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Our Editor's Letter.

During a visit to Boston, Mass., early in June, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Geo. L. Lansing, conductor of the well-known "Boston Ideal Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Club," together with other members of that organization, among whom was Mr. Shattuck, and Mr. Babb, who was at that time filling the place of Mr. Grover, who had gone to Western Pennsylvania to look at some property he contemplated purchasing.

Mr. Lansing informed me that the club had met with a very successful financial season and were going on the road again in the fall, but would make frequent return trips to Boston, so that banjo interests at home might be looked after as well as the rambling and scattered sheep; pupils in Boston will therefore be left in charge of Mr. Babb while the company is absent, and the frequent return of the members who have pupils, will insure the advancement of such.

During the summer, Mr. Lansing said, the members of the company, with their families, would summer at Lake Memphremegag, where Senor Romero, the guitar virtuoso, would coach them in new selections on the mandolin and guitar, at which instruments the Senor is an adept.

Mr. Lansing informed me that he had received something like one hundred and forty letters from different parts of the country, from banjo players, who wished that he should organize a mammoth "banjo orchestra," composed of banjo players from different states, to be heard at the World's Fair, in Chicago, next year. Mr. Lansing wished me to state through the columns of the *Journal*, that he preferred not to undertake the management of such an organization, as it would be impossible to drill in the performers to sufficient perfection for a united performance. Speaking for myself,

I think such a scheme would be *overdoing* things to a vast extent. It would not be possible to drill performers from different parts of the country and bring them together as one body, for a public performance—at least, not as the banjo is known and used to day; for although there are armies of banjo players, so called, there are really but few performers worthy of the name. And a vast body of banjo "plunkers," playing out of tune, before a vast audience, would do more to prejudice people against the banjo than to help the instrument.

Mr. Lansing spoke in high terms of praise of my late publication of an arrangement of the *Witches Dance*, for banjo and piano, and as I noticed he had two Stewart banjos and his Stewart banjeaurine on the desk in his office, I requested him to play something, whereupon he favored me with his latest composition for the banjo, *The Enchantress Waltz*, which is published by the Gatcomb Co., 58 Winter St., Boston, price 30 cents. The *Enchantress* is a very pretty waltz with "bass solo," and is arranged for a single banjo, with "bass to B."

In the wholesale and retail stores of Messrs. Jno. C. Haynes and Co., situated at 453 Washington St., and 33 Court St., I saw quite a large stock of Stewart banjos, also a large stock of the "Bay State" banjos, manufactured by Haynes & Co. A full line of Stewart's banjo music publications is also carried at the retail store. Haynes & Co's. wholesale department, which is situated over the Oliver Ditson Co's. store, in Washington St., presents a very large and attractive show-room. A fine showing of the "Bay State," "Haynes' Excelsior," and Tilton Patent Guitars is found here.

In the city of Brotherly Love, it is said that "beer and music won't mix," but in Boston the cultured classes seem to make it mix, and go down without salt. At Music Hall, which had the appearance of a vast "beer garden," an orchestra of seventy-five performers, under the direction of T. Adamowski, discoursed beautiful music to an audience of ladies and gentlemen. Most of the performers in the orchestra were

selected from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and, of course, all were thorough musicians, and the music was fine. Beer, ale, lemonade, cigars and light lunches were served at the tables in the hall during the performance. But the audience listened well. In Boston an audience will listen to good music; in Philadelphia, at a concert of this kind there would have been more talking and less appreciation of good musical selections.

I called on Senor Romero, the guitarist, at his rooms on Dartmouth St. The Senor appeared glad to see me and also my little son Lem, "the sweet singer," who was with me.

The Senor was arranging some mandolin music, to be issued by his publisher, Jean White, No. 226 Washington St. Those interested can write to the publisher for catalogue. I noticed the fine Martin guitar in the Senor's room, the same instrument on which he performed when in Philadelphia last. I did not notice any other make of guitar in the studio except the Martin, and I think that good evidence that the old Martin guitar is "holding its own."

I saw, however, whilst in New York, some very fine guitars, at J. Howard Foote's, No. 33 Maiden Lane. I refer to the Bini Guitar, of which only a few are made, and every instrument is a jewel. The Bini guitar is not very well known among guitarists of the day, and its sale is not *pushed*, because the production of the instrument is not very extensive. Like the C. F. Martin & Co. guitars, it is kept up to the standard, and *quality* instead of *quantity* is the rule. Some dealers will claim that as they sell a great many more of other makes of guitars than of the Martin, that the Martin is not keeping with the times, but the fact is as stated. Fewer Martin and Bini guitars are manufactured than other makes, but of the Martin and Bini there are few if any poor ones, and they are sold to the good performers who know what a good instrument is.

Mr. Lansing, in Boston, said, "The Martin has the *tone quality*, and that settles it, for any one who hears it and knows what a guitar is. The 'Thoroughbred' Stewart banjo has the *tone quality*, too, and when they hear it, that's enough."

THREE S'S.

"The Summer Girl."

Most banjo manufacturers, teachers and publishers are quietly taking a rest at this time of the year. The music man does not do much advertising at this season. It will be noticed, however, that the *Journal* has not gone down below its regular sixteen pages. We have something over that number of pages in this our summer number. When you see your "summer girl," tell her to read this number through and through, and not to forget her engagement with the Gods of Music—or the grand concert that Stewart and Armstrong will announce for the coming winter, in Philadelphia.

An Echo From "Open and Shut."

In this, the latter part of the 19th century, when A. A. Farland, of Pittsburgh, is playing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto on the banjo; when Brooks, of New York, is playing Nady Waltzes, when many other banjoists are playing Paganini's Witches' Dance, and when thousands of others are playing good music by note, one would scarcely believe that twenty years ago the banjo was largely used by weak minded "ear players."

Although the "open and shut," no note, "simple method," has been buried, so far as intelligent minds are concerned, for a number of years, yet once in a while it crops up again, and with its hollow, sunken eyes, and sallow countenance, stares stupidly at the "banjo world," and although "moon-struck," it manages to speak. Only a few days ago we received the following letter:

"Please send me catalogue of instruction books for the banjo. What I am looking for is *Simplified Method*. I don't mean the music here is an example." (Then follows a pencil sketch of old "open and shut.") "I have a large class and I want to teach them by this method. Send me sample copy of your *Journal*, also on the banjo."

Our advice to the writer of the above is to let the "Simpleton's Method" remain under ground, where it has been buried. Don't dig at it, sonny, the money you make by teaching such stuff will never do you any good. Remember the "Great Judgment Day" is coming and you'll not be "in it," with a "Ham" sticking to your jacket. Let the "simple method" remain with simple Simon, and when you go fishing, don't fish in your mother's wash pail.

The Banjoist Who Learns Nothing.

Most of the Banjoists of the day are becoming enlightened, and many of them are well read in the musical literature of the times, as well as perfectly able to read any banjo music that may be set before them.

There are, however, here and there, found remnants of the old goods—relics of the "old timer"—who have learned nothing new since the publication of Tom Briggs' Banjo book in the year 1855, or Buckley's Banjo Book, spoken of by A. Baur, in his article in our last number, published several years back. Yes, we meet them once in a while. They are still playing the same old jig that Ham played for Japhet to dance by,

when Father Noah weighed his anchor and sailed out into the deep, several hundred years before Columbus discovered America. Then, again, we find those who, though not precisely in this rut, are still sticking fast in the mire, simply because they have never cultivated sufficient reasoning in their minds to enable them to know anything for themselves. They have not read—or if they have *read*, they have not reasoned upon what they have read, and through mental inactivity have been led by the minds of others.

With the advance of Banjo music—as it reaches an artistic standpoint—it is necessary to have Banjos in keeping with the music. Such Banjos as led the day, twenty years ago, were doubtless in keeping with the music then played, just as the printing press of half a century ago was in keeping with the style of printing then required. But the printing machinery of fifty years ago would not answer for to-day, neither will the Banjo of twenty or twenty-five years ago answer the requirements of the Banjo player of the day. The "tubby" tone no longer meets the demands; neither does the "tinny" tone, and both will have to pass down the line to a back seat. Every principle laid down in "*The Banjo Philosophically*" is just as easily demonstrated as any other fact ever given to the public. The remarks also on the Banjo found in "*Observations on the Banjo*," being the result of practical experience, are also demonstrable, and cannot be gainsaid.

The Stewart Banjo, as manufactured by S. S. Stewart, in Philadelphia, Pa., was adopted by Horace Weston, the greatest player of the Banjo the world ever saw, and who used the Stewart Banjos in all of his performances for ten years—up to the day of his death, in New York City, in May, 1890.

The Stewart Banjos have been adopted by all the foremost players, not only in America, but also in England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, and other countries.

No Banjo has ever been able to successfully compete with the Stewart, as is evinced by the large demand for these instruments and the increased size of the Stewart manufactory during the past few years. No other manufacturer of high grade Banjos can show such a result as Stewart.

The last five years or so have introduced to the public some of the most abnormal specimens of contrivances in Banjoism the country has yet seen. We have the solid brass rim Banjo, nickel-plated and bell named, but not bell toned. We have the Banjo with "48 oblong brackets," and the "Banjo without brackets." Then there is the half-bred Banjo, or whatever you please to call it; one part is wood and the other metal, a sort of "half dozen on one side and six on 'tother." The Wash Basin, or Cullender Banjo, an instrument with a perforated tin basin inside the rim,—a double-headed drum affair, and a double rim, hollow shell, gong Banjo, are among some of the latest fads in that line. But perhaps the most absurd of all, so far as putting such an instrument up for a "fine solo Banjo" is concerned, is the Banjo with

the ring set on steel pins driven into the wood, and the head drawn down on a loose ring, which must drop out as soon as the head is removed. Such rims are bound to go out of shape very soon, because the rims are not constructed on philosophical principles, nor are they mechanically made. Outside of this the fact is apparent that no delicacy of tone is possible. The rim is not sensitive to musical vibration, and the head must be made *intensely tight*, in order to hold the various sections of the affair firmly together. Not only this, but an *abnormally high pitch* is required, for such an instrument is incapable of vibratory power from a fairly tense string. The players who use such instruments are those who do not read or study up what pertains to their instruments. As has been said, all the remarks on Banjo construction in "*The Banjo Philosophically*," and in "*Observations on the Banjo*," are readily demonstrated as *facts*, and can be demonstrated to any Banjo student who possesses sufficient intelligence to understand. A Banjo that will not respond to a gentle "pick," and will not express a *tremolo* movement, in a musically effective manner, is not the Banjo of the day. The Banjoist who learns nothing will stick to his raspy toned or tubby sounding instrument, and he is quite welcome; for the Banjoists who learn nothing will fall to the rear in this and succeeding years.

"All Stewart."

Once in a while, we hear some jealous one remark—"Oh! the *Journal* is all Stewart." Well! how would you like it changed to John Smith? If Stewart gets up the *Journal* and pays the expenses of it and charges merely a nominal price for subscription, who else can claim the honor of the result? At the present rate the postage alone is costing the publisher 2 cents per copy; so that it is really only 38 cents per year he is charging for the *Journal*. Those who think they can do better for this amount of money, have the hearty good wishes of the publisher and are welcome to seek elsewhere for bargains.

We do not want any one on our list who is not satisfied in every way with his bargain. Good day!

Banjo Concert.

Banjo Clubs, Banjo and Guitar Clubs, and Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Organizations, who think of entering in Stewart and Armstrong's Prize Banjo and Guitar Concert, to be given some time during the coming winter in Philadelphia, will now take notice that they have got plenty of time for practice.

No arrangements, of course, have been made, as yet, about the concert for the coming winter. But we expect to make it much more exciting and novel than the one of last January, which was given at Association Hall. Prizes of fine Banjos, Guitars and Mandolins will be awarded to Clubs at the next concert, and some of the instruments offered will be quite valuable.

Let Clubs organize now and get in first-class practice for the winter season.

A Brief Review.

In this number of the *Journal* we are pleased to give the balance of the article, "Observations on the Banjo and Banjo Playing." The entire article comprises thirty-five pages, and the last page, published in No. 70 of the *Journal*, was twenty-five; therefore, we should have ten pages of the article herein; but, owing to a mistake that occurred in printing No. 70 of the *Journal*, by which the nineteenth page of *Observations* was by some means omitted, we have eleven pages of the article in this issue of the *Journal*.

Those who failed to find page 19 of "Observations" in our last issue will now find it preceding page 26, and we hope this will be understood.

The entire article, "Observations," etc., is now printed as an appendix to the *American Banjo School*, and is bound in as part of that book, printed on very fine paper, so that those who purchase that work will have also the article complete and in good form.

* * * * *

Attention is called to page 28 of "Observations;" the remarks on "Notation and Pitch" will prove very interesting to Banjo players and those who are studying the instrument. See also "Concert Pitch," page 29 of "Observations." This section answers many questions which are almost daily asked. There is no excuse nowadays for ignorance of the Banjo. If you have a Banjo and remain ignorant of its proper uses and musical powers, you have only yourself to blame. Nowadays almost every one can read, and all who can read can find out for themselves all that is necessary to know about a Banjo, from the *Journal* and other publications, which may be had at a very low price.

When you find a person so ignorant of everything pertaining to the Banjo that he or she loosens all the nuts on the bracket-hooks, so as to slacken the head, after the instrument is used and before being put away, you discover one who will never amount to anything as a Banjo player. With such, "Ignorance is bliss," and "'Tis folly to be wise."

There is no use in trying to crowd wisdom into the cranium of a fool, because it cannot be done.

* * * * *

Particular attention is also called to the remarks on "Musical Expression," page 31 of "Observations." It used to be that the Banjo player, who "played by main strength," was considered "something great," but in those days there were few if any Banjos made capable of producing musical expression, and there was little expressive music written for the Banjo, so it naturally followed that many had an idea that the Banjo was incapable of expression. But now we have finer Banjos, better players, and more expressive music, and the "plunker" is doomed, as is the Banjo with "clinky, tin-pan tone," upon which it is quite impossible to produce a soft note or expressive tremolo.

The art of Banjo playing is truly moving forward; such music as the "Witches' Dance" is now not only possible, but is performed with success by many Banjo performers of the day.

* * * * *

A most worthy example in tremolo, for those who like expressive music, or wish to practise the same, will be found on page 33 of "Observations." Music, like this, in the key of "D," is becoming quite popular. The six string Banjo, when used for accompaniment, works better in this key than in almost any other.

To Subscribers.

A correspondent writes us, on a postal card as follows:

"Please do not send the *Banjo and Guitar Journal* any more."

In order that there may be no mistake as regards this matter, subscribers are informed again that we keep no accounts with them on our books, and as soon as the time paid for has expired, the paper is discontinued.

Those who pay the fifty cents subscription price for one year are placed on the subscription list for six numbers of the *Journal*, to be published during the year. Notices are sent to each subscriber at the expiration of his subscription, and if the amount is not received for renewal, the paper is no longer sent.

This is a plain business statement. Those who wish the paper discontinued need not renew their subscriptions, and they will not receive the *Journal* after the time paid for has expired. Those who wish the paper continued after the time paid for has expired must remit the amount for the following year, as we cannot undertake to send bills or keep accounts on our books for trifling amounts.

The *Journal* is well worth the price charged, and no Banjo student who wishes to advance can afford to be without it, but the "Simple-method" pretender who has no ambition to go beyond the "Ta-Ra-Ra-Bomb-de-ra" can hardly find comfort in perusing its columns, and the musical numbers contained in it are beyond his sphere. Such should not continue their subscriptions.

Don't Want Anything Unreasonable.

"Send me about a dozen good, easy, but showy and brilliant pieces for the Banjo. I want good, easy pieces, without any hard 'position fingering,' and not any harder than the Louisiana Hoe-down or the Alabama Echoes, and about that style, but brilliant and catchy."

* * * * *

The above is what a very easily satisfied female wrote recently. It is often very amusing to read the letters received in regard to Banjo and Guitar music. Then some of them want a lot of music sent "On Selection," and the privilege granted them

of returning such music as they do not care for. Now, as a great many of these people are incapable of performing a piece of music in an intelligent manner without first having it played over for them, it is difficult to imagine how they could tell from a casual glance at the lot of music what was likely to suit.

A good piece of Banjo music must be well practised if one expects to give it the proper effect. There are a great many, so-called, Piano players, who have purchased hundreds of pieces of music, and who are able to play really well perhaps two or three pieces of music.

Just so we have Banjo players. A great many play parts of different pieces of music, but have perhaps only one or two pieces that they are able to play fairly well.

In playing selections in public the pieces used for that purpose should be practised thoroughly, and continued until perfect, before using them for a public performance.

Better play an easy piece well than to worry through a difficult piece.

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Teachers who want a dozen or so easy tunes—yet all "brilliant and showy"—and all like sample, but not the same as sample—should purchase an Organette, or some sort of mechanical musical instrument, for the Banjo is out of their sphere.

The Season.

The season for Banjo playing and teaching is about to open again. By season is understood that period which follows a temporary lull in musical matters, during which time players and teachers have been taking rest or enjoying a period of relaxation.

In Banjo playing, really no season is recognized; but the months of June, July and August, the summer months of the calendar, being generally hot and oppressive, either in part or in whole, are not deemed expedient to any great musical effort, especially so far as stringed instrument playing is considered. Therefore, these months are considered as an "off season" in Banjo and Guitar playing, and very little teaching is done during that period, and only devotees keep up any great amount of practice during those months on their favorite instruments. Those who possess the means for gratifying their desires generally take themselves off to Europe, or perhaps to places nearer at hand, and no one can blame such for so doing, as "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," sang some ancient poet.

Those who are about to return from summer tours and annual vacations will take up their work with renewed energies, and those who have been hard at work throughout the summer will have encouragement afforded by the revival of interest in musical studies.

Let one and all now make ready to pitch into work, in Banjo practice, with renewed zeal and energy, and let us make the coming "season" a telling period in Banjoistic history.

The World's Fair and Other Affairs

Most of the piano manufacturers are adverse to exhibiting their pianos at the World's Fair on a basis of competition. Looking at the record of the Centennial Exposition, in Philadelphia, in 1876, where every piano exhibited got the "Highest Award," one can readily understand why our manufacturers prefer to have no awards.

It is a good thing to make a display of musical specialties in fairs, etc., but the matter of medals and awards amounts to just so much and nothing more. The public care very little for the prestige of medals and diplomas, awarded at such exhibitions—for those who are capable of thought and reason know that other factors than merit *per se* often enter into the matter.

Outside of the display of the goods at such exhibitions there is little real advantage to be derived. If banjos, guitars, or other musical instruments could be exhibited so as to be tested for merit alone, by a board of experienced experts in each instrument, and an unbiassed award be made on such a basis, such award, be it medal or diploma, would not be without weight. But the mere casual inspection of different exhibits, or a hasty trial before judges who perhaps understand little of the points involved, and perhaps care less, with an award on such a basis has small influence on the public either one way or another.

In London, at the International Exhibition, in the year 1884, the Stewart Banjos were exhibited and a medal awarded. The medal was appropriated by the agent who made the display, who afterwards had the name Stewart removed from the instruments and his own name substituted, and after having began the manufacture of banjos on his own account, used the medal to advertise his own goods. Some time ago, at the exhibition of the Charitable Mechanics, held in Boston, Mass., Messrs. J. C. Haynes & Co. displayed their "Bay State" Banjos, Mandolins and Guitars, and were awarded a premium. They also placed some of the Stewart Banjos in said exhibit, which banjos were taken from those they carried in stock, and were put in without the knowledge of Stewart, who, in fact, knew nothing of the matter until some time after the fair was over.

It would appear that this was rather a poor showing for the Stewart Banjo, as Messrs. Haynes & Co. did not carry in stock any of the higher grade banjos of Stewart's make. Such an exhibit, so far as the Stewart Banjos, thus displayed therefore counted for nothing, as any one can see at a glance that the Stewart had no fair chance with the home manufacturers,—no opportunity even being given to send on any of his fine banjos, that would have successfully stood comparison with any instruments of the kind manufactured.

For the Mechanics' Fair, to be held in Boston during *October* and *November* of this year, Messrs. Haynes & Co. have asked for, and will receive, a set of Stewart's Banjos, to be made part of their exhibit.

The Stewart will not be put in the fair, except for exhibition, as it would be folly to

enter instruments in competition with other makes, in an exhibition held in another State and where everything must point to the home manufacturer having every advantage that is to be had.

When such performers as E. M. Hall, of world-wide experience, give their autograph letters, testifying to the fact that both in tone qualities and handsome, durable workmanship, no banjo can equal the Stewart, there is little left for other judges to have to say to the merits of such instruments, and it is the opinions of such performers and that of the general public, who use a banjo, that has the weight, and with such opinions we are fully satisfied.

The demand for the Stewart Banjo during the season of '91 and '92 was the greatest of any year since the Stewart Banjo was made—and the sales for that period were far in advance of any like period. The letters, too, that have come in from those who have been purchasers of Stewart Banjos, are of such character that no room is left for a possible doubt of the intrinsic merits of the banjos manufactured and sold. With such a record to bring before the public, the Stewart can safely claim the foremost rank in instruments of its class, and, in the language of E. M. Hall, the world-renowned player, it can truthfully be said: "It is universally known the Stewart Banjo is King."

From 38 to Zero.

As was remarked in our "Observations on the Banjo," the illy-balanced mind runs from one extreme to the other. Some time ago the "38 bracket hock-shop banjo" filled the pawn shops and cheap stores throughout the land. Now a genius turns up and invents (?) a banjo without any brackets at all, and he is going to "set the river on fire"—he thinks. From 38 down to zero is quite a fall in the thermometer, and perhaps the banjo-world will require an extra supply of coal and thick overcoats.

Some years ago a banjo called the Tilton Patent, which had no brackets, was introduced, but it lived through its infancy only, and finally succumbed to an attack of teething. The manufacturers had it with them long enough to cut their wisdom teeth only. It is a little late in the day for clap-trap inventions of this kind now. This is 1892, and Stewart's journal is in active circulation, well circulated and well read.

Cadence from Kansas.

A wise man was once asked the question, "When is the best time to educate a child?" He answered, "One hundred years before he is born." This answer is full of deep significance, for it is true beyond a doubt that like begets like. Josh Billings says the best time to set a hen is when she gets ready. Some parents think that this same rule may be applied to the education of their children. There is no musical instrument that can be as successfully introduced in the education of a child as a small banjo, so full of sweet, fascinating, musical tones, harmonizing with the little one's voice and its very soul. I

speak from practical experience, as I have two little tots now under seven years of age that play all the easy rudimental lessons and chords of A major, in various instruction books and studies. I know of no other instrument that children could handle while so young. When a small boy I asked my father for a violin. He consented, and started to the music store, where we were shown the various styles, and all at once a very pious man entered the store and informed father that he was making an unpardonable error, as the violin, or fiddle, as he termed it, was the "devil's own instrument," and that the population of h—I was largely composed of ex-fiddlers. Unfortunately for me circumstances were against me, as at the time the absorbing question of the introduction of the organ into the churches of the United States, both North and South, was being agitated with bitter and intense feeling. In many cases divisions were made. But time has worked a change in this matter as in all other things. Now the churches of Topeka are glad to get any reed, string or brass instrument that will improve the music of their choir, and sometimes call in almost a full band. I was refused the violin, and took it very much to heart, and have often tried to estimate the damage that pious old man did me by his prejudiced superstition and ignorance, but "All is well that ends well" is the old saying, but I cannot help from feeling that it might have been better. Shortly after that I ran across a stranded minstrel banjo player and bought his banjo. He did not know a note; was an old-time "knock out stroke" player. He started me off by tuning the instrument and learning me the old time jig. I quickly learned to play in my own imperfect manner the tunes of the day, but I must confess that the satisfaction and pleasure was often mingled with embarrassment and disgust by the constant remarks of musicians on the supposed limited, aboriginal and heathen-like capability of the instrument, at the same time reflecting most severely upon my taste of selection. Such experiences have so frequently been repeated that I must confess that a peculiar feeling comes over me when I see composers of banjo music dedicating their compositions to the scenes and memories of the plantation. We have no evidence that these scenes were ever enacted by the negro, as represented by the old-time minstrel organizations. I do not wish to cultivate prejudice,—at the same time I do not care to perpetuate a custom that is not calculated to elevate the instrument. If the negro ever did use the banjo as his favorite instrument he surely does not use it now. Being unable to withstand the prejudice heaped upon the instrument, he has taken up the piano, violin and other musical instruments, preferring to imitate the white man. Let us unite with S. S. Stewart in the elevation of the banjo by playing a higher class of music and using better and more perfect instruments. The good that S. S. Stewart is doing for the banjo cannot be estimated. He will leave a name that the coming generations will sound with praise. I would not be without my *Journal* for many times its cost.

GUS. H. HUGHES.



Geo. F. Gellenbeck, Omaha, Neb., writes:

"Enclosed find draft to pay for the two *Thoroughbred* banjos and cases received. I have introduced two banjeaurines in my club, and we are making a hit wherever we appear. The two *Thoroughbred* banjos sound immense. The bon-ton musicians out here have recognized our favorite as a musical instrument, and a concert 'ain't in it' without the banjo. Hospe does not handle your instruments any more. Lyon & Healey are making a banjo for him, called the 'Hospe Professional,' (stenciled banjo), and it is the exact counterpart of yours in appearance, but they were so elated in producing such a perfect copy that they forgot to put the *tone* into it. We have three concerts this week and have several requests from outside towns, which we are going to take in."

The Stewart Banjo leads the business every time. Others may imitate its symmetrical form, but they can not obtain the same musical quality.

W. F. Olt, Butte, Montana, writing under date of June 13th, says:

"I received the *Presentation* banjo all O. K., last week. To say that I am pleased with the instrument does not express my feelings. It is indeed neat and handsome, with a *tone* brilliant and sweet, superior to any banjo I ever heard. Prof. Majors, a teacher here, and others who have seen and played upon the beautiful instrument, compliment it very highly. I wish to thank you for your kind endeavors in having the instrument made so complete and perfect."

Frank Somers, 122 Third Avenue, N. Y., writes:

"I receive your *Journal* regularly and am pleased to say that I am making a success with my banjo and guitar studio, and making preparations for the coming season."

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence L. Partee, banjo, mandolin and guitar teachers, have gone into the music publishing business, in Kansas City, Mo. Their card, advertising new music as published by them, will be found in our teachers' column, to where our readers are referred for catalogues and music.

Max Kolander, of San Francisco, Cal., has recently published some new music for the banjo. His card will be found in our teachers' column. Mr. Kolander has always been a strong advocate of the Stewart banjo, and we shall be glad to know that his efforts in the musical line are meeting with success.

We have received a handsome large photograph from W. P. Dabney, Richmond, Va., of his banjo, guitar and mandolin orchestra, and are pleased to tender thanks herewith, for the same.

R. J. Hamilton, No. 188 South Irving Avenue, Chicago, Ill., has published a new march, for two banjos, called "On Dress Parade," by Geo. Schleifarth, price 40 cents. The march is not at all difficult, is well arranged by its publisher, and should be a success, we think. It is in common time.

R. G. Allen, a banjoiist of reputation, died in Chicago, Ill., early in June last, of heart trouble. The body was taken to Richmond, Va., and buried by the Benevolent Order of Elks, of which the deceased was a prominent member. Mr. Allen used the Stewart banjo, a large instrument, for several years, and his letter of testimony, dated ten years ago, to the merits of the Stewart banjo, still remains in our various pamphlets.

We have received the prospectus of the Brown University Glee, Banjo and Mandolin Club, for the seasons of '92 and '93, and are pleased to note that it came to hand in June, showing that the manager, Harold C. Field, 16 Cabot St., Providence, R. I., is a *live man*. Most banjo organizations go to sleep in June or July, and do not awaken until late in the fall. Soon after this the traditional ground-hog appears, and the season is short. The Brown University organization is up and doing, and no doubt will meet with deserved success. The banjo organization is under the tuition of J. H. Jennings.

Otto H. Albrecht's new music is advertised in this number.

Geo. L. Lansing's address, until Sept. 1st, is North Derby, Vermont.

Master Lemuel Stewart, the young vocalist, who has successfully appeared at several public and private musical entertainments, already manifests a talent for business as well as for music. Recently, on a summer trip with his father, Master Lem amused himself, whilst traveling in the railroad cars, by writing the following on a card: "If you want a good banjo, write to S. S. Stewart, 223 Church Street, Philadelphia." This card the youngster enclosed in one of Muller's silk string boxes, and when the train stopped at a station, he threw the box on the platform, calling to a looker on to pick it up, and telling him there was something inside. Thus early in life does the youthful mind manifest genius.

Thomas J. Armstrong is summering at Sea Isle City, N. J., but visits Philadelphia each week to attend to summer pupils.

Geo. B. Ross and Geo. H. Lukens gave a concert at the Riverton Lyceum, Riverton, N. J., June 23d. Ross' banjo solos, Miss Lewis' Violin solos and Mr. Lukens' humorous songs and sayings were leading features.

The J. Henry Ling Banjo Club gave a concert in Philharmonic Hall, Detroit, Mich., on the evening of June 15th, last, to a large and appreciative audience.

A. C. Evans, of Pretoria, Transvaal, So. Africa, says:

"I have recently imported into this country four of your instruments for my pupils, and they all speak of them with delight. I am sorry there is not a more direct way of getting them from you."

We have parts 1 and 2 of the *Complete American Banjo School*, bound in boards, in good style, for sale at \$3.62, by mail, net. It has all the recent additions.

The Tyrone Banjo Club gave a concert in the Academy of Music, Tyrone, Pa., June 16th, last. The club, under the direction of Frank S. Morrow, performed "The Clover March," "A Dance in the Wood," "Bella Bocca Polka," and a number of other good things. Mr. Morrow will have instruction rooms in Harrisburg this season.

Geo. B. Ross, our Philadelphia banjo teacher, expects to spend his time in Chicago during the World's Fair.

Miss Edith E. Secor will resume giving banjo lessons, in Philadelphia, about September 1st.

Number 69 of the *Journal* containing the first installment of "*Observations on the Banjo and Banjo Playing*," has been quite in demand; so much so that only a few copies of that number are left. Come soon if you want a copy of No. 69.

See announcement of "LOVE AND BEAUTY" WALTZES for BANJO CLUB. Every club should have a copy.

H. C. Trussell, composer and arranger of Banjo music, of Hannibal, Mo., writes:

"Music received, many thanks. *The Witches' Dance* just strikes me. You have it well adapted to the Banjo, and any player who has appreciation for a better class of music for the Banjo, should lose no time in securing a copy. Your *Phantasmagoria Waltz* is beautiful."

John K. Trewetz, Banjo Instructor, of Lancaster, Pa., writes:

"The Little Wonder Banjo, recently purchased from you, has turned out fine. I use it with Mandolin Club, also for solo playing. It is admired by all who see and hear it."

NEW MUSIC PUBLISHED BY S. S. STEWART

The Most Successful of
T. J. Armstrong's Musical Compositions.

"Love and Beauty Waltzes"

For Banjo and Piano75 cts.
For Banjo alone40 cts.
For Banjo Club, complete in six parts, \$1.40

The above named has made a great hit. It has been performed by leading players and clubs in various parts of the United States, and always met with success. The Banjo solo with Piano accompaniment is particularly "catchy," and bound to remain a favorite for a long time to come.

There are yet hundreds of banjo players who have not heard "*Love and Beauty*," and to such we will say, do not delay in securing copies for your individual use and for your banjo clubs.

Owing to popular demand, we have just issued "*Love and Beauty*" for banjo clubs, as follows:—**Banjeaurine, First and Second Banjos, Piccolo Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin.** Leading part 40 cents, each of the other parts 20 cents. The Banjeaurine plays leading part. Two Banjeaurines should be used, when possible, for the leading part, and the Guitar part may be doubled if desired. The Mandolin part is intended to be used where the club has a performer on that instrument, and it can be omitted if the club has no Mandolin player.

The solo part, used in the Banjo solo, and Banjo and Piano arrangement, is the same part that is used for **Banjeaurine** in the club arrangement.

Banjo organizations in ordering this selection, should bear this in mind. In using the solo part for Banjo, the Piano part of course is published in the regular way of tuning—that is, the Banjo plays in "E" and the Piano in "G:" hence, the Piano part cannot be used if the principal part is played on the Banjeaurine, as this instrument is tuned a *fourth higher* than the ordinary Banjo.

The club parts, as arranged by Mr. Armstrong, and now published for the first time, have been played with great success by our leading banjo clubs in Philadelphia, and we confidently recommend this arrangement to all banjo organizations, and predict for it the leading place on the programs of 1892 and 1893.



Philadelphia, July, 1892.

To the Editor and Readers of "Stewart's Banjo and Guitar Journal":

The last number of our interesting paper was a noble issue, and contained much valuable information and readable matter, the articles on the contemptuously ignorant conduct of certain musicians and one of their so-called fraternal associations being specially noticeable. The fact that the banjo was not considered a legitimate instrument by these "wise-acs" was perhaps not known to all of our readers, and would therefore cause some considerable surprise. In former numbers I have hitherto addressed myself to those whose interest was particularly devoted to the banjo, and as the guitar seems to be somewhat more favored than the former instrument, perhaps I may be permitted to add still another pleading for the removal of the stigma against which our instrument valiantly advances, leaving its less abused companion to advocates more worthy. It strikes me that could the banjo be more frequently heard in the hands of players who have gained their proficiency by such long and continued practice, as per example, Romero has devoted to and achieved on his instrument, the banjo would not require any defense, and the most fastidious would be pleased.

The great majority of banjo music and playing is not of the order to satisfy the "musically critical," and as those belonging to this "band of fault finders" are very apt to give expression through the medium of the press, musical magazines and journals, their wailing against the "informal strains" of our instrument has produced, amongst their readers, a rather strong prejudice, which calls for our united effort to remove. But, permit me to point out, could these same prejudiced ones only see the amount of pleasant satisfaction given to an audience composed of the "masses" by even the "plunk of a tub," surely they would not deny but that it were capable of some good, it was working its end, even though it were by giving only pleasure to the "musically ignorant."

And to those who scoff at the banjo and hold it in derision, ask the question, Why? I fear they will not confess, what seems to us who know its fascination, their only reason, that it is only because to scoff is habitual. Does it ever occur that that which is much abused is often, under proper circumstances, found the greatest benefit and charm? A woman's tongue, for instance. How often do we hear of its "rasping and discordant tones," how often is it railed against, yet how many of us but must confess and give homage to its never-failing beauties? There are, of course, women and banjos—players and tongues, and why should we not use them as analogies? What, when properly proportioned and attired with modest, good taste, seems more perfect and pleasing to the eye than a woman, unless it be a "Stewart Thoroughbred Banjo"—while on the other hand an ill proportioned, slovingly and gaudily attired female but represents the "thirty-six bracket fake."

Again we, at times, find even under the covering of proper taste a discordant tone, money having purchased the instrument cannot prevent its being abused and ignorantly used. So in life, the tongue may be disguised by outside decoration, but it need only give out sound to prove how it is directed, for if not in the tone of voice at least in the matter used, its merit may be tested. A player who has successfully devoted himself to his instrument and judiciously selects his music, according to his hearers, need never fear the most critical audience. There will be no murmur against his performance. It is but through ignorance, lack of musical education and judgment, that the banjo has become involved in this seeming dispute.

This matter of "proper selection," according to circumstances and conditions of your hearers, is rather a difficult matter to deal with, and requires a great amount of judicious care and experience, for on it depends the impression that will be produced; some auditors having a taste for the "majestic style," others for the "dreamy, minor moods," and again others for the rollicking "jig or reel." While it is not unlikely that at times you will meet persons whose expressed taste, as a matter of perverseness, will be entirely opposite to your playing, and no doubt many of you will be compelled to listen to that "cold water" remark, "you ought to hear Mr. so-and-so play." Never mind that; the other fellow gets the same. Go ahead and please yourself. Don't be daunted by such remarks, for if you analyze such a critic you will often discover that his "fault finding" is prompted by chagrin, and that though it is easy to "find fault," the finder often wishes that he could do as well. Seldom will you meet with frank encouragement, the sayers of pleasantries being in the vast minority. When once you have got the attention of your hearers, and the invigorating influence of your instrument showing its effect, you will probably be called upon to play the popular and much whistled airs of the day, which had you commenced with would no doubt have completely shocked your audience.

It is astonishing how condescending and unfatidious the advocates of "classic music" will become when they are off their guard. Music in all its forms has always been an accompaniment to hilarity, and, of course, if you should chance to be "with the boys," give them it for all it is worth, patrols, jigs, reels, clogs, break-downs, &c., &c., and for once at least your banjo will be the boss feature of the occasion. I have been present at most select gatherings, ceremonious to extreme, stiff and unenjoyable, where a little judicious music has changed the entire conduct of the participants and transformed the assemblage to one of sociability and good fellowship; and the banjo, properly handled, can be used to this end, as well as any of the so called legitimate instruments. Do not think that because I write in this strain, that it is to be considered that the banjo is not making sufficient progress.

No, one has only to look around, and on all hands the popularity of the instrument will be seen to be rapidly advancing. It is no mere passing fashionable fad, it has come to stay; and while we try to impress our friends with this fact, let us give credit to all who work for the improvement of the status of the banjo, and I think that subscribers and chance readers of "The Journal" will find no fault if the names of Stewart, Armstrong, Baur, Converse, Lansing and others are subscribed on a tablet as earnest workers for the elevation of the banjo. The praise and credit that is given by the fraternity of any art, profession, or class of workmanship, is the most valued by the recipient, and therefore why not let these gentlemen know that their fellow-players are at least grateful to them for the efforts they make. So, like friend Baur, I begin to have doubts as to whether the readers of "The Journal" will be interested in the subject matter of which I write, and had perhaps better come to a close, so that at least the tired reader and those who do not like the letter can say, "Thank goodness, it was no longer."

Yours fraternally,
HYLARION.

Those who have not seen our 46 page Illustrated Quarto Price-List of Banjos and Banjo Music, should write for a copy.

Address, S. S. STEWART,

Nos. 221 and 223 CHURCH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Write name and address very plainly.

Two very fine guitar compositions, by Mr. Frey, a reverie, and a waltz, had been prepared for this number, but are held over for the next, owing to lack of space.



Senor L. T. Romero's address for the summer months is Newport, Vermont. If any of our guitar and mandolin teachers wish to study with him in July and August, he may be addressed as above.

E. H. Frey, who leads the orchestra in the Opera House, at Lima, Ohio, is doing some fine work in the way of mandolin and guitar music writing and arranging.

The leading guitars in the market to-day are the Martin, Bini, Haynes, Bruno, Washburn and Germunder.

Geo. W. Rianhard, editor of "Pennsylvania Grit," of Williamsport, Pa., is leader of the mandolin and guitar club of that city.

No one has ever taken hold of the guitar and pushed it to the front, in the same manner as Stewart has the banjo. There is a great lack of enterprise displayed by guitar manufacturers in general, as well as a lack of judgment as to the needs of the guitar student. They will begin to wake up after a while, and after some one starts up with a weather eye open, we may hope for some activity to manifest itself in this quarter.

The guitar playing of Henry Haug, at J. H. Ling's concert, in Detroit, Mich, June 15th last, was a decided feature of the entertainment.

E. H. Frey, Lima, Ohio, writes as follows:

I have been requested frequently of late, by teachers of the guitar, to give my opinion on tuning and playing the guitar in the Spanish key, and with your permission, I will answer the same querists, through the *Journal*.

Now, I do not approve of this method at all, for various reasons, viz: in the first place, the fingering is more difficult; it is not as good for duets, and for club work it is entirely out of the question. Of the latter I could give you many illustrations. Here is one of them: Two guitarists came through Lima last week, who were considered artists, and I heard them play a few pretty selections. While they were here I had an engagement to play for an entertainment with my mandolin club; being short of guitars, I engaged those two guitarists to assist. However, they told me they could only play in the Spanish key, but could transpose and play the music easily, so I gave them the parts to look over. Well, in the evening, we, the club, started out with a medley overture. It was a sight to see those fellows playing all over the neck of their guitars to find the positions, and playing more discords than anything else. It was not necessary for me to stop them, for after playing a few bars, they saw at once that their playing was doing more harm than good, so they took a quiet "sneak."

As a matter of course, some pieces are written that cannot be played on an ordinary guitar, without tuning it differently, yet, to adopt the "Spanish key" entirely, would be folly. There are guitars being made at present, having from eight to ten strings, which can be used in playing any piece of music written for the guitar, without changing the strings to a different pitch.

I would advise those players who play in different keys, "Spanish," etc., to get one of these instruments, as they do away with this extra amount of tuning and transposing. A pupil of mine had one made to order, which proved very satisfactory. Changing the pitch of the guitar often is a detriment to the instrument and makes it difficult to keep in tune. I always try to keep my guitar to one pitch, changing at times, the sixth string only, when it is to be played as open G or D.

REMINISCENCES OF A BANJO PLAYER

(TENTH LETTER.)

"Many are called, but few are chosen." Thus it is with banjo teachers, or rather many of those who profess to be teachers. In the last month or two I have noticed advertisements in several of the New York Sunday papers: One of these notices I saw after the first of April; it ran something in this wise: "Performers wanted to join Dobson's great banjo orchestra of one hundred performers, on May 1st; a knowledge of the instrument not necessary, instruction free." In my opinion, a person about to take part in an orchestra of one hundred performers should have a pretty thorough knowledge of the instrument he or she is to play upon. A man who will deliberately insert an advertisement like the above in a public journal is either a knave, or he imagines that every man or woman he meets is a fool. Another notice informed the public that banjo lessons would be given



at summer prices. In my experience, a first-class teacher is worth as much in one season as he is in another. Still another informs the public that a "thorough knowledge of the instrument guaranteed in one course of twelve lessons." Such nonsense as I quote above only tends to stamp the advertiser as a humbug, and it is safe to say that none of them are capable of guiding a pupil through even so small a course as twelve lessons, and it is safer still to say that after such a course the pupil will be compelled to acknowledge that he or she knew less than at the beginning. The only way I can account for such inducements being held out, is that the advertisers know very little about the business they have engaged in, but imagine they "know it all," and for a small consideration they agree to part with their scanty knowledge.

Many people imagine that the life of a music teacher is an easy one. Let them try it. A teacher of the banjo

LABORS UNDER MANY DISADVANTAGES,

that teachers of other instruments never dream of. If in a new field he must overcome the prejudice that exists against the banjo. After that has been overcome he must convince the ignorant that the banjo is a musical instrument and can be played the same as any other instrument, by regular musical notation and not by "patent banjo notes." It is wonderful how ignorant people can be when they do not try to learn, or even seek to be enlightened. I am safe in saying that I have been asked hundreds of times by educated musicians, "what is banjo music like? "Do you read it the same as we do ordinary piano or violin music?" I was once at a parlor concert where were gathered many fine musicians. After having finished my solo with piano accompaniment, I was amused with the following from the artiste of the evening: "I have never seen any banjo music, would you care to let me look over your collection?" I handed her my folio, and after turning it over she looked up in surprise and remarked, "why, this is just like any other music, I thought you used

PATENT NOTES

on the banjo." I informed her that she evidently had heard of the "Simple Method" humbug. Several other musicians present had the same idea, and when they learned that the legitimate banjo player was not a

heathen they became very friendly to the banjo, and for some time after I had plenty of volunteers to play my accompaniments on the piano. The banjo was growing in popularity and they wanted to be in the swim; but, as I have before stated in these letters, I never allowed any one but my wife to play my accompaniments, I respectfully declined their assistance. The ignorance sometimes displayed by very wise people is, to say the least, quite amusing.

At another "gathering" of musical people I played a solo in the "banjo style," using a thimble. After I had finished, one of the wisecracks, a lady, came up and said "I never knew before that you used an

'ARTIFICIAL NAIL'

to play the banjo with." The remark sounded so ridiculous that I did not care to answer, but remembering that I had a number of thimbles in my pocket, I slipped one on each of my fingers and replied: "Ordinarily I do not," but happening to have one on when I began playing, and not making the discovery before I began, I did not have time to remove it. "What you saw on my finger was one of a set of artificial finger nails that I had made to scratch my wife's back with." With her expression, "oh, how nice!" the subject was dropped and I thought nothing further of it until later in the evening a lady called me aside and asked me to show her "those things I scratched my wife's back with!" With a look of innocent surprise, she said, "isn't it lovely? How nice of you to be so thoughtful." By the time a third lady had asked me the same question, grave doubts began to crowd my mind as to the smartness of my remark, and my suspicions were verified later on, when my wife, poor innocent soul, who took everything seriously, and could not understand a joke, came to me with a look of horror on her face and told me that every lady in the room was talking about some patent device that I had to scratch her back with. A feeling of remorse seized me, but it was too late then to remedy matters and I assure you it took me much longer to straighten things out and everything running smoothly in its natural channel, than it did for me to give vent to what appeared to be a harmless joke.

* * * * *

When I began this letter it was with the intention of fulfilling a promise made in my last letter to give my experience as a teacher, so that readers of the *Journal* might profit by it. Thus far I have succeeded in keeping far from my track, but as there will be more *Journals* in the future, I shall endeavor to stick closer to my text, and what I cannot get into this letter may not come amiss in the next number. I take it for granted that the readers are not becoming bored with this series of reminiscences. I have received numbers of letters in which the writers express a wish that I shall continue the series, and the only obstacle to the consummation of these wishes is a fear that we may encroach too much on friend Stewart's valuable space and good nature. But to return to my subject, not every banjo player makes a good teacher, neither does it follow that a good teacher must necessarily be a good player; but of one fact there is not the least doubt, a teacher should never attempt to teach a pupil that which he does not thoroughly understand himself. Nothing will so quickly shake the confidence of a pupil in the teacher's ability as to have a question or lesson unsatisfactorily explained. I never in my experience found any two pupils alike. Some are very quick to learn and just as apt to forget, while others who are slow to comprehend, never forget what has once been taught them. A successful teacher should be full of expedients—quick to perceive and ready to supply the wants of any and all pupils. When the banjo rage first began, my greatest difficulty was in keeping pupils supplied with music. As the supply of published banjo music was not plentiful, I had to depend upon my stock of arrangements. Even this, large as it was, was inadequate to supply the de-

mand. At this time the light comic operas were all the rage, and as I always made it a point to give pupils the pieces they asked for, (if they were not too difficult), I was kept busy arranging the most popular melodies from *Patience*, *Pinafore*, *Merry War*, *The Mascot*, etc. Pupils seemed never to tire of them. One wanted this piece, another that, and still another something else. A few did not know what they did want or seem to care for what they got, and for these I generally arranged popular and catchy tunes—melodies from the late operas, songs, marches, schottisches, or anything that in my opinion would excite an interest in their studies. This latter class was easier to please than those who asked for certain pieces. Many a time I have taken the trouble to arrange a melody from some opera, only to be disappointed on taking it to the pupil on my next visit, to have them say, "Oh! I do not like that on the banjo at all, I thought it would sound better, etc." And many a time I have had a pupil hum over a few bars of a tune he or she had heard. I would then visit different music stores and find the piece, and then arrange it for the banjo. I always made it a rule to let a pupil have his or her choice of pieces, provided they were not too difficult and beyond the capacity of the pupil. In such cases I was firm and told them plainly that the piece requested would not suit. Another point I was very particular about, I never gave a pupil a piece that I could not first play over correctly myself. This happened very seldom, for the reason that I practised a great deal and arranged everything that came in sight, until I imagined I could play anything by note on the banjo that could be played on any treble instrument in existence.

It requires an immense amount of practice, however, to read music at sight, and as a banjo teacher ought to be fortified at all points, he cannot practise too much. A teacher ought also to be able to

TRANSPOSE AT SIGHT.

By doing so he will save much labor in trying over pieces written for other instruments. I have seen tolerably good readers who could not transpose a bar without first writing down every note. A man of this kind labors under a great disadvantage in the one item of lost time alone. I have often gone to houses where the pupil had a collection of piano songs or pieces. After getting through with the lesson I would ask if they had any preferences as to a piece for the next lesson. They would generally inform me that they had a certain piece or pieces that would be very acceptable if they could be played on the banjo. I would ask for the piano copies and play them over, at the same time transposing them into the most suitable keys for the banjo. In this way I saved myself much worry in selecting pieces for my pupils. I gave them their choice in the selection of pieces and they were generally pleased with them. If not, it was their own fault and not mine.

By careful handling a teacher can arrive at very satisfactory results in a short space of time. After one term of twenty lessons I nearly always managed to give a pupil a new piece at each lesson. If a difficult piece had been given that would take a month or two's practice—to enable that pupil to execute it—I was careful to give a lesson at each visit on this piece until it was thoroughly learned, and in addition to that I would have a catchy little jig, schottische, polka or something that would take up but a very short part of the lesson and give it to the pupil; thereby holding the pupil down to practice on the difficult piece and at the same time demonstrating the fact that he or she was making progress in the matter of the number of pieces learned. In the same manner, while I kept the pupil hard at work at practising scales and exercises, I sandwiched in a piece, either easy or difficult, as it suited the capability of the pupil, at each lesson; as the teacher ought to have the confidence of his pupils, it is absolutely necessary that he or she be an honest, upright and

capable person, with enough dignity to command respect from all with whom they may come in contact, either socially or otherwise. A person to be a successful banjo teacher, must possess the requisite qualifications, or he will be a dismal failure. A man may be ever so good a performer and have a thorough knowledge of his instrument, even to the minutest detail, and conduct himself properly to all outward appearances, but if he is of a surly, arbitrary and domineering or overbearing disposition, he will not be a success. In my experience with hundreds of pupils I never in one instance allowed my temper to become ruffled, or show that I was in the least discouraged because of the mistakes or dullness of a pupil. When I began teaching I made up my mind that in giving lessons I had a certain number of minutes allotted to each lesson and that it would be much easier to do it pleasantly, than to fly into a passion at the least mistake of a pupil. I have every reason to believe that my plan has worked successfully, and I pride myself on the consciousness that I have retained the good will of every pupil I ever had. When I began a lesson I made a business of the task in hand, and never "let up" until I was through. In only two instances have I stood upon my dignity, one a lady, the other a gentleman. In both cases I made up my mind that the parties were not sincere in their desire to become proficient in the art of banjo playing, and wanted merely to be able to play a chord or two and the same number of pieces. After I was thoroughly convinced in my own mind of this fact, I let them go in as near as I can recollect, the following words: "You are not a credit to yourself and never will be to me; your taking banjo lessons is a source of outlay from which you will never derive any benefit. We will therefore call this the last lesson." I never went to either place again and in due course of time sent in my bills, which were promptly paid. The lady is now a Countess in Europe, the gentleman a millionaire in New York.

"The laborer is worthy of his hire."
The amount charged by different teachers for banjo lessons is a matter of opinion to be decided by each individual for himself. "A may have agreed to fulfil a certain contract at five dollars per hour—B may be fully as capable as A, but he agrees to perform the same contract for half the price charged by A. This is B's business and not A's. As an illustration we will call A and B banjo teachers. In this case, B may have the most pupils but he is not making as much money as A. If he had twice as many pupils as A, he would not be taking in as much money, for the reason that B's customers belong to a class that cannot afford to pay as dearly for luxuries as A's customers. Therefore he is liable to have more customers who are unable to pay, and the chances are that at the end of the term he will have less money than A, besides having performed double the labor. It is a curious fact, but nevertheless true, that banjo teachers lose less than any other class of teachers. My case may be an exceptional one, but from the beginning of my career as a banjo player to the present time, I never lost but one bill for banjo lessons, and that was only about four months ago.

In the East the banjo season generally opened about the last week in August or the first week in September, and closed between the 1st and 16th of July following. I made it a rule never to present a bill to any pupil continuing through the entire season, until it had closed. There were always enough short term patrons to pay running expenses between the opening and closing of the season. My terms were as follows:—Forty dollars for a term of twenty lessons, two lessons per week; two dollars and fifty cents per lesson for any number less than a term, and from five to ten dollars per lesson for special lessons. Lessons missed by pupils were their loss. Lessons missed by me were replaced. These were my invariable terms, from which I never deviated while in New York. The lessons were from thirty to forty-five minutes in length. After my health became poor and I was compelled to leave the climate on the sea-

coast, I went to Pittsburg where I had a room two days in each week. My prices to pupils who came to my room were one dollar per half hour lessons. Pupils who desired lessons at their residences were charged the same rates that I had charged in New York. I never paid any attention to what other teachers were doing. There may have been some who charged less than I did and had more pupils, but I do not see how they could have managed them. I was busy from morning until night and could have kept myself busy far into the night, but I declined to teach in the evening. I often heard that most of the teachers gave hour lessons; true, they gave them at their own rooms while I went to the residences of my pupils. But there were at least two days in each week during my entire stay in New York on which I gave lessons at a couple of young ladies schools. On these days I went to a room that had been set apart for my use, and every half hour a pupil would step in to take the place of the one with whom I was engaged. During a part of each season I had the above named school two days in each week and parts of two other days at another institution. I worked so hard during the busiest part of the season that I very seldom had time to take a mid-day lunch. After each hard day's work I would go home and after a seven o'clock dinner I would practise with piano accompaniment until half past ten or eleven o'clock, after which I would arrange pieces for pupils and get everything in shape for the next day. This usually kept me busy until two, three or four o'clock in the morning, after which I would take three or four hours sleep to be ready for another day's work.

It must be remembered at this time there was no immense

STEWART CATALOGUE

to select music from. At the present time there is no necessity for the teacher to wear himself out in writing music for his pupils. He need only consult a catalogue and choose music of any degree of difficulty from the simplest for the beginner, to the most difficult for the most advanced player. Some ignorant persons imagine that a teacher need not practise; a greater mistake was never made. The more proficient a person desires to become the more practice is required. I remember long ago, seeing an advertisement of Mr. Frank Converse, in which were the words, "Teachers Taught." A short time afterwards I met one of the most prominent and persistent advocates of the "simple method." He asked me if I had seen Converse's card. I told him that I had, and that I thought Mr. Converse capable of doing just as he said. He became very indignant and said, "why he pretends to teach teachers, don't you know you cannot teach a teacher, any man who thinks he can is a fool." These were as near as I can recollect his very words. I saw there was no use in wasting time on this ignorant and left him. He professed to be the "greatest and best banjo teacher in the world," and so advertised himself, although he did not know one note from another, and several years afterwards when he was about to take part in a

"BANJO PLAYING MATCH,"

he called upon me to coach him in the solos that he intended playing. I had taken his measure long before that, and was not surprised to find him entirely ignorant as to the manner in which he should make the simplest runs in the key of A major. His execution on the open strings and in the lower octaves seemed truly wonderful, but when he had a passage to play above the twelfth fret, he was altogether lost. After pointing out to him his most glaring faults and correcting them, I asked him if he had ever before heard of a "teacher teaching a teacher." He then told me that that was the first banjo lesson that he had ever taken. I remarked to him that my candid opinion was that a few more would do him no harm.

I find that the subject upon which I am writing cannot be exhausted in one letter, therefore I shall close this letter and continue upon the same subject in future letters, until I have it entirely finished.

A. BAUR.

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Banjos Spoiled by Fretting.

Quite often amateurs who possess banjos with smooth fingerboards, ruin their instruments in attempting to fret them. Loose frets on a banjo cause the tone to be muffled and indistinct. Quite frequently banjos are sent to us that are suffering from this difficulty and the owners have been unable to detect the cause of the trouble. When frets are loose at the edges the *first* and *bass* strings will be affected in tone, without the second or third strings showing it. Unless the saw-cut for the fret is of exactly the right size, the fret cannot be made to stay in place, firmly and securely.

In cutting the slots for the frets *by hand*, it is almost impossible to make the cut as it should be, near the edges of the fingerboard, because the hand saw must be moved each way; but in cutting the slots with a saw that runs very swiftly and accurately, and with a machine made especially for such work only can it be properly done. Frets in soft wood fingerboards can never be depended upon to hold down in position at all, and much also depends on the seasoning of the wood in the fingerboard.

Banjo Heads.

Those who do not understand how to keep a banjo head tight, should read the remarks on that subject contained in "*Observations on the Banjo and Banjo Playing.*"

Mr. Rogers, the celebrated maker of high grade banjo heads, says that he obtains the skins from which his heads are manufactured, (calf skins) from nearly every state in the union, and those coming from each different state seem to possess some different characteristic. Some heads will stretch much more than others. Some will absorb dampness more readily than others; and each set of skins requires some difference in a proper treatment.

When Mr. Rogers puts his stamp, "Warranted," on a head, he simply means that such head is warranted free from flaws or imperfections in the skin, but does not attempt to guarantee that such head will not break. The fact is that a great many heads break before they have been on a banjo for a month, and numbers break on being pulled down when just put on.

It is very hard to get heads that can be strained tight and firm, that will remain so for one, two or more years. Occasionally we find heads that will stretch tight very readily and that require very little straining afterwards, and that stand firmly in place for two or three years. But such almost priceless jewels are not the pearls that fall readily into the lap of the seeker after fairy gifts, although sometimes they have such an appearance—often fading away, as it were.

In the murky weather of summer a firm, hard banjo head is something hard indeed to find, and he who finds it should hold on to it. It is necessary, however, that the banjo head should be kept tight, if one wishes to make a good showing of his instrumental performance at any time, and the performer who uses his instrument must

keep the head tight whether it breaks or not. It is better therefore to keep at least two good banjos in use, so that when a head breaks the player will have another instrument at his disposal, and need not "get left."

The strain upon a banjo rim to which a tight head subjects it, has never yet been truly ascertained, but is thought to amount to hundreds of pounds. The banjo rim must stand the strain, for that is part of its calling and mission here upon this mundane sphere. When Rogers or some one else has succeeded in manufacturing a banjo head that will not absorb moisture, then indeed will the banjo player shout "Glory Halleluja." But if a head did not absorb moisture at all, how would one undertake to stretch it over the rim? Just here we have the drawback to thin metal heads; they cannot be stretched over the rim and so are not to be thought of.

Well, there's lots of real good music in the "cat gut" and "calf skin" after all, when the weather is clear and fine, and in those cold winter seasons how the "gourd" does ring out its songs of salvation, rest and joy. It sings of "Rest for the Weary," "Joy for the troubled in Spirit," and merriment for the dyspeptic and despondent, a chaser away of "Blue Devils," and a ringer in of a fortaste of "Heavenly Harmony."

Then keep your head tight,
And your heart light;
For on the hot murky night,
There's still the winter in sight.

BOLSOVER GIBBS.

Grandfather's Hat.

FASHIONS, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Some years ago, Johnny Forbes, in his negro act, with banjo used to appear in an immense rimmed straw hat. Who would have thought that twenty years after, people would steal that shape and set it up as the fashion for 1892! And yet such is the case. We now see the same kind of hat worn by the society young man, standing on the street car platform, and crawling along Chestnut Street. How uncomfortable it must be, when the rim of the pancake hat touches up against the wall of some impending calamity and causes the head-gear to change its position; then, if a sudden gust of wind comes along and raises it, well, we will not contemplate further, it is too terrible. But fashions change. It must be so, or the hat makers and sellers would dry up.

The next style will be taken from the banjo act of the late Harry Stanwood, who was the most popular banjoiist a few years ago. This style will consist of a "plug-hat," with the rim cut off or a tall hat with a very narrow rim—just about the opposite to the present fashion. About this time the female bustle will have made its reappearance, and the tight skirt will once more be worn in the land.

The dandy, too, will reappear in the tight breeches his father once wore, or those

made on the same pattern. Soon after this the Public Buildings will be completed, the Bourse will have its fine building erected, and railways will navigate the streets of Philadelphia in mid air upon unseen wires.

"Number 71."

This issue, No. 71, of the *Journal* has been gotten out in advance of the time it is due. We suppose that none of our readers will object to that. It will also be noticed that this number contains twenty-eight pages within its covers, and as most of the matter is good solid information and music, we suppose our readers will not "kick" if the paper has been increased in size in this one instance. If they kick we will promise not to do it again. The *Journal* is supposed to consist of a sixteen page form, inside the covers; but lately it has been impossible to keep it down to that size, and we have therefore been forced to content ourselves with making it a twenty-four page affair. Now we fatten out to twenty-eight pages, just to get in what cannot well be left out, and to crown the absurdity of so outrageous a proceeding we shove the paper out about two weeks earlier than it ought to come out, and we plead as our excuse for so doing, that we want to get No. 71 off our hands and "out of sight," in order to make room for other work which is claiming the attention of the editor and publisher.

So "take a day off" and peruse it,
And careful be not to lose it,
After scanning it through
'Till the black appears blue
Don't make a mistake and abuse it;
But lay it aside in the book case drawer
Along with the poems you've read before,
And ere very long
You'll continue the song
S. S. S. is the boy who does it.

Philadelphia Notes.

R. W. Devereux, No. 1417 North 16th Street, Philadelphia, gives attention to pupils on the Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass and Slide Trombone. Special attention is given to the Mandolin.

D. C. Everest, the talented son of Mrs. E. Everest, the celebrated teacher of vocal music, continues to give lessons on the Violin and Banjo. He may be addressed at No. 1128 Walnut Street, this city.

Thomas J. Armstrong, who summers at Sea Isle City, will resume his Fall season of Banjo teaching, at No. 418 North 6th Street, in September. He comes to the city during the summer, once each week.

O. H. Albrecht keeps his Instruction Rooms at No. 241 North 8th Street, open all the time, but takes his usual bicycle rides in the park.

Geo. B. Ross, at No. 1411 Chestnut Street, will take his gunning trip early in the Fall, as soon as game is in season. He is working up to date.

Bolsover Gibbs is out of town at present.

"THE YORKE," One Heart, One Soul.

Polka Mazurka.

FOR THE BANJO.

J. STRAUSS.

INTRODUCTION.

Banjo.

f *p* *p*

2 2 4 0 3 2 0 3

7* 7* 7* 10* 2* 4* 2* 4*

FINE.

3

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The melody is marked with various fingering numbers (0, 2, 4, 1, 2, 0, 2) and accents. The second staff includes the instruction "D. C. al Fine." followed by a double bar line and the word "TRIO." above the staff. The Trio section starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, featuring a melody with a 5* fingering. The third staff continues the Trio melody with a 5* fingering. The fourth staff continues the Trio melody. The fifth staff contains two first endings, marked "1" and "2", with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The sixth staff continues the Trio melody with a 4* fingering. The seventh staff continues the Trio melody with a 4* fingering and a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The eighth staff continues the Trio melody with an 8* fingering. The ninth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line and the instruction "D. C." below the staff.

"The Yorke," One Heart, One Soul.

WALTZ, "RAINBOW PANSY."

FOR TWO GUITAR.

By E. H. FREY.

The musical score is arranged in five systems, each with two staves. The top staff of each system is labeled "1st Guitar" and the bottom staff is labeled "2nd Guitar". The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and fingerings. Specific markings include "p" (piano) in the first system, "7*" above the first staff in the second system, and "1" above the first staff in the third system. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in the final system.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with chords and single notes.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody from the first system, featuring some triplet markings. The lower staff continues the bass line with chords and single notes.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody with various rhythmic patterns and fingerings indicated by numbers 1, 2, and 3. The lower staff continues the bass line with chords and single notes.

The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody with complex rhythmic patterns and fingerings. The lower staff continues the bass line with chords and single notes.

The fifth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody, ending with a double bar line. The lower staff continues the bass line with chords and single notes, also ending with a double bar line.

Waltz, "Rainbow Pansy."

Modulations in Fourths, Through all Keys. FOR THE BANJO.

This set of Chords and Modulations for the Banjo, beginning in the "Natural Key of the Banjo," running through all the keys, and finally returning and closing in the original key, will prove very interesting to many students of the banjo.

Many of the Chords may be found most too difficult for rapid fingering, but the idea is to give the set of modulations alike in each of the keys. There are some performers who take much pleasure in playing over such exercises, and others again who do not care for such studies; but as nothing of this kind has heretofore been published for the banjo it is thought that this will prove acceptable to many of the *Journal* subscribers. 2*

Banjo.

The musical score consists of ten staves of music, each representing a different key. The keys are: C major (Natural Key), G major, D major, A major, E major, B major, F major, and C# major. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature. The music is written in a style where notes are grouped into chords, with small circles indicating the notes. Fingering numbers (1-4) are placed below the notes to indicate finger placement. Repeat signs (double bar lines with dots) are used to indicate the end of a phrase or section. Some staves have asterisks (5* and 4*) above them, possibly indicating specific techniques or variations. The score concludes with a final chord in the original key (C major).

4*

1* Bar.

2*

2*

Modulations in Fourths, through all keys.

THE "BOSS" CLOG HORNPIPE.

FOR TWO BANJOS.

1st Banjo.

2nd Banjo.

CROWN WALTZ.

GUITAR SOLO.

By E. H. FREY.

Tempo di Valse.

Guitar.

p

This Page, "Observations on the Banjo" was omitted from No. 70 Journal by mistake

19

fourth strings, now-a-days, are manufactured especially for banjo use and there is not much trouble in selecting them; as the strings found in any one lot are all of uniform size.

The great trouble with strings is,—their being composed of a material made from the intestines of lambs, and being very sensitive, will break frequently in warm and moist weather; and it being a matter of very great difficulty to manufacture them of perfectly even thickness, they are frequently found faulty in tone. In fact, it is more often the case that strings *false in tone* are to be readily got than strings that are true. The only way in which a performer can guard against this, to any extent, is by purchasing strings in quantities—by the bundle—and then selecting those for his use which possess the most even and uniform appearance.

Quite recently a new string composed of *twisted silk* has been manufactured in Europe, and placed on the market by Robert Müller, of London, England, and this string has proven quite a novelty among banjo players. Imitations of this string have already been made in France; and as "imitation is the sincerest flattery," it stands to reason that the Müller string would not be imitated if it did not possess a certain merit.

The twisted silk strings are nearly all of uniform thickness and true in tone, and will withstand hot weather where a gut string proves utterly worthless. The tone produced from the silk string is equally as good as from the gut string, and it is only a question of a little time when the gut string, by reason of its falseness and tendency to break, through atmospheric changes, will be superseded by the silk string. The present difficulty is that the prices of the twisted silk strings are far higher than the gut strings; there being a tariff duty of 50 per cent. on silk strings imported in America, but no duty on gut strings; and it is supposed that all our readers are aware of the fact that only the Banjo bass strings are made in this country, the other strings being imported from Germany and other parts of Europe.

No effective *tremolo*, or expressive music of any character, can be produced on the banjo when strung with false strings; and after strings have been put on the instrument and proven false, the best thing to do with them is to take them off at once and try others.

About three years ago I published in the Banjo and Guitar Journal the result of a series of experiments with banjo and guitar strings, showing the weight required to bring certain strings to "concert pitch."

Recently a new test has been made of the weight required to produce the requisite tension for bringing strings on certain sized banjos to the pitch generally used, and the result is here briefly given. It will appear that the weight is less than reported after the previous experiments—some three years ago—but this is owing to the fact that in making these late experiments and tests, the instruments were arranged almost perpendicularly; so that the resistance of the string in the notch at the nut was avoided.

A Banjo with 12 inch rim and 19 inch neck, was used for the following test. The distance from the nut to the bridge was 27½ inches; from tail-piece to bridge, 2½ inches.

Gut strings were used, of the following sizes, per English Standard wire gauge; which is the most convenient and accurate gauge procurable for the purpose. (Such a gauge costs \$1.50, and may be had of dealers in tools and machinery.)

The pitch used was taken from the C tuning pipe in general use.

1st string, No. 26, weight required, 6½ pounds.

2d string, No. 24, weight required, 8 pounds.

3d string, No. 22, weight required, 7½ pounds.

4th, or bass, string, No. 23, weight required, 9 pounds.

When the bass string was raised a full tone, as in "Bass to B," the weight required was 11½ pounds.

Thus, we find, that the ordinary "12 × 19" inch Banjo, requires a combined weight on the five strings of 38 pounds, in bringing it up to the concert pitch of C. The fifth string, it being understood, requiring the same as the first string. When the Bass is tuned to "B," the weight required for the entire five strings is 40½ pounds.

An experiment with same banjo was made, using the twisted-silk strings (Müller's), with the following result.

Strings of precisely the same thickness were used in both cases.

The first string required 5½ pounds.

The second string required 7½ pounds.

The third string required 6½ pounds.

The fifth string, same as the first.

The bass string being the same as mentioned in first instance, we have a combined weight in this case of 33½ pounds, showing that the gut strings of same thickness as the silk, require a greater weight to produce the pitch—and thus proving the tension less on the silk than on the gut strings to produce the same musical pitch.

I am of the opinion, however, that the twisted silk strings, on account of possessing less flexibility than the gut, are rather more severe—as regards strain on banjo-neck—than are the gut strings, when the strings are struck or picked.

The 7 inch "Piccolo Banjo," with 10 inch neck, using the same gut strings as in the previous experiment,—required the following weights to produce the concert pitch—an octave above the 12 inch rim Banjo.

First string 7½ pounds.

Second string 8½ pounds.

Third string 9 pounds.

Fourth, or Bass, 11½ pounds.

It will be noticed that the strain on the strings of the Piccolo Banjo, as used in Banjo Clubs, is greater than the "Orchestra" Banjo, of 12 inch rim with 19 inch neck, by 5½ pounds, the Piccolo requiring 43½ pounds.

On the 11 inch rim Banjo, as commonly used, the weight required to produce the pitch of C, is a little less than required for the 12 inch Banjo.

A steel wire bass string, such as is sometimes used by a certain class of banjo players, requires a weight of 11½ pounds to produce the pitch of C on the 11 inch Banjo; and 14 pounds to produce D. Whilst a good stout silk bass string (gauge No. 23), on the same Banjo, requires only 8½ pounds for C, and 10½ pounds for D.

The difference is accounted for by the greater density of the wire string, over the gut. It will be seen that not only is the tension on a steel bass string much greater than on the silk (the "steel" string is wound on a thin wire, and the "silk" is wound on strands of silk) bass string; but the lesser flexibility and greater density of the wire string, necessitates an increased strain on the instrument when the string is put in vibration, which is not the case with the more flexible string. It hardly require an argument of this kind, however, to convince a banjo player

OBSERVATIONS ON THE BANJO AND BANJO PLAYING--Concluded

BY S. S. STEWART

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EXERCISE No. 2.


The following variation on the well-known melody, the "Blue Bells of Scotland," is most excellent practice for the thumb of the right hand. The *accented* notes are picked with the second finger, and should be well accented. All the notes marked thus, ×, are picked with the thumb.

BLUE BELLS OF SCOTLAND.

Bass to B.

The following is an extract from the "Phantasmagoria Waltz;" it is a peculiar movement, and is executed, so far as the right hand fingering is concerned, very much like the variation on the "Blue Bells of Scotland;" the picking being done with the second finger and thumb. The accent should fall upon the 1st and 3d counts in each measure. The sign, ×, is used to designate the thumb—the notes thus marked being picked with the thumb. As

the movement throughout is the same, it is thought necessary to mark the thumb notes in the first three measures only, in this example.

The sign, thus: , indicates a slide, or shift of the finger from one note to another.

Musical score for a piece with tremolo movement. It consists of four staves of music in the key of D major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes markings for thumb notes (1, 2, 3, 4) and slides (5*, 3*, 8*). The second staff continues with similar markings (6*, 5*, 8*, 6*). The third and fourth staves feature first and second endings, indicated by '1' and '2' above the notes, and conclude with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Now we have another Example in the *tremolo* movement: This time it is "Home, Sweet Home," in the key of D. Those who have grown weary of the melody in the old-fashioned "key of A" will now see what satisfaction can be gotten out of it in a new key.

HOME, SWEET HOME.

Musical score for "Home, Sweet Home" in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The piece is marked with a *Tremolo.* dynamic and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score is divided into four staves. The first staff includes markings for thumb notes (5*, 10*, 5*) and a slide sign. The second staff continues with thumb notes (10*, 5*, 3*, 1*). The third and fourth staves feature more complex fingering (13*, 11*, 10*, 5*, 11*) and conclude with a *mf rit.* marking and a double bar line.

NOTATION AND PITCH.

In music, as in every thing else, a little knowledge is often a dangerous thing. Quite often those who know the least assume to be the wisest. Thus, often we find those who having taken up the Banjo, and possessing very little practical musical knowledge, at once set about to "revolutionize" the instrument and its musical notation. The most blatant subjects belonging to this class are found among the English banjo players, although we have typical representatives on this side of the Atlantic as well. From the time the American banjoist introduced the Banjo into England, the English banjoist has been at work showing us how banjo music should be written.

"Music should never have been written for the Banjo in the keys of A and E," says the English banjoist.—"It is all wrong. Here you are, playing in the key of C with the piano, and reading the notes in A. It's all wrong, I tell you, to play in one key and read in another. Why don't the American publisher change his music?—destroy all the plates and printed copies in America, and *get up new plates and print new editions in the keys the Banjo is tuned in?*"

And so wags the tongue of the banjo enthusiast, who possesses more volubility than knowledge, and like the empty vessel, "maketh a great sound." Yet, the self same person will take a Banjo and go boldly upon the stage,—tune the banjo in the pitch of B \sharp , with the piano, and "thump" out a March in the key of B \sharp , whilst *his music is written for his English Banjo in the key of C*. He never thinks of changing his music to B \sharp , when he tunes in that key; nor did such an idea ever enter his slow thinking brain:—only he wants some one else to change something,—he wants something;—he doesn't know exactly what;—but he wants to *talk*, anyhow, and he wants to publish his music in the way that suits him, whether it is practical or not;—and possessing only the veriest smattering of a knowledge of the Banjo, he "goes at it blindly," and gets all muddled up in his ideas. So is it that in England music is being published for the Banjo, which assumes the natural key of C as the "natural key of the Banjo," instead of the key of A, as long established in America; and thus American banjo music and English banjo music are two separate and distinct things, and the one who has been taught to play by the existing English system of musical notation can not read the American music, published for that instrument without first transposing it into another key.

One would naturally have supposed that the Banjo coming from America,—its musical notation having been established in America,—and America being the home of its greatest manufacturers and players,—the American system of noting music for it would have been adopted along with the instrument in England. But such was not the case, and the result is now found in the confusion of two systems of musical notation,—two bases as a foundation, instead of one;—and in the inconvenience the English performer is forced to submit to, by this confliction of keys, and consequent transpositions.

Many times has the writer received letters from exponents of the Banjo in England, complaining that they could not read American banjo music, and wishing to know why it was that our music was not published the same as theirs, assuming C as the natural key of the instrument instead of A. Now there is no precedent whatever to establish any such claim, as has been made, that C should be the basis of the banjo musical notation.

It is true that a great many banjos are so pitched or tuned that the string and note read as A corresponds with the note C, on the piano. It is equally true that smaller banjos are tuned higher and the same note or string corresponds with D on the piano. It is again true that other and larger banjos are tuned lower and the note read as A upon these instruments corresponds with B \sharp on the piano; and at the time the English banjo music first made its appearance more banjos were tuned to the B \sharp pitch than to C. But all this counts for very little. So long as we have a key for a ground work or basis from which to build the notation of the instrument, it makes no real difference whether we call that key A, B, or C; and the basis of this notation having been established already in America as A, and banjo music having been written on that basis, it became an act of the most unwarranted assumption to set up and seek to establish another key as a basis of notation for the instrument in opposition to one already established.

The setting up of the key of C as the natural one for banjo music would have been justifiable if no other key had already been established; but in the face of what had already been done by such writers as Frank B. Converse, and others,—ignoring the system of prominent American writers and performers,—was an act of jugglery, fostered by short-sighted individuals and had but a single excuse, namely this: The teachers were not familiar with musical notation and sought to avoid having to explain the *sharps, flats and naturals* to pupils, and hence singled out the natural key of C as a favorite one for teaching in—supposing that most of their pupils would not go any further than a few simple tunes in that key, when they would consider their banjo education finished.

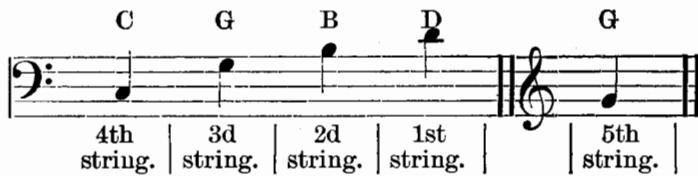
Teachers here in America have often complained that the keys of A and E, with their three and four sharps were difficult to start a pupil in who was not familiar with the rudiments of music, and have expressed a regret that C had not originally been selected in place of A, as the natural key; but none of them have ever gone so far as to think of undertaking a complete change of an established system. The real mistake is in setting pupils to work at the banjo before they have acquired a knowledge of the rudiments of music, and when those ignorant of musical principles are taken as banjo pupils, putting them right at banjo picking without any ground work to start on.

What is really needed is a greater cultivation of the study of musical principles—a better grounding in keys, scales, etc.,—before the pupil sets out to become a performer. The teacher who merely thinks of getting so much money from an aspiring pupil in exchange for showing how to pick the strings in the execution of few tunes, is not the one to establish a system of banjo playing; nor will such teachers ever rise beyond the level they have chosen for themselves.

There would be just as much sense in the Guitarist who makes a practice of tuning his guitar a half tone flat, changing the notation of his instrument on that account, as to change the notation of Banjo music from A to C, because the A of the Banjo is tuned to C of the piano. Even if the change spoken of were made, neither the Banjo or Guitar would be perfectly true to its notation, for each of those instruments sound an octave lower than the notes indicate, and to bring the musical notation absolutely correct it would have to be written partly in the *bass clef*. But some of our banjoists know about as much of the "Bass Clef," as they know of their great-grandfather's grandfather.

"CONCERT PITCH."

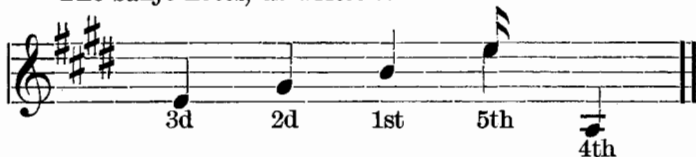
Nearly all the banjo players of the day, in performing with piano accompaniment, and in tuning to play with Guitar, Mandolin, Violin, Flute and other instruments, pitch their banjos in "C." That is, it is now customary to tune the fourth or bass string of the Banjo to the note C; and consequently when the Banjo is played in the key of A, according to its musical notation, the piano and other instruments play in the key of C. The Banjo being pitched thus, the five strings of the instrument correspond to the following notes of the piano.



The above represents the actual notes produced by the five open strings of the Banjo, when tuned to play with piano or organ; and music now published for banjo and piano, in the form of duets, is arranged to suit this tuning. The reading of the notes on the Banjo, will in no wise be changed,—no matter in what pitch the banjo may be tuned; so there is no occasion for the pupil to be perplexed or mystified on account the seeming difference in the actual pitch of the notes on the piano, and the printed notes in his banjo music.

First tune the fourth (bass) string of the Banjo to C, with the piano, and then tune the remaining strings just as you would without the piano. After tuning, try the strings with the notes of the piano, as follows, and see that you are well in tune before beginning to play.

The banjo notes, as written :—



Correspond with, on the piano :—



In tuning the Banjo with guitar, let the guitarist first tune his guitar to concert pitch, and then tune the *third* string of the Banjo, the same as the third, or G string, of the guitar. Or, tune the bass string of the Banjo to the

note C, found on the fifth string of the guitar at the *third* fret.

To tune the Banjo to play with the mandolin or the violin, tune the *third* string of Banjo to the fourth string (G) of the mandolin or violin.

As has been said, the key of "A" on the Banjo will correspond with the key of C on the piano, organ, mandolin, guitar and violin. Any other key will, of course, be subject to the same rule—no change of this tuning pitch being required in any case. Thus, the key of "E," on the Banjo, will correspond with G on those instruments; the key of "D," on the Banjo, with F on the other instruments; the key of "C" on the Banjo, with E \flat ; the key of "A minor," with C minor; the key of "F \sharp minor," with A minor; and so on.

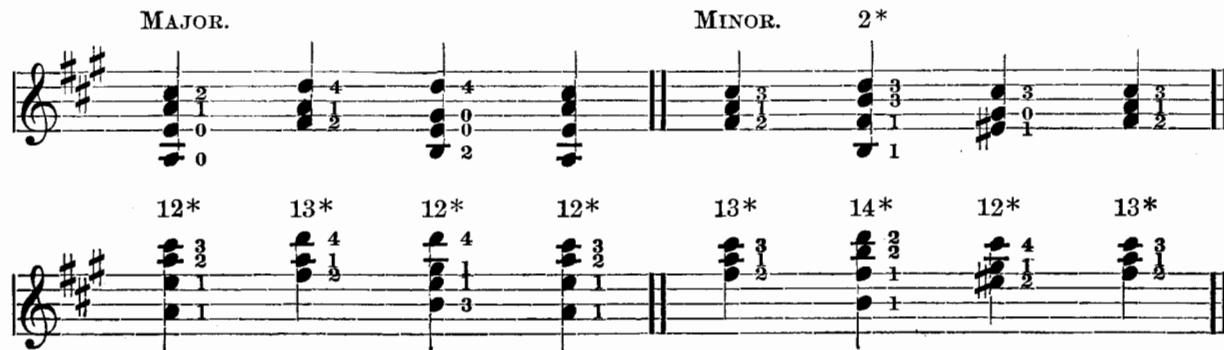
Some banjos—smaller ones—require tuning to a consequently higher pitch; and others—extra large ones—to a lower pitch, of course; and such instruments do not come within the rule laid down above for tuning. But the pitch, as given, suits the great majority of Banjos now being manufactured, and as it would not be a paying business to go to the expense of publishing music for the Banjo, with piano parts in more than one key, the "C" pitch has been adopted as the most appropriate and practicable.

For the method of tuning and arranging Banjos of various sizes, to be used in orchestral combinations, together with guitars, mandolins and other instruments, the reader is referred to an excellent treatise on that subject, entitled "*Hints to Arrangers and Leaders of Banjo Clubs*," by Thomas J. Armstrong, which is published by the writer of these articles.

READING IN "THE POSITIONS."

In learning to read notes in the "positions," on the banjo, it should be impressed upon the mind of the pupil that the four strings are divided exactly by the 12th fret, and as previously explained, the notes on any of those strings, from the 12th fret upwards, will be an octave higher than in counting from the nut upwards. The fifth string, of course, if fingered, will not come within this rule; as it begins only at the 5th fret. The 17th fret, therefore, will produce the octave of this string.

The following simple chords are given, first in the lower position, and then an octave higher. By practicing them a few times, as written, the pupil will get the idea correctly in mind of the dividing line—or 12th fret.



Following out this principle, the reader has only to remember that in stopping the strings at the 12th fret, the notes produced are the same (if the string is true) as the open strings produce—but an octave higher. Therefore, any note that is produced at the 1st fret on any string, finds its octave at the 13th fret. For illustration, on the second string at the 1st fret, we have A; therefore we find the same note, an octave higher, on the same string at the 13th fret. The same rule applying to all transpositions

on stringed instruments, it will not be difficult for the student, after a little practice in the right direction, to acquire skill in reading chords and music in any of the higher "positions" on the banjo fingerboard.

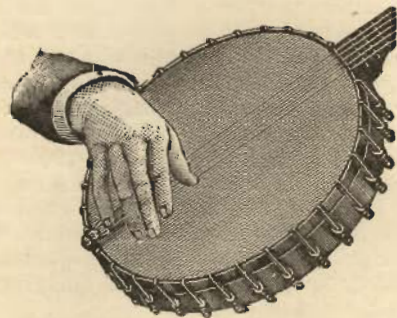
The following scales of E and A major, are given in two octaves:—the second octave of each scale to be played in the "positions."

DRUM CHORDS.

On page 24 of the *American Banjo School*, will be found some remarks on "Drum Chords." The drum effect is very nicely introduced into some military movements, called in banjo parlance, "Drum Marches," etc., but there appear to be comparatively few banjo players who rightly understand or properly perform this movement.

As the *American School* was originally printed entirely from engraved plates, it was not possible to introduce wood engravings, or a great amount of explanatory matter. I therefore now append the following cuts and explanatory remarks concerning this movement.

The following wood engraving represents the position of right hand assumed in striking the strings near the

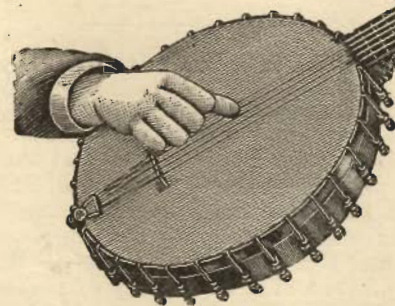


bridge with the ball of the thumb—or with the thumb, proper,—not with the end of the thumb.

Immediately after the chord is made by striking the strings with the thumb the hand is quickly closed, and the roll is then made, by rapidly opening the four fingers

of the hand, from the little finger to the first, so that the nails come in contact with the strings.

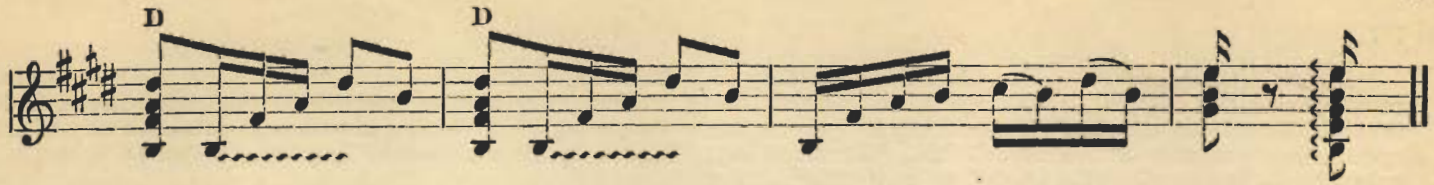
The following illustration shows the hand closed, in



the act of making the "roll" over the strings—but I am unable to give on paper an illustration of the position of the fingers in the act of performing the next operation, as much as I should like to do so for the benefit of the many who may not fully understand this movement.

In the following example, the "drum chord" should be struck with the thumb on the strings near to the bridge, with the right hand—the left hand being used as in any other chord of the same kind. The hand then being closed, the fingers are opened vigorously, beginning with the little finger, followed by the third, then the second and first. The back of the nails of all the fingers are to come in contact with the strings, as the hand moves downwards a little in the act of making the "roll." Many performers do not practice this movement sufficiently to enable them to make the notes clearly and acutely. A practice of partly closing the hand and then sliding the fingers over the strings is but a poor substitute for the legitimate movement.

HERNANDEZ'S DRUM MARCH.



The chords marked D are the "drum chords." The triplet and succeeding note form the "roll," as explained. Marks like this \wedge , are marks of expression, signifying a strong accent to be given such notes or double notes. The wavy line, thus: ~~~~~, indicates the roll, which in drum chords is made, as explained, in this department, by the opening of the fingers over the strings. In thimble playing such a sign would indicate the sliding of the thimble over the strings.

The wavy line that appears in connection with the last chord in the example, simply indicates an arpeggio chord, as explained on page 24 of the *American School*,—one note to follow another in the regular "picking" style with thumb and three fingers.

It is necessary, of course, to perform the notes in the roll, including the drum chord, in perfect time, which the pupil will not be able to accomplish with good effect until he has, by practice, suppld and strengthened the fingers and so educated them, as it were, to the work.

A very good method for doing this is to practice the movement of the hand upon a table, or upon any flat surface within easy access, until the movement is easily and accurately accomplished.

MUSICAL EXPRESSION.

It is not unusual to meet with banjo players—and even with teachers—who will declare that slow movements are not suitable for the Banjo at all, and that they never attempt to play anything "slow," or in the case of teachers, that they give any "slow movements" to pupils, as the pupils will not tolerate such lessons, wishing to learn only music that is quick and lively. Hence, we have many banjo players who, in the way of playing a few jigs, polkas, schottisches or marches, may be entitled to the name of "banjoist," and yet who are very far from being musicians and artists. Up to within a very few years ago banjo music had not become developed to that extent that made slow movements a feature of banjo playing, and players of the class alluded to could get along very well with a small stock of lively airs—and selections, some of which were a mere "jingle," and far from being worthy of the name of musical compositions. But art in the Banjo line is advancing—what would have passed muster ten or twenty years ago, as banjo music, will not hold today; for now musicians of culture listen to the Banjo, and many have taken it up. The lights and shades of music on the Banjo can no more be passed by to-day, than can the "simple method" fakir of a few years ago, find recognition as a banjo artist in the concert room or musical soiree. When we gaze upon a painting—the work of a great artist—we do not see all bright colors, without shade—or all dark colors,—but the combination of all, and each in its proper place.

It is this bringing of the lights and shades into music that gives it *expression*. and it is the *artist* who expresses himself in his music. The mere botch can perhaps run through a difficult musical composition and play the notes or chords mechanically, as written; but the musical artist enters into affinity with the composition he performs, and coming thoroughly *en rapport* with the music, produces

altogether a different rendition of the same composition.

There is no use, nowadays, in a person picking up a banjo and thumping upon it with all his might in a vain attempt to out do the piano player—or guitar player—who is accompanying him, if he wishes to be classed as a banjo artist. Musical art links itself not with pugilistic encounters or with feats of hard punching of boxing bags. Every thing is good in its proper place, else it would not exist. And the "banjo slugger" will exist in his proper place, perhaps, until, at least, he has learned better, and advanced out of that sphere; but he can have no place in musical art. But, not to further digress, let me say a few words to the teacher and pupil of the Banjo, upon *expression in banjo music*.

The signs *f*, *ff*, *p*, and *pp*, when placed in music mean something. They are not to be overlooked or passed by as mere accidents of the composer, or as if they had merely dropped into the plate by some strange mistake of the printer. The sign, *f*, meaning *forte*, loud, should be observed; just as its opposite, *p*, meaning *piano*, soft, should be observed. *mf*, signifying, more loud, or more tone, means that the volume of tone should at that place be increased. When the word *dolce*, appears at the beginning of a composition, it means that it is to be sweetly played; but the extent of the sweetness imparted to it depends upon the nature and ability of the performer, of course.

To attempt a review of the various signs and terms used in music does not come within the scope of the present article, but there are many excellent musical works published, from which a thorough knowledge of this subject may be obtained, the most complete of which is believed to be "Stainer and Barretts' Dictionary of Musical Terms," published by Oliver Ditson Co.

It is sometimes customary with the soloist to give his own interpretation to the composition he plays, and to have an accompanist who is gifted in the art of "following," as it is termed, so that the various signs placed in the music are not strictly followed,—the accompanist having the music before him, but taking care to follow the soloist accurately, and to give his interpretation of the music, rather than that of the composer. I am not prepared to say that this is not correct, so far as it applies to such cases; but it will not answer for orchestral playing, for if each performer in a banjo club should give his own ideas full scope what a sorry mixture the combination would be likely to produce can be imagined from what some of us have already heard.

Therefore, I say, to the teacher—instruct your pupils to follow the marks of expression found in the musical compositions you are teaching them. To the pupil, I say, study the marks of expression found in the music, as well as the notes. There is no use in playing *tremolo* music on the banjo unless you give the music proper expression. In listening to an oration from a public speaker you do not hear him deliver his words and sentences like a machine, or as though he were wound up, to go along in a purely mechanical manner—all the words having the same emphasis; but on the other hand, you perceive that he makes use of the signs *p*, *f*, and *ff*, where he becomes enthused upon his subject, and when some particularly

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striking point is reached. And just so in music does the composer endeavor to make a distinction in the relative force of certain musical sentences, so to speak. But as no two orators deliver an oration in precisely the same way, perchance no two musical artists may place the same stress upon the same musical passage,—this being a matter of individuality, after a certain point. But until the pupil has arrived at a point where he can with safety place himself upon a level with his teacher, or the composer whose music he plays, he had better content himself with following the marks and signs of expression given to the music by the composer thereof.

There are some performers and writers, who take great liberties with the music of composers of standing. Sometimes, in writing variations for the Banjo, on a certain melody, they will depart far from the original, in order, as they suppose, to give it a better harmony. When the *melody* has got to be changed in order to produce cer-

tain desired effects in *harmony*, a liberty has been taken with the work of another that evidently was never intended by the composer. Again, we find enthusiastic banjo players frequently changing a standard melody for the sake of producing what appears to them an improved musical effect, or perhaps to give expression to a certain part of it. In such cases, I should again observe that undue liberties have been taken with the composition, and if the arranger has to resort to such doubtful expedients, he had better leave the melody to itself and set about composing something of his own, where full scope can be given to his peculiar ideas on harmony. The introduction of modulations into a musical composition merely for the sake of modulating, is not in good taste, and pieces so arranged are fit only for exercises.

The following melody, in chords, will be found of use as an exercise and amusement for the student.

In the following Exercise in G major, the double notes are made entirely upon the third and fourth strings. In denoting the "positions," the rule previously laid down has been followed—that is, the first finger of left hand establishes the position; and when the first finger is not used to stop a string in any of the chords, the fret at which that finger would fall naturally, is taken as estab-

lishing the position. The fingering for left hand, as denoted, is given with a view to retaining the musical effect of the shift; as the hand glides from one position to another, as the exercise is intended to be performed *legato*, or in a connected manner.

The right hand work may be done entirely with the thumb, if desired, in playing the exercise.

SCALE OF G MAJOR.

EXERCISE.—“DOUBLE STOPS” IN G.
(Played entirely upon the third and fourth strings.)

Note.—The left hand positions, under Mr. Converse's method of noting, would be somewhat different from those marked in the example: for instance, in the third measure, that marked "8*" would, under Mr. Converse's plan, be called 9*, because the *lowest stopped note* is found at the 9th fret; that marked "6*" would be called 7* for the same reason, and so on. Here we establish our "position" from the fret at which the *first finger* is placed, and Converse's method, establishes the position from the *lowest stopped note* in any chord. This difference in designating positions is of no great importance to the skilled performer, as he can judge of the *position* from the notes before him, but it is important for the student to observe.

In an example like the foregoing, where the chords,

or double notes, may be made on the banjo in two or more positions, it is a specially important matter that the "positions" intended by the composer or arranger should be intelligible to the performer, for if played in other positions than intended a very different musical effect may be imparted.

As an example of expressive banjo music, the writer knows of nothing superior to the following; for simplicity and purity it can not be surpassed.

The melody is an old one, it is true, but has never before been used as a Banjo subject. It is called "*Eva to Her Papa*," by G. C. Howard, of "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" fame, and is used by the permission of Oliver Ditson Company, owners of the copyright.

Tremolo.
Andante religioso.

EMBELLISHMENTS.—GRACE NOTES.

The introduction of grace notes, or embellishments, into banjo music is often productive of good effect; but when overdone the reverse is apt to be the case. Sometimes we find passages in a good musical composition so overdone with embellishments, that it is better for the pupil to entirely omit the "graces" in practicing the selection, in order to avoid being overwhelmed in confusion. Often the over-embellishment of banjo music keeps the fingers of the player busy to such an extent that one does not know but that he is troubled with some nervous affection,—the fingers not having time to settle long enough upon the notes forming the melody, proper, to insure their impression upon the ear,—and the fingers twitching about, in attempting to get the grace notes all in in good time, is not a desirable addition to the performance.

The grace note as introduced in the following example produces a very nice effect.



Again, in the following example, we have another kind of grace note embellishment, that is also appropriate.



Example No. 5 presents the same passage over-embellished, but not more so than some of the banjo music now offered for sale.

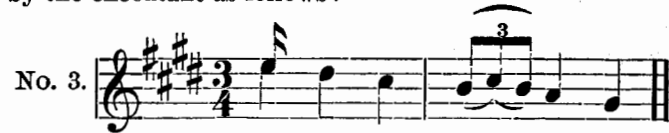


The over-embellishment of music is an extreme to which some writers must go—just as some people run into extremes in other things; but for the majority of musical compositions we think the fewer grace notes that are used the better,—both for the music and the performer.

THE SIX STRING BANJO.

There are two separate and distinct kinds of six string Banjos; the one is strung, tuned and played precisely like a Guitar,—the other precisely like the ordinary five string Banjo, with this difference:—the neck is made a little wider and there is an additional peg set in the centre of the scroll, so as to make five pegs in the peg-head instead of four. The extra peg is used for the fourth string, (the regulation bass string) whilst the peg that usually holds this string is used for the extra bass string. The five string Banjo with the additional bass string, then, becomes the six string Banjo. The short string remains, to be used, or not, as occasion may require. The extra bass string is tuned a fifth—or sometimes a fourth—below the fourth string, or ordinary bass string.

The foregoing (No. 2) example would be expressed by the executant as follows:



There are two kinds of grace notes used to embellish music—the long and the short; called in musical parlance by the tongue-twisting name of the "long and short appoggiatura."

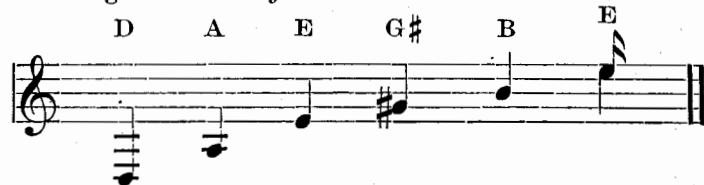
The short grace note is usually written thus, ♯ , and borrows very little time from the note that follows it. In fact, there is no rule for deciding the exact time to be given to the short grace note, and it may be omitted from the performance altogether if desired.

With the long grace note it is different—as will be seen by comparing Example No. 1, as written, with Example No. 2, as played.

It is a matter that has never been clearly explained to the writer, as to why the long appoggiatura was ever devised and used in music. The same passages could be more clearly expressed in notes of the usual size and value, but the "long grace note" seems to remain as one of the impediments to the successful study of music, by many amateurs.

The Example No. 4 is given to display a passage having slight embellishment by the employment of the short grace note.

Hence, the six strings of this Banjo correspond to the following notes in banjo musical notation.



For convenience sake, and to avoid confusion in terms, we designate the second bass string the *sixth string*, as the short string is so generally recognized as the fifth string.

The six string Banjo is of very great advantage in playing duets, or in combinations of Banjos. As an instrument of accompaniment it is far superior to the five string Banjo, and its use for this purpose in conjunction with the five string Banjo forms an excellent musical combination. The addition of the extra bass string gives the performer the fundamental note of many chords in which this note is lacking on the five string instrument, while the harmony is, of course, much richer and more

powerful. The writer does not admire the six string Banjo as a solo instrument for all "around playing," not thinking it as brilliant for this purpose as the five string instrument,—the extra bass string seeming to lessen the power of the higher notes,—but for the purpose of playing an accompaniment to the solo on the five string Banjo or Banjeaurine, or upon the Mandolin, the six string Banjo is vastly superior to the five string Banjo, or the guitar.

A good six string Banjo costs from thirty dollars upwards. Those who play the "second banjo" parts in Banjo Clubs would do well to adopt the six string Banjo, as it does not require much time to acquire facility in the use of the same and the music produced is far superior to that of the five string Banjo for the same purpose.

In the *Eclectic Banjo School*, part second, by John H. Lee, will be found full instruction for playing accompaniments on the six string Banjo, together with a complete set of chords for the instrument. The late Mr. Lee was a firm believer in this instrument and a warm advocate of its use for the purpose I have named, and his accompaniments to the banjo solos of Mr. W. A. Huntley, will long be remembered with pleasure by those who were so fortunate as to have heard those gentlemen perform in concert.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Not only is a knowledge of notes and of musical notation necessary to the banjoist of the day, but also a practical knowledge of the mechanical principles of his instrument. He should know when his Banjo is properly equipped—should know when it has a good and proper head upon it—should be able to rightly judge of this, and must know when it is rightly and properly strung; and should fully understand how to regulate his instruments and maintain them in proper condition for the use required, and be prepared for all exigencies.

When we come to consider that the best instrument possible to construct in the shape of a Banjo may be rendered very inferior by having an inferior or unsuitable head upon it, or one that is improperly put on and adjusted,—or the bad influence of improper strings, we perceive the necessity of understanding the matter of properly *Heading* and *Stringing* the instrument. It is well, at the same time, to bear in mind that a Banjo that is not otherwise properly constructed can not possibly be transformed into a perfect instrument by changing the head or strings, although it is quite often the case that a poor instrument is improved to a greater or less extent by so doing.

A good workman should understand the tools or machine with which he operates, otherwise he cannot of himself keep them in good working condition. The cyclist who travels over long distances must understand the mechanical construction of the machine that carries him, or he is likely to be detained some time or other by his machine getting out of working order, and leaving him in the lurch, to continue his journey on foot.

The horseman must understand his animal, if he rides and depends upon the faithful horse to carry him—otherwise he too is likely to be "left" some day, through complete dependence upon his groom. In fact, the artist or artisan who understands the implements with which he works is always better off than the mere mechanical workman who proceeds, as it were, in an automaton like manner—doing only that which he has acquired by the constant repetition daily of one thing only—and that mechanically.

It is not by any means meant to infer that a banjoist must understand fully all the details of the manufacture of banjos, but that he should have a practical knowledge of the instrument as it is constructed, and that this knowledge does not require any very great amount of

time or study to acquire and will greatly assist him in his performances, by aiding him in keeping his instruments in the best playing condition. This alone will give him an advantage over those performers who possess merely a superficial knowledge of picking the strings. Therefore it is hoped that the remarks contained in these articles will be welcome to the banjo student of the day, for he will find here, what he can find no where else,—the necessary instruction in this branch.

How often it happens that a learner will take or send his banjo to the manufacturer, complaining that the frets in some of the upper positions are *false*,—or have suddenly gotten false,—from say the 7th fret upwards; when, had he possessed the information given in this work, he would have known that it was simply impossible for the fretting to have become false of itself, after once having been true. Possessing the information given in these articles he would naturally look first to the position of the *bridge* upon the head of the instrument, and then to the strings. But there are many amateurs to-day, posing as banjoists, who do not know any thing about the proper position of the bridge—or how to ascertain the exact place it should rest upon the head, by calculating from the 12th fret,—and they therefore depend upon the mark which has been placed upon the head by the manufacturer, and which is liable to become effaced, or slightly changed in position, in the stretching of the head.

Again, many an amateur does not know when a false string is on his instrument—or if he has one, two or more strings that are false, and must therefore be more or less annoyed in practice or performing—and as is frequently the case,—becomes, for the time being, discouraged and lays the Banjo aside for a while, when for lack of a little knowledge he loses time and meets with a possible setback to acquiring a desirable mastery of the instrument. For these reasons, as stated, I have included in this work a few observations upon the instrument that I think cannot but be of practical service to the banjo student—the teacher and the performer.

Practice is absolutely necessary to the banjo student who aims to acquire skill in execution. Strength and suppleness of the fingers are essential to success in a brilliant execution; as for this, dexterity of fingering must be coupled with musical knowledge. An hour's daily practice—or even a half hour, providing the right things are practiced—is sufficient to keep the fingers of the amateur in good condition for work. We have performers to-day, who by constant practice, and concentrated energy have advanced as executants far beyond what was deemed possible a few years ago. It is no doubt possible,—by concentrating the mind constantly upon the work and practicing the greater part of the time,—for some persons to become almost wonderful performers upon the instrument; but whether it is well,—or a good thing,—to devote all one's time, or the greater part of one's life to this one thing is a question. It is hardly possible that the true aim of life consists of becoming a sort of "musical block-head,"—only fit for one thing; but there is little doubt that a fair amount of banjo playing and musical study may become, not only a source of pleasant amusement and recreation, but also an educator and developer of the mind,—and the Banjo itself a companion and friend in many otherwise weary hours, and a cheering and enlivening companion after protracted work in other directions.

With this observation I will draw my "Observations" to a close, wishing that all who peruse these remarks and practice the musical examples included herein, may meet with the fulfillment of their fullest musical aspirations, and hoping that inspiration may enable some of them, at least, to add in the future to the stock of information I have been enabled to give.