

medium. May not this ideal singable perfection be within our grasp instrumentally when the right hand, hitherto only schooled by necessity, is adequately developed in a physical sense?

An acquaintance with every exercise which has been devised for the development of the left hand of the string instrument player is a practical impossibility. It is sufficient to know the best, such as Carl Flesch's "Basic Studies for the Violin." Strange to say, however, there are few exercises for the right hand; indeed the right hand has only a small and partial opportunity for practice; and this in spite of the fact that the fingers of the right hand are as active as those of the left. Yet independence of the fingers of the right hand, suppleness and ability to combine as individual factors in the use of the bow, is imperative. That maximum freedom of motion demanded of the right hand can be obtained only by mastering the necessary practical means of securing it. Hence, to increase the right hand's reserves of muscular strength and elasticity, if not as much time, then, at least as much attention must be devoted to it as to the privileged left hand. This ambidexterity of the hands is essential in many sports, and it is surprising to find hardly any provision made for organic training of the bow hand in the case of the violin player, of whom so sensitive and delicate a use of arm and hand is demanded.

Those who have been privileged to observe some of our great artists in their work-room intimacy, realize that intellect has given its final finish to perfection, that little is left to chance, and that it is not genius, but talent, that insists on the most thorough-going process of clarification.

Beginning with the first lesson, the development of the right hand is left to chance. It often happens that the young violinist who laments his poor tone or awkward wrist only awakens after years to the need of thought and effort toward overcoming his defects. And often, the awakening comes so late that the realization of his wishes is difficult, if not impossible.

The studies which follow do not represent any arbitrary system, but have resulted entirely from the division of a single stroke of the bow according to the individual activity of the various participating muscles of fingers and hand, and its subsequent development. There is no question of far-fetched gymnastics with a mechanical apparatus; the fingers are prepared and developed for their work, on the bow itself, the instrument of the right hand.

The following exercises may be carried out in a few minutes, yet if carefully gone over each day will within a short time develop a light hand and hence a good tone—good results quite out of proportion to the slight investment of effort demanded.

In order to practice the exercises which follow, hold the bow before you as though it were resting in the middle on the open D-string. The thumb should be bent, the fingers close beside one another on the bow, as every elementary scholar is taught, in a perfectly \* natural position.

I might say at once that not only should the exercises be carried out without strain or stress, but that a correct

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\* As a descriptive text book Richard Scholz' "The Technique of the Violin," cannot be too highly recommended to the young violinist.

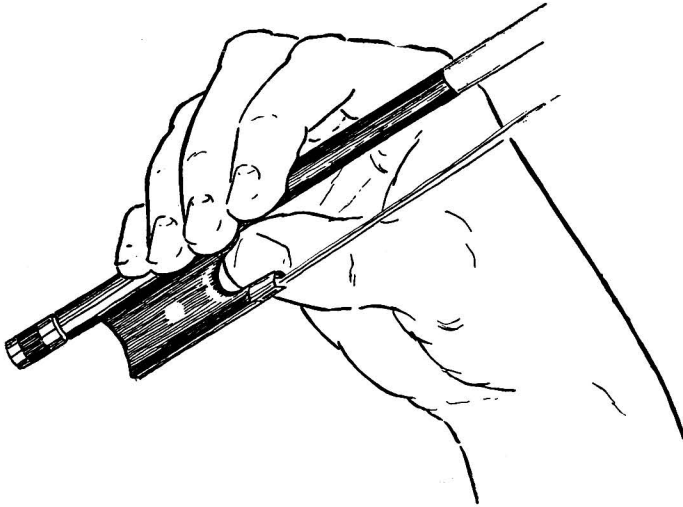
performance of the eleven exercise groups should exhaust the working capacity of the fingers. In this way only can the muscles be strengthened and the period when fatigue makes itself felt be gradually deferred. The movements themselves should gain in breadth and sweep, for only the greater power thus acquired will make the student excel in actual play. Common-sense, naturally, should prevent over-exertion. Hence the number of exercises to be repeated is exactly prescribed, and they should be taken up but once a day, preferably in the morning, before beginning the musical work of the day. The carrying out of this idea demands the greatest possible regularity and devotion.

# RIGHT HAND CULTURE

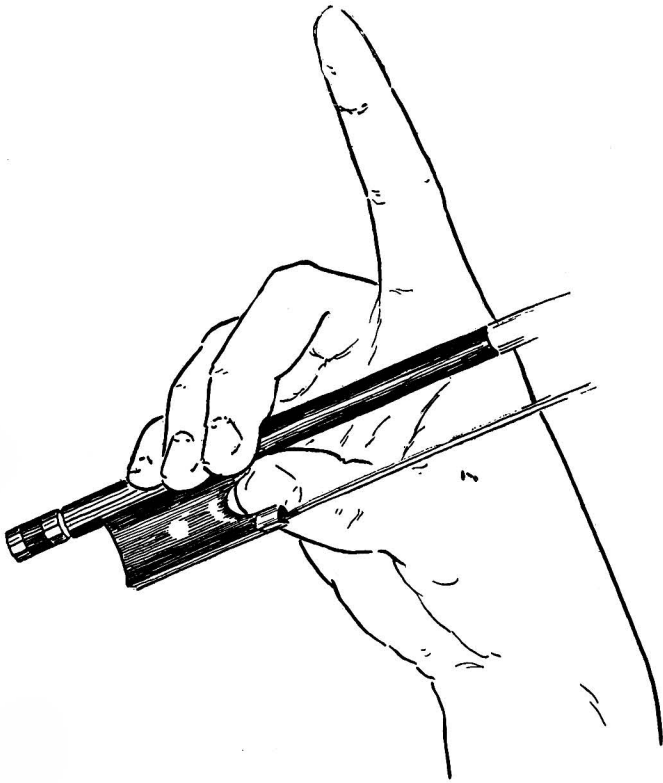
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## EXERCISE I.

With the hand in position as indicated in the foreword, the forefinger is to be lifted lightly from the bow; raise it without straining and let it drop on the bow again. The finger could be raised without any effort at all, yet this would serve no useful purpose. An amount of exertion which would cause the muscles of arm and shoulder to ache is not called for, but a certain energy will be necessary in order to accomplish our aim of strengthening the fingers. The movement described should be repeated, in turn, by the second, third and fourth fingers. Then, beginning again with the forefinger, the whole exercise should be repeated eight times.



III. 1a.—General position of the hand.



III. Ib.—Position of the hand with first finger raised.

## EXERCISE II.

This exercise is a natural development of its predecessor. It differs from it only inasmuch that, while dropping the first finger, the second is raised at the same time. This movement is distantly akin to a trill on a keyboard instrument, though very slow, as conditioned by the proper finger-control. The combination of the fingers is expressed by the following numbers:

1 . . . . 2 . . . . 1 . . . . 2 . . . . 1 . . . . 2 . . . . 1 . . . . 2

These numbers indicate which finger (first or second); is to be raised.

Lift the finger from its bent position on the bow, and raise it stretched out, as far as possible away from the bow itself. The remaining fingers rest passively on the bow, uninfluenced by the movement of the practicing fingers—a point to which special attention should be paid. The position of the thumb should not be changed, nor should it be bent inward. A tendency to do so will also be manifest in the fingers nearest those in action, and should be controlled. In the same manner as already shown, the remaining fingers should also be exercised:

3 . . . . 2 . . . . 3 . . . . 2 . . . . 3 . . . . 2 . . . . 3 . . . . 2

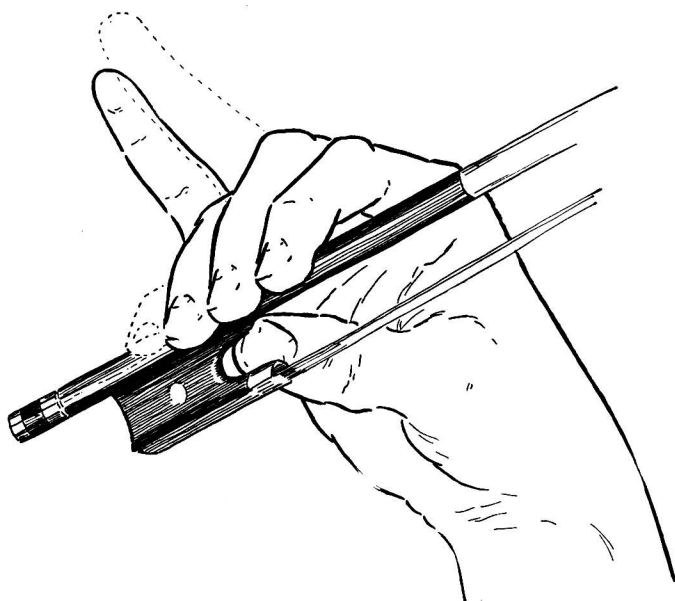
4 . . . . 3 . . . . 4 . . . . 3 . . . . 4 . . . . 3 . . . . 4 . . . . 3

1 . . . . 4 . . . . 1 . . . . 4 . . . . 1 . . . . 4 . . . . 1 . . . . 4

1 . . . . 3 . . . . 1 . . . . 3 . . . . 1 . . . . 3 . . . . 1 . . . . 3

2 . . . . 4 . . . . 2 . . . . 4 . . . . 2 . . . . 4 . . . . 2 . . . . 4

This exercise should be repeated four times.



III. II.—Position of the hand with interchangeable third and fourth finger.