

Practical Violin Method

Book 1

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Introductory Remarks.

1. Description of the Instrument.

1. The Violin belongs to the family of string instruments. It consists of two principal parts, the Body and the Neck, which in turn are made up of various smaller parts.

2. The several parts of the body are:

- (a) The arching belly with the two sound-holes, which from their form are usually called the *f*-holes;
- (b) The back, which resembles the belly in shape and size;
- (c) The ribs, these being the narrow side-pieces connecting the belly and back.

3. The neck is joined to the body at the upper end of the belly and back, and its continuation at the other end consists of:

- (a) The peg-box with the four pairs of holes in which the pegs turn;
- (b) The scroll or head, ordinarily made in the form of a spiral twist or a lion's head.

4. The finger-board over which the four strings are stretched is placed directly upon the neck. The strings are fastened to the pegs and the tailpiece; the tailpiece is fastened by a loop of strong gut to the *button*, let into the ribs at the lower end. In order that the strings may vibrate freely, they pass over a bridge set in the middle of the belly, and over a low ridge called the nut at the upper end of the finger-board.

5. In the interior of the violin are the soundpost and the bass-bar. The soundpost is a small, cylindrical wooden prop set between belly and back just behind the right foot of the bridge. The bass-bar is an oblong wooden bar glued on lengthways below the belly. It is the object of the soundpost and bass-bar to offer resistance to the pressure of the stretched strings; and it is the special office of the soundpost to communicate the vibrations of the belly directly to the back.

6. The strings are made of sheep's entrails, and are four in number; the E, A, D and G strings. The last is covered with silver-plated copper wire, or better, with real silver wire.

7. The strings of the violin are caused to sound by means of the bow. The several parts of the bow are:

- (a) The stick, ending in a little projection called the head or point;
- (b) The nut, a small piece of wood hollowed out on both sides, and connected with the stick by means of a screw; and
- (c) the hairs, inserted in mortices in the nut and point, and brought to the right degree of tension by the screw.

8. The stick is of Brazilian lance-wood, the nut of ebony, and the hairs are from the tails of white horses.

9. The violin is tuned in perfect fifths:

As a rule the A-string is tuned first, either to a tuning-fork or to some other instrument already at the correct pitch. Then the D- and G-strings, and finally the E-string, are tuned. While tuning, the bow sweeps two strings at once, and should exert equal pressure on both.

2. Position of the Body.

The position or attitude of the body when playing the violin should be erect and unconstrained. It is better to stand than to sit. The weight of the body rests on the left foot, which should point straight forward, whereas the right foot is turned in an outward position. The heels should be in line, and only a short distance from each other. Many teachers of the violin prefer that the right foot should be advanced so that the back may be held straighter; as long as this advancing of the foot forms no hindrance to the bowing, there is no objection to it.

3. How to hold the Violin.

1. Take the violin in the left hand, and set it against the neck in such a way that the left collarbone may serve as a support, and the chin may lie to the left of the tailpiece.

When in position, the body of the violin slants down from left to right. The instrument must be held pointing horizontally forward, in line with the left foot. The left hand must hold it at such a height that the scroll is on a level with the part next the player's neck; thus it must neither project at either side, nor hang down.

2. The neck of the violin rests on the root of the left forefinger, being retained in this position by the counterpressure of the tip-joint of the thumb. Take care not to let the neck of the violin sink down so deep as to touch the skin connecting thumb and forefinger. There must always remain such a space between the thumb and finger, that the point of the bow can pass through under the neck.

3. The left hand should be held in such a rounded position that the fingertips can easily fall upon the strings. To attain this end, the palm of the hand is held away from the neck of the violin, the wrist curving outwards toward the scroll, and the elbow brought vertically under the body of the violin.

4. How to hold the Bow.

Take up the bow with the right hand. The tip of the thumb must lie very close to the nut, the other fingers taking hold of the stick in such a way that the hand remains naturally rounded, and the fingers gently curved. The stick lies within the last joint of the forefinger, middle and ring fingers; the thumb is exactly opposite the middle finger.

The tip of the little finger rests lightly on the stick, and moves easily back and forth according to necessity (forward for the up-bow, backward for the down-bow). Take care that the four fingertips lie close together; no finger should lie apart from the rest, or grasp the stick clumsily.

5. *Tone-Production and Bowing.*

A fine, round tone is, as a rule, the result of good bowing. Whoever is in doubt on this point should listen to the wretched scratching and scraping, the stiff sawing up and down, of some bungler, and then to the playing of an artist, in whose hand the bow sweeps gracefully up and down, eliciting the sweetest and most ravishing tones. The greatest attention should therefore be bestowed on the study of bowing. The following points are specially worthy of note:

1. First of all see to it that the tone begins quite clearly and distinctly. Not a few violinists waste one-fourth of the bow before the tone fairly commences, whereas it ought to sound full and strong the instant the stroke begins. This poor tone production is caused by not properly taking hold of the string at the very beginning of the stroke. To get a fine, full tone the hairs of the bow must be so set on the string (about an inch from the bridge) that they touch it with their whole breadth. The stick inclines slightly towards the finger-board. By setting the hairs on the string the latter is taken hold of, so to speak, and thus obliged to vibrate fully from the very beginning of the stroke. This imparts fullness and "body" to the tone, gives it a clear and precise start, and draws it out of the violin by the roots, so to say. This impulse must make itself felt both in the down-bow and up-bow, and should be practiced with special care in the latter, because it is harder to take hold of the string at the point than at the nut.

2. The strokes of the bow must describe a straight line, i. e., the bow must always run parallel to the bridge. This is rendered possible by slightly bending the wrist while guiding the bow up and down. When the stroke begins at the nut, the wrist is bent somewhat upward in the direction of the chin; while gradually drawing the bow down to the point, the wrist sinks little by little, and the hand is more prominently raised.

During the up-bow the process is reversed, the sunken wrist gradually rising and bending outward. At the same time, the upper arm hangs straight down, the elbow being quite close to the body.

3. All strokes of the bow are to be carried out almost solely with the hand and forearm, both wrist and elbow remaining as loose as possible; the upper arm hardly participates in the movement at all, and can at most only yield to the motion of the forearm. This case occurs when the stroke carries the bow up to the nut, and the upper arm has to move slightly forwards, or when the lower strings, especially the G-string, are played on, and the arm is lifted slightly upward and outward. It is incorrect to play with the entire arm; this brings

about slanting strokes and a stiff execution, and makes it impossible to obtain a fine singing tone.

4. In general, the strokes should be carried out at an equal rate of speed. This is particularly necessary when the tone is to retain the same volume from beginning to end. It is a frequent mistake that the player on starting moves the bow very fast; and thus uses up the greater part of it before half the value of the tone is exhausted. This style of bowing produces uneven tones, strong when beginning the stroke, and growing weaker and thinner towards the end.

5. However, the even guiding of the bow does not suffice to obtain a tone of equal sonority throughout. For the bow is heavier at the nut than at the point; besides, the natural weight of the hand exercises a stronger pressure on the string when the bow is placed at the nut than when it is placed at the point.

Consequently, if we simply allow the natural weight of bow and hand to influence the string, the tone will be stronger at the nut than at the point. This unevenness can be obviated, in the down-bow, by laying the forefinger very lightly, and the little finger firmly, on the stick when beginning the stroke. The further down the stroke extends, the firmer must the pressure of the forefinger become, whereas that of the little finger decreases. Thus these two fingers control the pressure of the bow; where the influence of the one ceases, that of the other begins.

6. The pupil must gain the faculty of endowing his tone with every shade of power. A loud tone is obtained by playing as near as possible to the bridge, guiding the bow with a firm hand and allowing the stick to bend over but slightly. A soft tone is obtained by playing nearer to the finger-board, bending the stick further over, and drawing the bow across the strings with a lighter hand.

7. In executing a crescendo, only a small portion of the hair touches the string at the start, and the bow is drawn very slowly at first, with an increasingly rapid movement. At the same time it constantly nears the bridge, and the pressure of the forefinger grows firmer and firmer. For the decrescendo, this process is reversed; the bow is placed upon the string near the bridge, taking good hold of the string and making it vibrate strongly; the stroke constantly decreases in rapidity, the hand lessens its pressure, and the bow approaches the finger-board somewhat. If a crescendo and decrescendo are to be executed in one stroke, the above two methods are combined; but the stroke must then be timed so accurately that the tone attains its greatest power and one-half its time-value together, and just when the bow has reached the middle.

8. When playing very close to the bridge and guiding the bow with a light hand, shrill, nasal tones are produced, which are occasionally useful in bringing out certain contrasts. Passages to be played in this manner are marked *sul ponticello* (near the bridge). When playing with an ex-

tremely light hand and with long strokes, very close to the finger-board, flute-like tones are produced, and passages thus played are marked *sull a lastiera* (over the finger-board).

9. Good bowing also demands a suitable and correct choice of the down-bow and up-bow. The down-bow is stronger than the up-bow; therefore, when a tone is to be accented, the down-bow should be chosen. Consequently the strong beats are, as a rule, played with the down-bow, and the weak beats with the up-bow; this rule, however, must not be slavishly followed. It cannot always be exactly observed, and it often happens that the stroke alternates, the strong beats in one measure being taken with down-bow, while those in the next fall, in turn, on the up-bow. The pupil should, therefore, acquire by practice the facility of accenting equally well with either up-bow or down-bow.

10. The following may be suggested as general rules for the up-bow and down-bow:

The down-bow is employed:

- (a) at the beginning of a movement, when it commences on a strong beat;
- (b) on the strong beats in common time;
- (c) on the up-beat (fractional initial measure) when it is connected by a tie to the following strong beat;
- (d) for isolated syncopated notes;
- (e) for chords;
- (f) for a final tone which is to grow softer and softer;
- (g) for all tones which are to be rendered specially prominent, in which case the down-bow may even be employed several times in succession. The bow is then generally used near the nut, or frog, this being indicated by the words *au talon de l'archet* (at the frog).

11. As a special aid and to avoid constant errors in this respect, the down- and up-bow are indicated in all instructive works by special signs. As a rule, the down-bow is marked by a square open at the bottom (□) or by the French word "tirez" (draw), while the up-stroke is shown by two lines meeting at the bottom (∨) or by the French word "poussez" (push). The signs given above (□ and ∨) are retained in this method, but it was necessary to give more precise directions as to bowing (1) as regards the length of the strokes, (2) as regards the particular part of the bow to be used. This is shown by letters. For instance:

N.—At the nut of the Bow.

M.—At the middle of the Bow.

T.—At the tip of the Bow.

W. B.—Whole Bow.

L. B.—Half Bow from Nut to Middle (Lower Half of Bow).

U. B.—Half Bow from Middle to Tip (Upper Half of Bow).

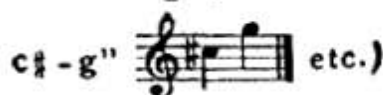
6. The Fingering.

1. In order to obtain higher tones than those produced by the open strings, the strings are short-

ened by "stopping" them with the fingers. For this purpose, the forefinger, middle, ring, and little fingers are employed. These fingers are drawn in a trifle, so that the joints are bent, in order that only the tips of the fingers exert pressure on the strings.

2. The fingers must fall on the strings with strength and precision and the tones must be hammered out, as it were, with energetic blows. The thicker the string to be stopped and the more forcible the stroke of the bow, the stronger, too, must be the pressure of the fingers. The little finger, being the weakest, must be specially exercised.

3. A point of prime importance is the purity and accuracy of the tone. For this reason, the pupil should learn to gauge the intervals exactly, gain a thorough acquaintance with the finger-board, and sharpen his ear by attentive listening. The chief reason why beginners play out of tune is that they do not properly distinguish between semitones and whole tones, and, in particular, because the fingers are not close enough together for the semitones. The interval of a diminished fifth, to be executed by one and the same finger on the two neighboring strings (i. e., b-f", or c"-g", etc.),



is also frequently played false, because the pupil forgets to move the finger up or down.


4. Holding the fingers over the strings in such a manner that they need only fall vertically in order to strike the right tone is a great aid to perfect intonation. It is also advisable not to lift the fingers directly from the strings, but to keep them down as long as one possibly can. Thus, in ascending passages, all the fingers will gradually be put down, whereas in descending they are gradually lifted. A system of fingering as used in piano playing is not allowable.

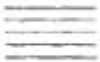
5. The tones of the open E, D, and A strings can likewise be produced by the aid of the little finger on the next lowest string to each. It depends upon circumstances, whether the little finger or the open string is to be taken. As a rule, one keeps to one string as long as possible. Therefore, where several successive tones occur which can be stopped on one and the same string, the player keeps to this string without passing unnecessarily to the next. But where higher tones follow, which, in any event, necessitates a passing over to the next string, there is no reason for using the little finger, and the open string is taken. When two or more tones are to be taken in one stroke of the bow, the little finger is to be preferred in cases where the tones following and connected with its tone are lower than the latter; but the open string is to be employed when the tone is followed by higher ones.

6. The fingering is indicated by the figures 1, 2, 3 and 4; a cipher (0) indicates the open string.


Rudiments of Music.



Before the student can commence to play any Instrument it is necessary that he should be acquainted with the rudiments of musical Notation.

The signs, which indicate pitch and duration of a musical sound, are called Notes figured thus:  etc.

They are named after seven letters of the alphabet; C. D. E. F. G. A. B. and are written on, between, above or below five parallel lines,  called the Stave, the names of which are determined by Clefs, placed on different lines.

For this instrument, only the treble or G clef  is used, which is placed on the second line.

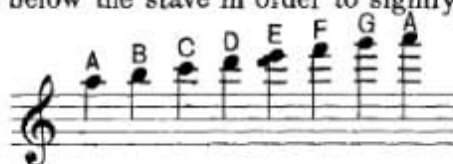
The names of the notes on the five lines are: 

of the four spaces  between the lines:  of the two above and below the lines

These eleven notes are insufficient to indicate the full compass of Sounds in use.

Ledger lines have therefore to be added, above and below the stave in order to signify higher and deeper sounds.

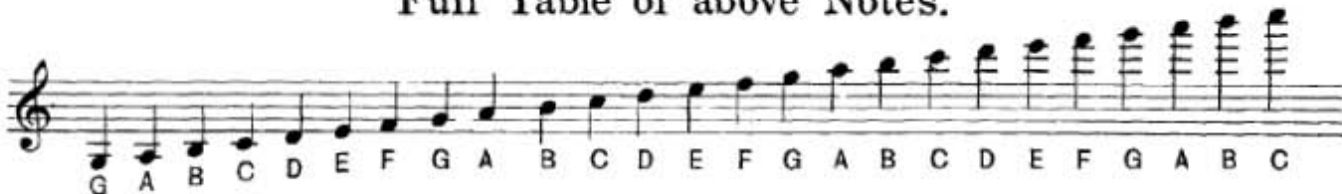
Notes of the ledger lines above the stave



Notes of the ledger lines below the stave



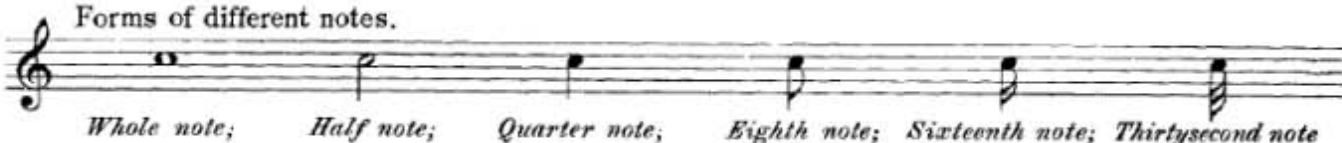
Full Table of above Notes.



Duration of Notes.

Notes may be of longer or shorter Duration which is shown by the peculiar form of each note.

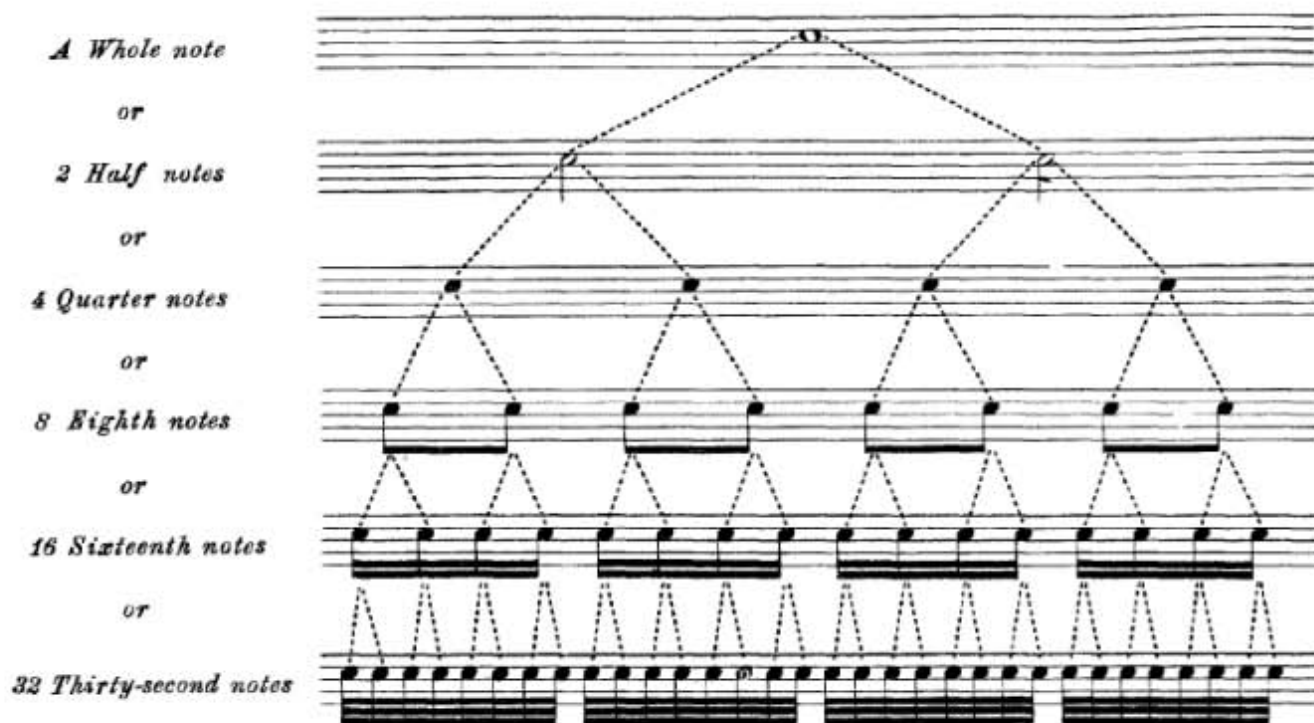
Forms of different notes.



Several of the latter three specimens combined may also be written thus:





Comparative Table of the Relative Value of Notes



32 Thirty-second notes

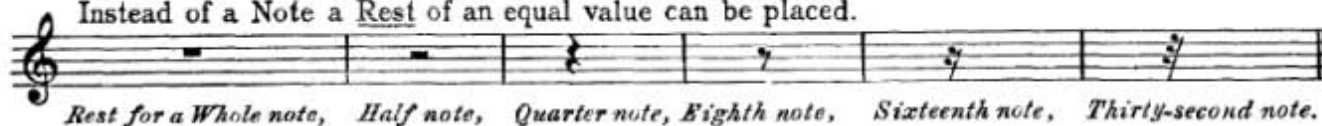
Bars

Notes are arithmetically divided into bars, marked by one or two lines drawn across the staff.

One line  is placed after each bar, and each bar contains the same number or value of notes, and each bar must last precisely the same length of time. At the end of a part of a composition, two lines or a double bar is placed, and if either two or four dots are found by the side of the double bar thus:  the whole part from the preceding double bar, or if there is no earlier double bar then from the beginning of the piece is to be played again. This is called a Repeat.

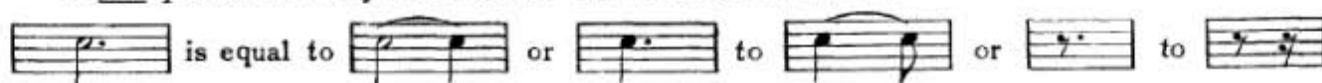
Rests


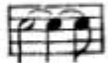
Instead of a Note a Rest of an equal value can be placed.










Dots

A Dot placed after any note increase its value one half, thus:



Two dots placed after a note increase its value one half and a quarter or  like  etc

Triplets, Double Triplets and Group.

Triplets are marked by a 3 being put over a group of three notes. Double Triplets are marked by a 6 being put over a group of six notes. Three quarter notes marked thus  must be played in the same time as two quarter notes  not so marked; or six eighth notes  in the time of four eighth notes  not so marked. There are also groups of five  seven  and nine notes  etc.

Time.

In order to know how many quarter notes, eighth notes or sixteenth notes a bar contains, special figures are placed at the beginning of a movement.

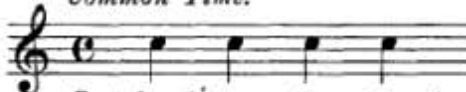
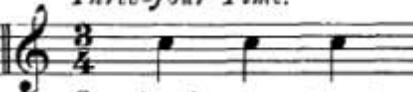
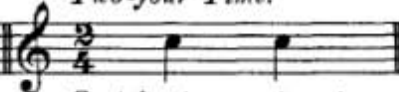
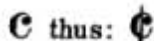
<p><i>Common Time.</i></p>  <p>Contains four quarter notes or the same value in longer or shorter notes or rests, and four (1,2,3,4) must be counted in a bar.</p>	<p><i>Three-four Time.</i></p>  <p>Contains three quarter notes or the same value in longer or shorter notes or rests, and three (1,2,3) must be counted in a bar.</p>	<p><i>Two-four Time.</i></p>  <p>Contains two quarter notes etc., and two (1,2) must be counted.</p>
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Table of Times.

<i>Single Common Times.</i>	<i>Compound Common Times.</i>	<i>Single Triple Times.</i>	<i>Compound Triple Times.</i>
			
			
			

When a line is drawn through the C thus: , which is called alla breve, two is counted in a bar.

Practical Violin Method.

First Course.

Signs and Abbreviations for Bowing.

- 1.) ▢ = Down-Bow.
- 2.) ▽ = Up-Bow.
- 3.) N. = At the Nut of the Bow.
- 4.) M. = At the Middle of the Bow.
- 5.) T. = At the Tip of the Bow.
- 6.) W. B. = Whole Bow.
- 7.) L. B. = Half Bow from Nut to Middle. (Lower Half of Bow.)
- 8.) U. B. = Half Bow from Middle to Tip. (Upper Half of Bow.)

The Open Strings.

1. E String. ▽ W. B. Repeat 10 times.

2. A String. 10 times.

3. D String. 10 times.

4. G String. 10 times.

5. W. B.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

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First Notes to be played on the E String.

Names of the Notes: e f . g . a . b
 Fingers with which they are taken: 0 1 . 2 . 3 . 4

11. W. B. \checkmark 12.

e f 10 times. g 10 times.

13. 14.

a

Comparative Table of Note and Rest Values in Common Time.

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Whole Note. Half Notes. Whole Rest. $\frac{1}{2}$ Note, $\frac{1}{2}$ Rest.

15. W. B. \checkmark \checkmark

16. W. B. \checkmark \checkmark

17. 18.

10 times. 10 times.

19. W. B. \checkmark

20. *W.B.* *V*

21. *W.B.* *V*

22. *L.B.* *V* *W.B.* 23. *U.B.* *V* 24. *L.B.* *V* *W.B.* *U.B.* *V* *W.B.* *V*

SONG OF THE E STRING.

25. *Andante*⁽¹⁾ *L.B.* *V* *W.B.* *U.B.* *W.B.*

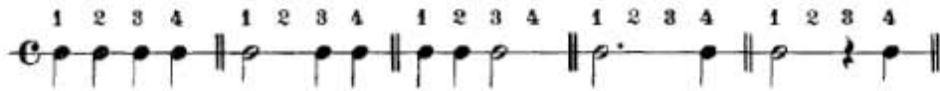
PLEASANT JOURNEY.

26. *Allegro*⁽²⁾ *U.B.* *V*

U.B. *V*

(1) *Andante*=in moderately slow time. (2) *Allegro*=in lively time.

Comparative Table of Note, Dot and Rest Values in Common Time.



27. L.B. V. 10 times. 28. U.B. V. 10 times. 29. L.B. W.B. U.B. W.B. 10 times.

30. W.B. U.B. W.B. L.B. 31. W.B. 32.

33. 10 times. 34. 35. at Tip at Nut

MY FIRST PIECE.

Moderato⁽¹⁾

36. L.B. V. W.B. U.B. W.B.

W.B.

DOLLY'S SLUMBER SONG.

Andante.

37. W.B. V. U.B. W.B. L.B.

⁽¹⁾Moderato = in moderately fast time.

W. B.

*) D. C. S. R.

Comparative Table of Note, Dot and Rest Values in Three Quarter Time.

38. With $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Bow for each note at the Tip. 10 times.

39. 10 times.

40. 10 times.

41. W. B. 10 times.

42. W. B. T. V. N. 10 times.

IN JOYOUS MOOD.

Scherzando.⁽¹⁾

43. U. B. V.

Fine.

*) D. C. S. R.

*) *Da capo senza replica*: From the beginning, without repetition.

(1) Scherzando: In lively, playful manner.

44. W. B. *f sharp.* 45. *b*

EVENING SONG.

46. Adagio⁽¹⁾ W. B. V

GOING TO SCHOOL.

47. Moderato.

ON THE MEADOW.

48. Allegretto⁽²⁾ W. B. U. B. V

(1) Adagio = very slowly. (2) Allegretto = in moderately quick time.

PUSSY AT PLAY.

49. Moderato. U. B. V

AT PLAY.

50. Moderato. T V U. B. V W. B. U. B.

SERIOUS ENDEAVOR.

56. *Adagio.*

THE EVENING STROLL

57. *Allegretto.*

66. ^{*)} 3^d finger down 10 times. 67. 10 times.

68. 3^d finger down. 10 times. 69. 10 times.

PLEASANT THOUGHTS

Moderato.

70. 3^d finger down.....

THE BEGGAR CHILD.

Andante.

71. 3^d finger down.....

*) Note:- In this and similarly marked places the 3^d finger should be firmly kept on its note (D) until end of dotted line.

72. 73. 3^d finger down.....

10 times. 10 times.

A LITTLE FOLK-SONG.

Moderato.

74.

THE MERRY PARTY.

Allegretto.

75.