined and passed upon by the regular critic belonging to the house. Not so with banjo music, however; critics were scarce and in many instances all a man had to do was to call at a music publisher's and offer a piece of music for publication. It was generally put in press as soon as possible. In this way many publications were placed on the market that did not deserve to be classed in the list of musical compositions. This has changed very much in the last two or three years—all first-class houses now have their critics of banjo music, upon whom rests the responsibility of keeping

the list clear of trash. Notwithstanding these precautionary measures, some houses have lists of banjo music that are inferior to that which a conscientious teacher would care to place in the hands of a pupil. A little time and study will put the teacher and pupil as well in a position from which he can judge as to where he can procure the most suitable and best music. In looking over the various catalogues of music one must be guided entirely by the titles of pieces, if the author is unknown. This is a poor way at best. The poorest pieces may have the highest sounding titles, while on the other hand, the very piece you may be looking for has the simplest kind of a title. Of course every buyer must run some risks. A good plan I find to be to purchase music of different authors. Two or three pieces of each will suffice. While the music may not be what you want, you will be fully repaid for the outlay in becoming acquainted with the style of the different writers. Not long since I received a piece of music that had been written by a banjo player, whose name was entirely new to me. I played the piece over several times, and was considerably worried over the fact that here was a writer of banjo music whose name I had never even heard mentioned, while I had taken pride in the thought that I was keeping thoroughly up to the times and everything going on in the banjo world. The piece I speak of was as well put together a musical composition as I had seen for some time, and I predict for the writer an abundance of success in the near future. But this only shows how rapidly the banjo is advancing and how hard it is for us to keep up with it. Only a few years ago, I could name every banjo player in the United States, who had any reputation at all, and I could tell how far it was from where I lived to the home of the nearest player. Now it keeps me busy to remember those who live within twenty-five miles of me. I sincerely hope that we may all live to see the banjo advanced in the future as much as it has in the last twenty years. "The world do move," not alone the world referred to by the Rev. Jasper, but the banjo world in particular, with everything connected with it. Being now out of politics, I will have the time to do so and will try to make my next letter more interesting.

## THOMAS E. GLYNN,

The Expert and Celebrated Banjoist, writing under date of Feb. 15th, last, says of the Stewart Thoroughbred Banjo.

"It cannot be equalled for its carrying power, quality of its rich and loud tone, and its fine workmanship. I use it exclusively."

## MUSIC CATALOGUE.

Do not suppose that we do not publish BANJO MUSIC, merely because you do not see what you want in this issue. For 16 years STEWART has continued to publish music for the Banjo, Banjo and Piano, Banjo Clubs, Etc. Send stamp for latest catalogue.

## BANJO VOTING CONTEST.

The New York DRAMATIC NEWS proposes to award an S. S. Stewart \$125.00 Presentation Banjo to "The Most Popular Banjo Player on the Stage."

The competition to decide the question will last for three months. For full particulars the reader should consult the weekly editions of the New York DRAMATIC NEWS.

## STRINGS.

Use Stewart's Strings. Send \$1.00 and get 15 Banjo Strings; sent to your address by return mail, together with a nice Leather Pocket Pouch, or String Holder.

Single Strings for Banjo, 10 cents.

One Set, 50 cents.

15 Strings, assorted (3 sets), \$1.00.

Special attention is called to our stock of Banjo Bass, or fourth strings, consisting of silver-plated and copper wire covered, spun upon the best quality white silk. Price, 10 cents per string; \$1.00 per package of one dozen.

We have also a full line of silk covered Guitar Bass Strings, E, A and D, at 10 cents each. These strings. The rough "Roman" E strings, for Guitar (or Treble E), are also carried in stock. Try them for Guitar or Violin. Price, 15 cents, or \$1.50 per dozen. The ordinary smooth Guitar E, 10 cents each, or \$1.00 per dozen.

Send to S. S. Stewart for your Strings, No. 223 Church Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

## THE CENTURY WHEELMEN BANJO CLUB CONCERT.

This popular Philadelphia musical organization announces an attractive concert, to take place on Tuesday evening, April 23, in the new hall of the MERCANTILE CLUB, Broad Street, above Master Street, on which occasion the Banjo Club will appear in new selections, Mr. Paul Eno, in artistic banjo solos, together with other artists, among whom may be named Miss Grace Phelps, soprano; Miss Fannie Purves Barnard, alto soloist and recitationist; Mr. George Russell Strauss, baritone; Robert G. White, monologuist.

The new Mercantile Club Hall will be opened to the public for the first time upon this occasion, and is conceded to be the handsomest hall in the city.

Tickets for the entertainment may be obtained in advance of any of the members, at the Century Wheelmen Club House, 1606 N. Broad Street. Prices, 50 and 75 cents. Mr. W. S. Allen, manager.

## THE COURIER

(Descriptive Fantasia)

FOR BANJO AND PIANO.

By THOMAS J. ARMSTRONG

This will, no doubt, become as popular as *The Voyager*, by the same composer. It is free from difficult position fingering, and is very "catchy" and tuneful. Price, 75 cents.



Thomas J. Armstrong, the well-known teacher and composer, has opened a studio in the Haseltine Building, 1416 Chestnut Street, this city. The family residence at 418 North 6th Street, having been vacated, and the Armstrong family removing to a point distant from the business centre of the city, made this change in the studio necessary. Mr. Armstrong has now a very cheerful and pleasant music room, and is centrally located. An elevator takes pupils speedily to each office in the spacious building.

F. W. Bailey, Waltham, Mass., writes:—

I received the banjojouissance in good condition and was very much pleased at your prompt reply. As to the instrument, I expected something fine—knowing your reputation; but it is so much better than I ever anticipated that I do not know how to express myself. For sweetness and volume of tone, I do not think it can be equalled.

The Yale College Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Club gave a concert in Philadelphia, at the Academy of Music, on the evening of February 1st.

F. M. Plaque, banjo soloist, and teacher at the University Conservatory of Music, Lincoln, Nebraska, is making many friends out there. His banjo playing and whistling solos are a special feature at all first-class concerts. Mr. Plaque is composer of the solo, known as the "University Cadets March," named in honor of the Cadets of the University of Nebraska; published in sheet music form at 25 cents.

R. J. Hamilton, the well-known banjo teacher and composer, of Chicago, is doing a good business, and reports interest in the banjo greater than ever before. Mr. Hamilton's studio is situated at 1215 Jackson Boulevard.

C. C. Rowden, of Chicago, is certainly an enterprising and energetic hustler. With organizing banjo clubs, giving lessons, and performing, he surely is kept busy.

Concerning the Yale Club concert, of February 1st, a correspondent writes:—

Judging by the enthusiastic audience, the Yale Glee and Banjo Concert at the Academy of Music can be counted a success.

The Glee Club sang several college songs, and Messrs. Green, Latham, Parker and Lackland sang solos to the Glee accompaniment. Mr. Green, after exhausting his encores, favored us with some recitations, proving himself a better elocutionist than tenor. The banjo selections were all very well rendered, but one had cause to regret the absence of the programme of the names of our favorite banjo players. Due credit must also be given to the Mandolin Club, which organization though lacking the precision of the Banjo Club, deserved the warm applause received.

We have received a copy of Walter Jacobs' *Banjo Studies for Beginners*, Book No. 4. The author calls our attention to his mode of teaching the higher positions. A diagram of the neck is placed opposite the scale, showing which frets are used. Mr. Jacobs claims to be the first to publish the scale in this manner. Copies may be had by addressing the author, as per teachers' cards.

We have received a fine cabinet photograph of W. W. Watkins, banjo teacher, of Scranton, Pa.

An amateur banjo teacher writes:—

"Won't you kindly send me your trade discount price list on your banjos? I think quite likely I could sell some to my pupils, from time to time. The temptation is to sell these makes that give the largest profits, but I should prefer to sell your banjos exclusively. The *Special Thoroughbred* is great, and as near perfection as anything could well be."

The reason we refer to the writer above as an "amateur teacher," is because he is one who works at other business, but fills in spare time by teaching the banjo. We do not wish to give names in such instances, but use this to illustrate a certain type. There are too many who are unable to resist the "temptation" to buy cheap banjos and attempt to dispose of them at dear prices. In other words there are many who have been in the habit of selling cheaply and poorly made musical instruments for as high prices as could possibly be obtained for them. Not being satisfied with a fair commission on sales, they must cut the quality and raise the price.

Now, the Stewart Banjos have never been cut or reduced in quality; but, on the contrary, the aim has been to make a better instrument every year, and such being the case the prices have been cut or reduced—because the cost of manufacture has increased rather than diminished.

Banjo students and players are becoming better educated, and the cheaply thrown together "tubs" has "lost its grip."

Geo. F. Gollenbeck, and his Omaha Banjo Club, are meeting with continued success. Their recent appearance at a concert in Omaha, Nebraska, was the occasion of much applause—in fact, triple encores were the order of the evening every time the club appeared. The Stewart Banjos are used by the Omaha Club exclusively.

James H. Jennings, the well known teacher, composer, performer and publisher, of Providence, R. I., deserves much praise for the manner in which he has worked up the banjo interests in his city.

We have "Queen of the Sea Waltzes" and "Love and Beauty Waltzes" for banjo and piano, price 75 cents each. We also have the same popular waltzes for banjo clubs, price \$1.50 for each arrangement complete. The piano parts are not to be used with the banjo club arrangement, and have no connection with such arrangement. Please bear this in mind when ordering music of this character, either for club, or for banjo and piano.

The solo parts of such arrangements are used in the club for *banjojouissance*, and bear in mind that the banjojouissance is tuned a fourth (four notes) higher than the first and second banjos used in the club. Therefore, when the solo part is rendered on the regulation banjo, tuned to the C pitch, the piano part harmonizes, and it is intended to be used in this way. But when the same solo part (or leading part) is played upon the banjojouissance, the piano part will not harmonize with it, and it is not intended that it should. Bear this in mind and avoid unnecessary correspondence. The club parts all harmonize beautifully, when rendered upon the instruments they are intended for. These are, banjojouissance (solo or leading part) first and second ordinary banjos, guitar, piccolo banjo, mandolin and bass banjo. Seven parts, in all, complete the banjo club arrangement.

Of course, more than one banjojouissance can be used to play the same part if desired,—sometimes three or four being used. The guitar and mandolin parts may be doubled, if desired,—or these parts may be left out, providing the club has a bass banjo; but if this latter instrument is not used, the guitar part can not be so well left out. The piccolo banjo part is also an important and attractive part. It is always a great mistake for a banjo club to attempt to do without a piccolo banjo, and to fill its place with a mandolin, for this instrument does not fill the place. A piccolo banjo once heard in a banjo club is always missed if not heard in its accustomed place. "There is a place for everything." Let all things be done in order, and have everything in its place. Then the banjo club will be in a position to succeed, not otherwise.

Mrs. Ethel G. Dahl, of Seattle, Washington, the well-known teacher of the banjo, and musician of that place, has organized a banjo club. Mrs. Dahl has several very promising lady pupils, and from among them she will select five, who possess marked musical talent, to accompany her on a concert tour of California and Oregon.

G. H. Rinkine, of Denver, Colo., writing under date of February 11th, says:—

"Enclosed herewith is a clipping from the *Rocky Mountain News*, of this date. I think the critic has made a very broad assertion when he says that the higher tones are imperfect on a banjo. It may be so with some. I have had an S. S. Stewart *Universal Favorite* for eighteen months, and the higher tones are perfect with the lower ones, and I do not wish for a better instrument; for it is clear, distinct and musical in tone, in every respect!"

Commenting, we might remark again that critics have much to learn, particularly as to the banjo, an instrument which has a great future before it, although it has been abused and misunderstood in the past. However, no abuse the banjo has ever received, is worse than that received by the violin years ago. The tones of a poorly constructed violin, or one with bad strings, or that is poorly played, are about as imperfect, to say the least, as those of a poor banjo.

The following is the clipping from the *News*, referred to by our correspondent:—

A music teacher called attention recently to the relative merits of the guitar, mandolin and banjo and their degrees of popularity. "The banjo," said he, "is dropping out of sight as a musical instrument, although occasionally a player comes along who is capable of making genuine music on the banjo. The object of the violinist is to get the instrument in perfect and do not compare, in musical quality, with the lower tones on the same instrument. I know of only one banjo soloist in Denver who can bring out the capabilities of the instrument."

"As to the guitar," continued the speaker, "there is an instrument that will compare as well as long as the violin stands. It is musically thorough and in the hands of an expert needs no comparison. The way, have you noticed that performers on the guitar do not hold the instrument now as formerly? The latest and by far the best method is for the performer to sit erect and rest the guitar on his lap, the neck of the instrument extending to the left, above the left shoulder. This is a great advantage over the awkward position which has been taught in the past and is especially graceful for ladies. The new method also teaches that a performer should not touch his fingers with the violin, but that it is necessary to watch their fingers, and why should the guitar player burden himself with an unnecessary task? The performer who plays without the aid of his eyes gains much pleasure from the exercise. The principal objection to the guitar has been the awkward position in which it was held."

A performer can scarcely be a perfect master of three instruments, and if one is capable of demonstrating the merits of three instruments he must be "some thing fine." We should like to hear him. This critic, however, "puts his foot in it," instead of his head, for he first states—"The objection to the banjo is that the higher tones are imperfect," then goes on to state in contradiction, that the fault is in the player and not the instrument, for he clearly says: "I know of only one banjo soloist in Denver who can bring out the capabilities of the instrument." If the banjo did not possess the capabilities in itself, no one could play it so well as that out-of-the-way banjo. The fact is that no musician, or soloist, upon the violin, or any other high class instrument, ever received finer press notices than A. A. Farland has received in his concert tours with his Stewart Banjo. Those who are not familiar with this fact are invited to become acquainted with it,—the sooner they do so the better it will be for them, so that they may no longer speak ignorantly.

Then again, just think of a guitarist being told to "sit erect and rest the guitar on his lap." If he has a lap, where is it, and what does it consist of?

We have received a handsome cabinet photograph of Mr. Newton C. Linsley and his Stewart Banjo, from Spokane, Washington, for which we take this method of expressing our thanks.

George Stannard, Banjo Teacher and Performer, can be engaged for musicals, etc. His address is 24 W. Lafayette Street, Trenton, N. J.

The performances of A. A. Farland, on the banjo, at the Paterson, N. J., musicale, on the evening of February 14th, was a revelation to the audience. The programme numbers rendered, included *Polka No. 2*, by Chopin; *Wieniglein*, by Hauser; and *Gypsy Rondo*, by Hayden. Mr. Farland played without an accompanist; his first numbers occupying a full half hour. He was certainly in good musical company, having Miss Gertrude Christie, violinist; Miss May Lyle, flutist, and a number of other musical celebrities on the same programme.

Stephen Shepard, of Paterson, N. J., writing under date of February 17, says:—

"In regard to my card in Teachers' column, you can take it out, as it is of no use to me unless my music is mentioned therein. Whenever you decide to write outside ads, let me know, and I will give you an order for space."

Frank L. Wilson, Banjoist and Teacher, is now located in Leavenworth, Kansas, being connected with a R. R. Co. in that place. He will take a few pupils during his spare time. We might say for Mr. Wilson, that we have always found him reliable. His address is P. O. Box 295.

Malcolm Shackelford, of Richmond, Va., writing under date of February 18th, says:

"I will send you by this mail a copy of yesterday's *Dispatch*, and also one of the Sunday before, in which there are several articles written on the banjo, which may prove of interest to the readers of your *Journal*. I also send you a clipping from the *Staunton (Va.) Post*, where I went to attend the Y. M. C. A. State Convention. I was in great demand—I mean my *Special Thoroughbred*—while there. I met several of your subscribers to the *Journal* who did not even know me. I met one of them each of them said they would never have thought it was possible to get as much music out of the banjo, as that brought out of mine."

The articles on the banjo, contained in the papers referred to above, relate to the early history of the instrument,—of which, by the way, very little is known, and that which passes current as such, is not authentic. Players of the modern school care very little where, when, or how the banjo came into existence,—for the banjo of to-day is so entirely different from the banjo of forty years ago that one bears small resemblance to the other, except in name. Whether that name was derived from *Banador*, "*Band Joe*," or *Banandana*, is of small consequence, and speculations or theories thereon of small value.

E. M. Hall, the well-known Banjoist and Comedian, was with Field's Minstrels during all the recent cold weather, travelling through the South. He says that the cold was something awful, as the houses in the South are not fitted for unusual cold weather. Who, who suffered from frozen and bursted water pipes in the North, can sympathize with Brother Hall in his travels.

Banjo students will find something of interest in this number, in the article, together with engravings, giving an account of the recent surgical operation performed on Mr. Gregory's hand. We also announce with pleasure the opening of Mr. Gregory's work upon *PRACTICAL FINGERING FOR THE BANJO*. Whilst making no pretense that this *Journal* is published as a high class work, or even that its publication was undertaken otherwise than as an advertising medium, yet it would afford us much pleasure, at the present time, to find any other publication in which so much is given for the money as the subscribers to this *Journal* receive. This seems to be the prevailing opinion among our subscribers. Serial publications, such as have appeared in *Stewart's Journal*, among which may be mentioned, "*Banjo Orchestra Music*," a work on Banjo Clubs, by T. J. Armstrong, and "*Divided Accompaniment*," another work by the same author, are not to be had elsewhere, and probably would never have met the

public eye, had it not been for *Stewart's Journal*. Mr. Gregory's work treating upon *Practical Fingering* is another analytical treatise which cannot but do much to assist in elevating the banjo, and making better players. Nothing much would ever have been accomplished had Stewart sat down and waited for some one else to prepare the way. And while it does not pay now to give such elaborate works at a mere nominal price, yet "in the long run" it must compensate through the increased number of good performers, and in the recognition of the banjo, where it has heretofore been looked upon as a mere toy, or, at least, as far from being a respectable musical instrument. There surely can be small satisfaction in putting upon the market a lot of musical compositions which are played by few, and then, but in a slipshod or slovenly manner. What we are doing is to educate the performer and teacher so that he may get a practical knowledge of the instrument he is supposed to perform upon. *Stewart's Journal* is, and has been, for some years, doing this work, and we should be pleased indeed to find another that is able to present the same evidence.

It is doubtful if there is another teacher and performer in this city, or elsewhere, capable of doing the amount of work that is accomplished by Mr. Paul Enos. He is surely a compound of brains, muscle and energy. When one comes to consider the work involved in teaching two or three different instruments, concert playing, drilling musical clubs, writing and arranging the music, and playing banjo, first banjo, mandolin, or bass banjo, parts,—being ready to play any part at almost a moment's notice, with any of the different clubs he has under his charge, it is truly astonishing.

Among the prominent Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin Clubs under Mr. Enos's direction, may be mentioned:—The *Hamilton Club*, one of the best in the country; the *Drexel Institute Club* (which was recently reorganized and placed under Mr. Enos's direction); the *Manheim Club*, the *Century Wheel* on Club, and the *Penna. University Club*.

Of these organizations, the *Drexel Institute* boys gave their first annual concert, February 20,—the *Manheim Club*, February 6, both being under the management of Mr. Enos.

Frank S. Morrow, of Harrisburg Pa., has removed from the Y. M. C. A. Building, to his new Studio, at 113 South Street. Speaking of the new Overture, "*Cupid's Realm*," for Banjo Club, he says:—"It is a fine club piece, and certainly sounds great with a large club."

C. C. Rowden, the Chicago teacher and player, has opened a new Studio at 25th and Cottage Grove. The "*Elks Quartette*," consisting of banjos, guitars, and mandolins, comprises the following performers: C. C. Rowden, G. H. Bowden, C. D. Smith and J. P. Wiekling; all prominent teachers.

Geo. W. Gregory, with his banjo and piano trio, met with great success at the Smoking Concert of the Crescent Athletic Club, in Brooklyn, N. Y., on the evening of Feb. 26.—The selections rendered were *Racety March*, by Liszt; *Narcissus*, by Nevin; *Hungarian Dance*, by Corelli; *Violetta Waltz*, by Waldteufel; *Talisco March*, by Chadwick; *Dance California*, by Gregory; *Popular Medley*, by Hill, and *Gaiety Girl Potpourri*. Mr. E. Wilbur Hill has succeeded to Mr. Farmer's position in the trio. Mr. Charles Van Bazar retains his post of honor at the piano.

Mrs. Margaret Parker, The Crescent, Wem, Shropshire, England, writes:

"My '*Lady Stewart*' Banjo has arrived safely and I am most delighted with it. Many thanks. I shall do all I can to recommend your banjos; their timbre and tone are unequalled."

W. M. Sailors, Franklin, Ind., writes:

"Please find enclosed, subscription to the *Journal*. Although not a banjo player, I appreciate your efforts in behalf of guitar players. My best guitar pieces I get out of the *Journal*, and I would not be without it for several times its cost."

L. D. Burford, of Portland, Oregon, sends the following letters from his pupils:

"The *Special Thoroughbred Banjo* was received in first-class condition, and to say that I am more than pleased with it, does not express it. It is the only banjo that one can play. Farland's exercises on it. A novice with Prof. L. D. Burford for instructor, to give *Special Thoroughbred Banjo* and Farland's system, who does not become an artistic player, has only himself to blame."

W. B. FREEMAN.

Portland, Or. Feb. 24, 1895.

MR. S. S. STEWART:

Dear Sir—I have just received one of your *Special Thoroughbred Banjos*, and I am highly pleased with the instrument in every particular. The finish is perfect and beautiful in the extreme; the tone is loud and brilliant; the music sweet and mellow. It far outstrikes all other instruments that I have ever heard and I take great pleasure and pride in displaying it on all occasions, and am pleased to personally recommend your banjos when opportunity offers. Thanking you for your promptness in forwarding, and also for the pleasure I derive from it,

I am sincerely yours,

IRVING CHAFFELL.

George Carr, the Scranton teacher, is delighted with his new *Stewart's "Special Thoroughbred" Banjo*, and writes in high terms of praise concerning it. He says the instrument is "perfection."

Henry Howison, of the Hamilton Banjo Club, Phila., was out in musical society one evening, not long ago, when some one suggested that his *Stewart Banjo* be sent for. Upon a messenger being dispatched for the instrument, some of the company thought it time to withdraw—(they had never heard a banjo, and doubtless imagined they were about to witness a Tambourine Dance.)

Shortly the messenger returned with the banjo and a lot of music. Then the banjo was played, with piano accompaniment,—time passed,—no one went home until the small hours of the early morning. They had heard the banjo; they were delighted and went home happy.

E. M. Planque, of the University of Nebraska, reports the Banjo Club organized at that institution as composed of the following members, all of whom are deeply interested in their work:—A. R. Chapman, R. Thorp, R. H. Manley, J. A. Bailey, W. B. Clark, L. Packard, Ed. Franklin, F. J. Beach and Albert Ricketts.

Mr. Planque is leader. He writes in high terms of his "*Special Thoroughbred*" Banjo, upon which all his classical selections are rendered, and the banjo-lancjeunes used in the club also come in for a large share. Mr. Planque is destined to win a great name as a performer and teacher.

Albert Baur, our well-known contributor, was released from the clutches of Justice in the Prison, in the Borough of Brookville, Penna., at the late February election. Mr. Baur is a popular man in Brookville.

S. C. Baldwin, Banjo and Guitar Teacher, of Oakland, Cal., writes:

"Will you please send me the price of J. H. Lee's Banjo book. I had the pleasure of hearing some of the selections out of one of them the other evening, and liked them very much. Also send me the price you will make me a *Thoroughbred Banjo* for. I played on the program with Mr. A. A. Farland, when he was here, and I would like to get one just like his; only I like to use a twelve inch rim, and thought I would write and make sure. The Banjeurine I received from you through Kohler & Pass, as the boys say, *out of sight*. Well, I am obliged to keep it out of sight, or I am afraid they would steal it from me. I never heard a banjo sound as fine in my life, as the one Mr. Farland played on. I admit that there was a great deal in the man that was playing it, still the S. S. Stewart Banjo must get

the credit for the beautiful tone he brought from it, as I would like to see the man bring the tone out of a banjo when there is none to be brought out."

Daniel Acker, the Wilkes-Barre Teacher of Banjo and Guitar, was in the city recently, and made a pleasant call, also Fred C. Meyer, of Wheeling, West Va.

George Carr, the Scranton, Pa., teacher and performer, is still pushing onward, and doing much for the elevation of the banjo in his neighborhood.

William Morrow, Dundee, Ill., writes:—

"My Stewart Banjo is still proving itself all that Mr. Ross said it would be (while at the World's Fair), and he is not backward in statement, as you may know."

O. R. Babbitt, formerly of the "far west," and now of Asylum Station, Mass., and whose name has been on our sub. list for over ten years, in a recent letter, says:—"Your *Journal*, for general information, with *quality* and *quantity* of music, far exceeds any similar publication in this or any other country. Like your Banjos, it cannot be beaten."

M. Rudy Heller, of the Carleton Banjo Club, has his club booked for the Bijou Theatre, Philada., in April, and is said to be booking time in European cities, to start about the middle of June. The club proposes to appear in London and Bournemouth, Eng.; Paris, France; Leipzig, Berlin, and Elberfeld, Germany. The latter place being the birthplace of Mr. Fleischauer, one of the Carleton's prominent members.

The Hanover Banjo Club, recently organized in the northern section of Philadelphia, by William Robson, and which has been under the instruction of Mr. Heller for some time past, gave a concert at Mercantile Hall, January 30th last, which proved a financial and artistic success.

W. A. Huntley, the veteran Performer, Vocalist, Teacher and Publisher, of Providence, R. I., has been in poor health for some months, which has interrupted his work at the studio; but he is now on the road to recovery, he writes,—which our readers doubtless will be glad to hear.

The "Modern Banjo Club," of Chicago, gave its "Grand Annual Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin concert and Jubilee," at Central Music Hall, Chicago, February 13th, last.

The Doré Bros., with W. B. Farmer and C. L. Van Baar, Pianist, performed at Madison Square Garden Concert Hall, Tuesday evening, February 19, meeting with great success.

Laura O. Marks, Banjo Soloist and Teacher, has her studio at 224 North Eighth Street, and residence, 452 Marshall Street. Those who desire to receive instruction may apply to either address.

THE ERD HARP.—Frank H. Erd, well-known some years ago as a banjost, is the manufacturer to-day of the Erd harp, the Erd piano, and the Ab Miramba, the latter being a novel musical instrument. The Erd harps are made with single action or double action, as desired. They are finished in Hungarian ash, figured walnut, mahogany and bird's eye maple. The columns are solid woods and hand carved; no player of Paris ornaments or imitation carving being used in these instruments. For particulars, address the manufacturer at Saginaw, Michigan.

The Banjo Studio of T. J. Armstrong, in the Art Gallery Building, at 1416 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, is a fine institution.

Erasmus Osgood, writing from Concord, N. H., under date of February 7th, says:—

Possibly you would like to know how all the Banjos and Banjeunettes are being used by the have sold to the students of St. Paul's School. To begin with the club, the personnel is as follows:—

Banjeunettes: Geo. T. Kendal (leader), E. Campbell, M. B. Holmes, and G. Cooke.

First Banjos: C. E. Bascorn, F. H. Broke.

Second Banjos: F. C. Bingham, F. A. Nelson.

Guitars: L. M. Thomas, G. Western.

Mandolins: C. F. Banks, S. Stoddard.

Cello: B. Whiteck.

Some of the above names are familiar to you as subscribers to the *Journal*. As you know, I have had considerable experience in drilling clubs, and I certainly pronounce the above organization a genuine "up to date" club.

To hear them play one of Armstrong's inspiring Marches would do your heart good. I am soon to drill them on *Capit's Reel Overture*, and I have no doubt they will render it in fine shape.

The boys have also an excellent Mandolin and Guitar club, with Mr. C. F. Banks, Leader. The school, likewise, can boast of a really fine string band and Glee Club; so if Jack Frost sends the mercury down to "20 below" (as he frequently does up here) the boys just laugh at the ice king, tune up their instruments, and their spirits soon float in the sunniest possible atmosphere.

I have been greatly assisted in my work by Mr. Kendal, of the Banjo Club, and Mr. Banks, of the Mandolin Club. Both these gentlemen are accomplished musicians and skillful performers, and with zeal and judgment for the benefit of their respective clubs.

Sam Durham, the Germantown Banjo Teacher, says of his Stewart Banjo:—"I have used the *Special Thoroughbred* constantly, and have tested it thoroughly, and find it the easiest playing and sweetest toned Banjo I have ever used. I hope to be the possessor of another one in a very short time."

Jos. H. Jennings, of Providence, R. I., writes:

"My friend, Mr. Weedon, of East Greenwich, is much pleased with the 12 inch *Special Thoroughbred*, and wishes to thank you for the same, and wish *Special* to join Banjo is a corker, and I would like to see a better banjo for the money."

This is the best season I have had since my advent in the banjo business; plenty of pupils and lots of concert work.

John Davis, the well-known teacher, of Springfield, Mass., writing under date of March 12th, says that there is as much interest in banjo playing in his locality as ever before, and that the banjo is being studied more seriously than at any time in the past.

The Messrs. Sedor, banjo and piano artists, appeared at a concert in West Philadelphia, on the evening of March 12th, at V. M. C. A. Hall. These ladies are very popular as musical artists in this city, where they were once residents. They have their home, at the present time, at Bayonne, N. J.

A. A. Faaland has arranged for a concert in Westerly, R. I., for April 18th.

Newton's School of Harmony for the Guitar, just published by S. S. Stewart, containing 55 full size music pages, printed on good paper, and bound in brown covers is a mine of wealth to the purchaser. Price, only ONE DOLLAR. Copies mailed to any address, on receipt of \$1.00. No such work has ever been published elsewhere for this price. It can not be duplicated. Every guitar student should possess a copy. It is surely a guide to harmony, and explains every chord possible to produce on the guitar.

Gregory's "Practical Fingering," for the banjo, is begun in this number. The introductory portion contained herein, will be followed by a series of examples and exercises, and we are confident that the

book, when completed, will prove one of the most important and valuable additions to the banjo literature of the day that has yet made its appearance. Within the next few years our readers will doubtless witness an astonishing advancement in the art of banjo playing, and the general adoption of the instrument in high class musical circles.

Frank S. Morrow, of Harrisburg, Pa., writes:—"I received the last banjo, *Special Thoroughbred*, on Wednesday last, and must say, that it is the finest banjo I have ever had. The last one you made to my order, though it was about as fine as could be made; but the New Special with the deeper rim is far superior in tone,—being much sweeter. The man that calls the banjo to-day a *Plunk*, must be either crazy or deaf. This banjo is making a big hit."

Miss Edith Winthrop gives instruction on the banjo, and can also be engaged for concerts. Address, 23 James Street Mansions, Buckingham Gate, London, England. This lady has organized a Banjo Quartette, which it is proposed to call, "The Stewart Banjo Club," the instruments being of Stewart's manufacture.

For a fine concert or parlor selection for banjo and piano, get the *Celtic Fantasia*, by Thos. J. Armstrong, price 75 cents.

C. H. French, St. Helena, Cal., writes:

"The *Special Thoroughbred Banjo* came duly to hand and in perfect condition; it is entirely satisfactory throughout. The tone is wonderful for the size of the instrument, and I shall take great pleasure in recommending your banjos."

Tom Midwood, of Hobart, Tasmania, sends us an excellent pen drawing of a scene with the banjo in Tasmania, which we would have been glad to reproduce for the benefit of our readers, had it come to hand a little earlier.

(The following from the *News*, Hobart, Tasmania, is self explanatory.)

Mr. Chas. McFarlane, who the banjo has organized a club having for its special object the study and advancement of banjo music with a view to public performances in aid of charities, etc. The members will use exclusively the S. S. Stewart Banjos and Banjeunettes. The initial concert will shortly take place, when the soloists will be as follows:—banjeunettes, Messrs. C. McFarlane, H. R. Nichols; first banjos, Messrs. D. Griffiths and J. Armstrong; second banjos, Messrs. C. Gregory, A. Filmer; third banjos, Mr. H. Minton; bass banjo, Mr. A. Rose. A code of rules and regulations has been adopted, and Mr. H. R. Nichols appointed honorary secretary, to whom all communications must be addressed.

F. L. Stuber, the artist photographer, of South Bethlehem, Pa., writes that his son, Fred, the boy banjoist, is delighted with the banjo banjeunette, recently purchased, and is making great progress in his musical studies.

Alfred Wright, of Narberth, Pa., is an enthusiastic student of the banjo. He practices daily, and is making great progress.

J. Willard Hill, who is now associated with Geo. W. Gregory, in the Banjo School, at 55 West 42nd Street, New York, writes that one of his Stewart *Thoroughbred Banjos*, recently purchased, and which he uses exclusively. Will C. Dore, the teacher, of 666 Fifth Avenue, is also thoroughly satisfied that the Stewart *Thoroughbred* is the best banjo made.

W. J. Connolly has removed to his new studio, 639 Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y., and writes that he is very busy. He says—"I am drilling the High School Club, of 12 members, also a Ladies Club, in addition to my own club, and this, together with my pupils, keeps me very busy. Our club intends to give a concert here in May, to open with two banjos and guitar, and some of the best talent in New York City. We have plenty of engagements ahead, in and out of the city."



# SAN JOSE SCHOTTISCHE.

FOR THE BANJO.

By THOS. J. ARMSTRONG.

*Tempo di Schottische.*

Banjo.

The musical score is written for a single-stemmed banjo in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The tempo is marked 'Tempo di Schottische.' and the dynamics are 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The first staff contains measures 1 through 8. The second staff contains measures 9 through 16, ending with a double bar line and the word 'Fine.' The third staff contains measures 17 through 24, with a '9 Pos.' (9 positions) marking above measure 22. The fourth staff contains measures 25 through 32, ending with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C. al Fine.' The fifth staff contains measures 33 through 40, with a 'mf' dynamic marking at the beginning and a 'f' (forte) marking at the end. The sixth staff contains measures 41 through 48, ending with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C. al Fine.' The score includes various musical notations such as chords, triplets, and fingerings (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 0).

# BROWNIES DANCE.

FOR BANJO AND GUITAR.

By E. H. FREY.

NOTE. Tune A on Banjo, to C on Guitar.

Banjo

Guitar



1

2

*Fine.*

*p* *f*

3 Bar

1 2

*D.C. al Fine.*

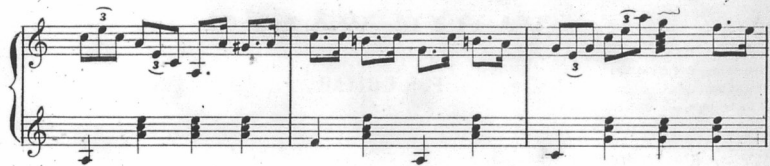
# SLEIGH RIDE SCHOTTISCHE.

MANDOLIN AND GUITAR.

By E. H. FREY.

Mandolin. *p*

Guitar.



# VARIE WALTZ.

FOR GUITAR.

. 1st. finger of right hand.  
+ Thumb .. ..  
: 2nd. finger .. ..

Tune 6th. String to 6

By E.H. FREY.

Guitar.

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a 'Tune 6th. String to 6' instruction and a small musical notation. The music features various chords and melodic lines, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-3 above notes. Dynamics like 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte) are used. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.



*dolce.*

*segue.*

# "HARP CLOG"

FOR ONE OR TWO BANJOS.

*Moderato.*

1st Banjo. *mf* 3 Bar 5\* Bar 6\*

2nd Banjo. 3 Bar 5\* Bar

5\* 5\* Bar

*f*

2 Bar . . . . . 7\* Bar 5\* Bar . . . . .



Miss Lillian M. Florio, of Salem, Va., is a Guitar Teacher of experience; also teacher of vocal culture, piano and harmony. She also gives much attention to the violin, banjo and mandolin.

Henry C. Blackmar, of New Orleans, leads the Tink-a-lick Orchestra Club and arranges music for all instruments, his specialty being guitar and mandolin.

Edw. J. Henderson, the Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Artist, of New Orleans, has a thriving business.

George Bauer, Guitars and Mandolins, 1016 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

George Stannard, of Trenton, N. J., has added the mandolin to the instruments upon which he gives instruction.

Newton's Practical School of Harmony for the Guitar has been issued by the publisher of the JOURNAL. A fine work, bound in boards, price \$1.00. Copies mailed upon receipt of price.

Those who desire a good and not difficult March for the guitar, should get a copy of the "St. Louis" March, by D. I. Lynch, price 25 cents.

Mandolin and guitar players should secure a copy of Gounod's *Ave Maria*, for two mandolins and guitar, arranged by E. H. Frey, price 50 cents. It is fine.

The Ideal Mandolin Orchestra, of Baltimore, Md., gave its second annual concert at Lehman's Hall, on February 6th. This company numbers twenty performers, including violins, flute, cellos, guitars and mandolins. Those interested should address the corresponding secretary, Mr. N. T. Lang, Fulton and Frederick Avenues, Baltimore, Md.

Arling Shaffer, the renowned Guitarist, Mandolinist, Harpist and Banjoist, has a very large class of pupils in Chicago. He has lately brought out a new Mandolin Instruction Book, through Lyon & Healy.

A mandolin and guitar contest and contest between mandolin and guitar clubs, was given at Musical Fund Hall, Philadelphia, on Saturday evening, February 23d, under the management of F. H. Griffith & Co., the house being thoroughly well filled. Preceding the "contest," a brief concert was given, opening with an orchestra of one hundred mandolins and guitars, and three bass banjos, under the direction of Paul Eno. The two selections rendered by the orchestra were "March Ensemble," a composition of Brother Eno's, and "One Heart Divine," composed by Koenig, and arranged by Richard Weaver. The rendition was effective, and, considering the limited number of rehearsals, was fully up to the standard.

The bright particular star of the concert was Valentine Abt, the talented young mandolin soloist, from Pittsburgh, Pa., who, as some of our readers are aware, was formerly a teacher in the Utica Conservatory of Music, but who now occupies a Studio in the Verner Building, Pittsburgh,—and whose performances upon the mandolin we have yet to hear equalled. Mr. Abt's selections were classical, and consisted of the *Andante* from Concerto, op. 64, of Mendelssohn and *Impromptu*, by Paganini, together

with other numbers equally as difficult; all of which were rendered in a style of finish, and with such perfect ease, that the applause was spontaneous and terrific. Mr. Abt stands erect while playing the mandolin, the same as a violinist or flutist would, and yet manages to have a more complete mastery of the instrument than those who "sit themselves down to play." He is surely a *Mandolin Virtuoso*, and if he keeps on as he has begun, the world must hear from him.

Mr. Abt is a pleasant and genial young gentleman, and we hope that he will meet in the future with the success he so richly deserves.

Mr. Johnson Bane, the eminent Guitarist, did not reach the city in time to connect for the first part of Program, but appeared later in the evening, showing the audience what wonderful harmonies could be brought from the guitar. He is surely a master of that instrument, and it is to be regretted that he could not have had a better opportunity afforded him to render some of his celebrated selections. However, we hope soon to have an opportunity to hear from him again.

The contest for prizes took place between six clubs, as follows: Clover Mandolin and Guitar Club, R. L. Weaver, leader; Philadelphia College Mandolin and Guitar Club, Frank Adams, leader; American Students, J. H. Minges, leader; Pennsylvania Mandolin and Guitar Club, A. Bellano, leader; Palomela Mandolin and Guitar Club, Edw. Fruch, leader; and La France Mandolin and Guitar Club, W. H. Gracey, leader. Each of the organizations rendered two selections; the first, upon which the verdict was to be rendered, consisting of "Valse Romantique," by Valentine Abt. This selection was well rendered by each of the six clubs, followed by a selection of their own choosing.

Although the audience was compelled to listen to the same piece six times over, yet it was not at all monotonous, being followed in each instance by another selection which was not repeated, thus being as interesting as it was novel, and, as they had the right to render the *Valse* with his own ideas as to expression, and as each of the clubs seemed to have a different conception of the composition, there was a spice and seasoning given to the sandwich which added considerably to the flavor. Two of the clubs used bass banjos, whilst four had none; others introduced flute, violin, etc. One club having its guitars strung with wire strings, caused the entire *Valse* to sound like another thing, after hearing the former club, with its more harmonious and softer string tones.

The judges were: Mr. Johnson Bane, Mr. Valentine Abt, and Dr. Clarke of the University of Penna.

There were six prizes consisting of mandolins and guitars valued at \$150.00 for the first, down to \$30.00 for the sixth and last.

The awards were as follows: First—The American Students, (This club was also awarded first prize in the mandolin and guitar club class, at the Stewart, Armstrong & Co., Academy of Music contest, on January 31st, 1894). Second—Pennsylvania Mandolin and Guitar Club. Third—Philadelphia College Mandolin and Guitar Club. Fourth—Palomela Mandolin and Guitar Club. Fifth—La France Mandolin and Guitar Club. Sixth—Clover Mandolin and Guitar Club.

As usual, in such cases, many among the audience were surprised at the announcement of awards; but as such decisions are always merely the result of the opinions of three musicians, it is not to be supposed that all in the audience will agree with them.

George F. Holloway, the Guitarist, of 135 West 63d Street, New York, is much pleased with the JOURNAL, he says. He accompanies Mr. Farmer, the Banjoist, whose playing is "a revelation to the audience in most every instance."

W. H. Teasdale, of Savannah, Ga., has his "Amphion Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Club" well organized. The club gave a concert recently.

Domings I. Lynch, Guitarist, Pianist, Teacher, Composer and Arranger, 4224 Chestnut Street West Philadelphia.

## FLEISCHAUER'S CONTEST.

We have received the announcement of "Fleischauer's Mandolin, Banjo and Guitar Contest," for Wednesday evening, April 24th, at a Session Hall, 15th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. There are several instruments offered as Prizes, to be competed for by a number of clubs, among which the following are announced as entries:

N. E. Manual Training School Banjo Club, Hanover Banjo Club, Clover Banjo Club, Royal Court Banjo Club, Upland Mandolin Club, Orpheus Mandolin Club, Philadelphia College Mandolin and Guitar Club, Germantown Academy Banjo Club, Roman Students, Columbia, La France, American Students, Quaker City Students, Castilian Troubadours, Clover Mandolin, Imperial and Enterpean Mandolin Clubs.

It will appear from this list that some 17 clubs have entered for the contest. If they all come to time, there is no doubt that the audience will get their money's worth, which is what they want, "these hard times."

In addition to the "contest" there is announced a Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra, of 100 performers, which will open the entertainment.

A special feature of the interesting contest, which may be noted for its originality, is the awarding of an additional or sub first prize, consisting of a Mandola, which is to be presented to the most popular club appearing in the contest.

Each holder of a reserved seat check is to be entitled to a vote on this important question, and the club receiving the highest number of votes takes the Mandola.

This, no doubt, will prove a very interesting and exciting affair, which lovers of sport and music cannot afford to miss.

Those wishing further particulars may address Prof. Fleischauer, at his Studio, 1301 Marshall Street. For tickets and reserved seats, apply at Fischer's Piano Warerooms, 1221 Chestnut Street.

Chas. Phair, Presque, Me., writes:

"Thinking perhaps you would like to hear how the *Special Thoroughbred* you sent me is turning out, I would say that for tone, finish, etc., it is ahead of any banjo I have seen yet.

I am now using one of your banjo-banjoes, and it improves every day."

Paul Eno, the Philadelphia teacher, writes concerning the 11 inch "S.S. Banjo" (the "It is certainly a beauty. The tone is ~~very~~ powerful; having given it a good test in my-eh, I find it comes to the front every time."

Mrs. B. A. S. N., the well-known teacher and music dealer, of Utica is doing well at her new location, No. 6 Lansing Street.

Prof. D. Mansfield, of 116 Stockton Street, S. Francisco, Cal., gave a concert in Kohler and Chase Hall, 26 O'Farrell Street, that city, on the evening of March 26th.

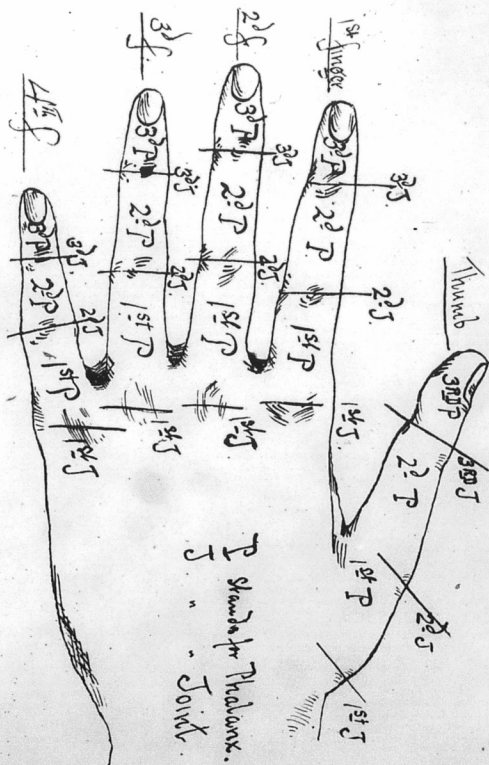
The Eastburn Academy Banjo Club, of Philada. announces a concert in this city, for April 22d.

FARLAND'S NATIONAL SCHOOL FOR THE BANJO, by A. A. Farland, price \$1.00. Copies mailed upon receipt of the price, address S. S. Stewart.

M. RUDY HELLER, of 141 N. 8th Street, announces a contest to take place at Musical Fund Hall, 8th and Locust Streets, Phila., on Saturday evening, May 4th. Mr. Heller states that A. A. FARLAND has been engaged to appear on this occasion. 100 players will appear in the Banjo Orchestra.

Owing to the *Journal* being just at the point of going to press, further particulars could not be given.

# Gregory's Practical Fingering for the Banjo



# PRACTICAL FINGERING FOR THE BANJO.

By GEORGE W. GREGORY.

## INTRODUCTION.

When we consider the banjo as a musical instrument in the position it occupies to day, and attained in so short a time as compared to the growth of other instruments, its extraordinary advancement up to the present time is more to be wondered at than are its short comings. The banjo, starting as it did in disrepute, because of its early associations, handicapped by an impractical style of fingering, surrounded by prejudices, and worst of all, championed in great part by unmusical and illiterate people, who took to it readily because of its apparent simplicity, is now recognized by the most skeptical musicians and acknowledged throughout the world as a thoroughly musical instrument.

Much credit is due to Mr. Stewart for having overcome its former mechanical and acoustical defects; adaptations of the works of the great masters can be found in any music store, and especially arranged books on harmony and orchestration are now making their appearance; but it is still in its infancy and bears promise of greater possibilities than have as yet been demonstrated. Every opportunity is offered to develop this unexplored field and establish the banjo as the equal of any other stringed instrument, but there is one obstacle which will bar the way to further progression so long as it is countenanced—and that is the system of fingering almost universally accepted to day. A mere superficial study of the theories advanced for the fingering of the older instruments, in which the same fundamental principals can be traced throughout, would convince any one of the truth of this.

Of what benefit are all the fine points of a carefully constructed instrument, if we have not the ability to make them manifest? Of what service the adaptations of the classics, if the manipulation of the more difficult passages is beyond us? And of what avail works on modulation, etc., if to write examples within the capacity of the player the chords themselves must be so turned and twisted that the intended progressions are entirely obliterated?

Now, when we consider that this is the actual situation at the present time, can the importance of sound theory in fingering be over-estimated? Surely it is the one thing which will extend the possibilities of the instrument and increase the facility of the performer!

Some of the more recent methods have advocated new and avowedly advanced theories for the bettering of right-hand fingering, but much of the same primitive method for the left hand still exists that was in use years ago, and should have passed into oblivion hand in hand with the earlier banjo music, (†) now obsolete, with which it may be associated. There is certainly much room for improvement and the only question that arises is—upon what lines can it be accomplished most successfully.

It was with this query in view that the methods of the older instruments were carefully studied and analyzed; not for the purpose of adopting without modification, the system employed on any other instrument, (a common error committed by some compilers; i.e. in left-hand fingering), but to eliminate such facts as appertained to construction of method alone, and on these lines build up a theory particu-

larly suited to the characteristics of the banjo itself. It proved a difficult subject to cope with, and one upon which the author spent years of study in bringing to what he considers a state of perfection, and while he feels convinced after much experience, both in teaching and playing, that his system is not only sound in theory but practical as well, he does not hold "I say" equivalent to *Q. E. D.*, but submits the fruits of his labor to the judgment and criticism of the banjo public and will abide by their decision.

**NOTE.**—The author does not approve of self-instruction, either with or without the aid of a "method," being convinced that the faulty habits so easily cultivated and hard to eradicate, oft-times acquired through this system of learning, will invariably prejudice the student against the ultimate proper use of the hands or fingers, which to him or her will seem unnecessarily difficult by comparison with that which has been adopted and facilitated through practice. Hence, in writing this work the aim has not been to produce a "self instructor," but rather to explicate in a concise and comprehensive manner a practical system of fingering and a substantial theory for scales and arpeggios reduced to formulas for the use of teachers or advanced pupils particularly, dealing with the elementary principles of music only where necessity demands the correction of certain prevalent errors.

The study of the older instruments aforementioned, brought forth one predominant fact; that the very basis of science in fingering rests upon two fundamental principles. First: The use of muscles in the most natural and effective manner, and Second: The equal division of the work to be accomplished, between the fingers employed. The latter we will term "Division of effort."

The subject of the correct usage of the muscles will be very briefly dealt with, but as a thorough discussion of this branch would fill a volume in itself and does not come within our scope, the author has reserved a fuller dissertation for another work, now under way: "Technical Studies and Foundation Exercises for the Banjo."

The other principle, the "Division of Effort," forms the mainspring of this work and will be treated at length.

## POSITION.

Correct position is as necessary to good technic, as scientific fingering is to rapid execution, and, as the former is essential to the latter, a word on this subject cannot be remiss.

Few professionals and fewer amateurs appreciate the importance of a studied position of the wrist, although a moment's consideration of the anatomy of the muscles used in playing, would be sufficient to convince any one that a cramped position of the wrist will necessarily constrain the action of the fingers.

We all know that in picking the strings with the fingers of the right hand, or when closing the fingers of the left hand on the frets, the flexor muscles, (those on the inside of the arm) are used, and that to open the hand or "recover," after picking a string, the extensor muscles, (those on the outside of the arm) are brought into play; and further, that the chords or sinews only of the muscles governing the action of the fingers are actually situated in the hands, and that passing the wrist and extending up the

arm they connect with the muscles proper, attached at the elbow; hence the importance of avoiding a position that will interfere with the action of these chords (such as the bending of the wrist in an unnatural manner), and the necessity of cultivating one in which the wrist will be as nearly straight as expedient. While arching the left wrist slightly outward adds to the strength of the touch by bringing greater pressure on the finger tips, good judgment must be exercised, and, as in all other things, extremes guarded against.

As an example illustrative of the effect the position of the wrist has upon the use of the fingers, bend the wrist at a right angle with the arm; thus:—



[Wrist bent at a right angle with the arm.]

work the fingers as in playing and the action will be stiff and tedious. Then straighten the wrist; thus:—



[Straight wrist.]

and repeat the same performance with the fingers, and their increased flexibility will be apparent. All things are relative, and this constraint is exercised to a greater or lesser degree as the wrist is more or less crooked.

Of equal importance with the position of the wrist is the position of the instrument.

How many there are who, in spite of all advancement, still insist upon holding the banjo as closely to the body as possible, when the simplest test will demonstrate that a large percentage of the tone is lost—smothered in this way; and again, how many we see who hold the banjo neck so near the shoulder and high in the air, that viewing the frets involves a position of the head both trying to the performer and awkward to behold. Glance at the following cut taken from the “old-time” method, illustrating the faults still

prevalent, just described:



[“Old Time” position. INCORRECT.]

and then study closely the next cut:—



[Modern position. CORRECT.]

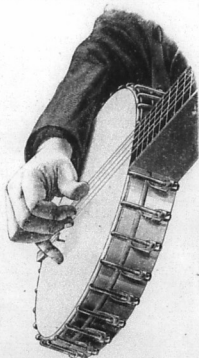
the modern and strictly practical position. In the latter we have every essential to good form. The banjo rests on the thigh in such a manner that with the right wrist on the rim, and the fingers over the strings in readiness for picking, it balances without the aid of any support from the left hand—the latter remaining free to shift from one end of the fingerboard to the other.



4

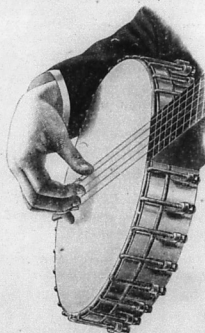
The neck of the banjo being held so far in front has manifold advantages: the performer can look straight ahead (or very nearly so) and still see the fingerboard. By this method the difficulty experienced through the awkward and tiresome movement of the head in looking back and forth from the upper frets so near the shoulder, to the music rack in front, and necessitated by the "old-time" position, is obviated by bringing the music-rack and fingerboard within the same line of vision. This enables the modern banjoist to read at sight with as much precision (if not rendered with the same facility—this to follow) as the modern violinist. It admits of "shifting" from the higher to the lower positions and vice versa, without cramping the elbow or changing the position of the instrument, (both common errors due to lack of system), it keeps the rim away from the body, permitting the tone to come forth unchecked, insures a better position of the right wrist; thus:

[Showing a Straight Wrist.  
The CORRECT POSITION.]



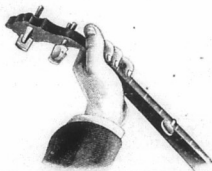
which when the banjo neck is held too close to the shoulder (throwing the lower edge of the head outward) will be curved in an awkward manner over the rim; thus:—

[Showing Wrist Arched over  
the Rim.  
INCORRECT POSITION.]



and last, but not altogether least of the advantages to be gained, it combines utility with ease; this position is more graceful and the importance of effect should always be given due weight.

Another word about the left hand position. There seems to be a general tendency among amateurs to either grasp the neck as one would an axe, with the palm of the hand in contact with the back of the fingerboard; thus:—



[Showing the palm of the hand against the neck. *INCORRECT.*]

or else to go to the other extreme of holding the banjo between the very points of the thumb and first finger. While the former tends to constrain the action of the muscles, the latter is antagonistic to playing with any precision.

The neck should be held between the third phalanx of the thumb and the first joint of the first finger; thus:—



[Showing correct position of the left-hand,—wrist slightly arched. Neck held between first joint of first finger, and third phalanx of the thumb. See large plate.]

with as much strength as seems necessary and no more,—varying this position somewhat in playing "in position" and forming chords, by permitting the thumb to seek the back of the neck generally beneath the first finger.

It is important that the first joint and not the first phalanx of the first finger should be used to hold the neck, as the former plan permits of the use of all three joints of that valuable member, while the latter would leave but *two* free for action. The position of the fingers themselves is almost everywhere agreed upon and will not be discussed here, further than to accentuate the importance of fretting as much as possible with the points, and to advise picking the strings *obliquely*, thereby avoiding the harsh jarring tone produced by picking them *upward*.

### WHAT FINGERS TO USE.

Most methods on one point agree—the advisability of using all four fingers of the left hand. This is certainly as it should be and leaves no room for argument, but there is considerable speculation as to just which fingers of the right hand should be employed, and there have always been advocates for and against the resting of a finger on the head. Some methods advise the use of the first and second fingers and the thumb, while others argue that the only correct method includes the third finger.

NOTE.—The Author of this work holds that they are both right, in so far as recommending their particular ideas go,—but equally wrong when they do so to the exclusion of any other, and contends that there is room and necessity for both theories properly advanced.

There are movements that cannot be played with the thumb and two fingers, while others are more practical without the use of the third finger. And likewise, at times a finger resting on the head is of inestimable value as an aid to execution and at others a positive hindrance—this depends entirely upon the movement to be rendered. It would seem then that a judicious application of both theories would be the most logical and safest method to adopt. Now the question arises, how are we to know when to put the little finger on the head and when to depend on the "wrists support"?

There is no absolute law to go by, but it is generally safe to be governed by the following: Rule I.—*In four finger movements (three fingers and thumb) rely on the "wrists support."*—*In three finger movements (two fingers and thumb) use the "finger support."*

The "little finger support" is found advantageous in all movements where "alternating" is used and as "alternating" has never proved successful between the second and third fingers, this will not conflict with the general rule for "support."—The third finger is used principally in chord and arpeggio movements. It is essential to a good tremolo that a finger should rest on the head, but it often happens that one possesses a little finger so short that the elevation of the hand necessary to this movement cannot be obtained by its use as a support.—It is advisable with such a hand to rest the third finger instead of the fourth on the head—but for the tremolo only.

\* NOTE.—While the advocates of "wrists support" who object to the placing of a finger on the head certainly have some grounds on which to base their theory, the fact that every modern performer of note uses the "little finger support" must bear some significance.

### DIVISION OF EFFORT.

Now we come to the first and most important principle of fingering—the practical division of effort.

It is hardly necessary to argue that if two or three strings are to be played in rapid succession it can be done more easily with three fingers than with one—this is generally conceded and is one of the elementary principles.—But then, why is it that so many banjoists will play any number of notes with one finger that happen to be on one string? Simply because they lack *method*, and have either been badly taught or taught (†) themselves, and given the matter little or no thought.

It may not be generally known, but two fingers used alternately can be trained to pick a string *more than twice as rapidly as one*. From this it will be seen that there is a great advantage to be gained by "alternating,"—but alternating like every thing else can be done in a right and in a wrong way, and must be studied and practiced by rule.

In left hand manipulation the same idea should be carried out.—Who will gainsay that four fingers in succession falling on the frets that naturally come beneath them—for instance first, second, third and fourth fingers on the first, second, third and fourth frets, should be used in preference to one or two fingers for all four notes?—(another and very simple illustration of the division of effort—four notes—four fingers.) Now if the first, second, third and fourth frets are opposite the first, second, third and fourth frets, and the first, second and fourth frets only are to be stopped, why not use the first, second and fourth fingers skipping the finger which happens to be opposite the note omitted? or if the second fret is omitted why not omit the second finger? etc., etc. This example treats of the notes as they occur in a chromatic scale and is the basis of the theory adopted in the fingering of other scales, for which the general rule is: *skip a fret skip a finger*. Exceptions to this rule occur where the number of frets included in the position exceeds that of the fingers.

The simplest examples are generally the most explicit and the foregoing, merely suggesting the method employed throughout this work, are cited to emphasize the strength of the theory that the secret of rapid execution lies in the division of effort, and that alternating is one of the governing features of the principle. There are other and equally important factors, and a close observance of the following rules will give the key note to the situation. The exceptions which prove the rules follow them:

Rule II.—Do not pick two notes in succession with any one finger of the right hand.

Rule III.—Do not use one finger of the left hand to fret two consecutive notes other than those of a chord or position.

The exceptions to Rule II, are these: The "Tremolo" (a rapid succession of notes) is played with one finger. "Sliding" from one string to another to keep up the order of alternating is permissible, and also several notes are sometimes taken with one finger for the sake of effect, as for instance, bass notes played with the thumb to obtain force and mark a passage.

The exception to Rule III, occurs when performing a "slur" or "slide."

Without further ado we will introduce a few exercises in "alternating" preparatory to scale practice.

The rules for "alternating" are:

Rule IV.—*Alternate with the thumb and first finger on the fourth, third and second strings, and with the second and first fingers on the first string.*

Rule V.—*The first finger should precede the thumb in ascending and follow the thumb in descending scales.*

The following being three finger exercises (two fingers and thumb) are played with the "little finger support." The thumb must be held well ahead of the fingers.

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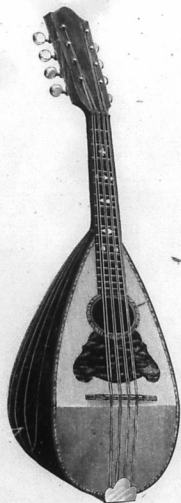
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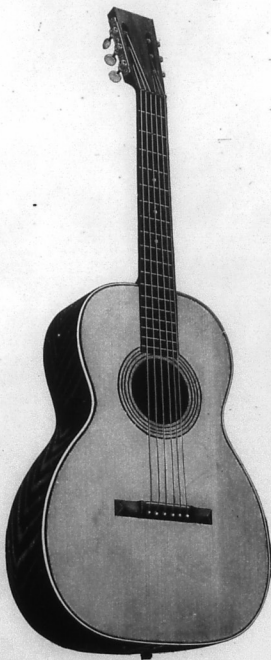
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