

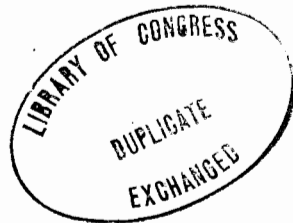
S. S. STEWART'S

BANJO  GUITAR

JOURNAL.

JUNE, 1887.

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Banjo and Guitar Music Album.

THE LONG AND SHORT WAYS.

The Hard and Easy Systems contrasted

HOW BEST TO BECOME A BANJO PLAYER.

There are many who take up the banjo and musical studies who, through lack of proper guidance and a mistaken conception of what they are about to do, succeed only in becoming discouraged, and in the end, concluding that they cannot become players.

When you have decided to begin the pleasant study of music, and to acquire the delightful accomplishment of banjo playing, it is well to consider the importance of making a good beginning, and thus saving unnecessary loss of valuable time. Often what may appear the *shortest* way to the uninitiated beginner turns out to be the *longest* way—or, sometimes, in fact, no way at all.

If you have never "learned your notes," never studied the rudiments of banjo playing you may perhaps think that the easiest way as well as the quickest way to learn to play is to dispense with all such old-fashioned methods as musical notation and to adopt one of the latest improved methods (?) of playing "without notes or study." But the experience of hundreds has been that the seemingly shortest way is not always the shortest way in reality.

The "shortest way" is the way that leads to the desired destination in the shortest time. But the way which leads nowhere—simply carrying you around the circle, back to the starting point, cannot be called a short or quick way.

A boy, during his early school-days, cannot always understand the advantages or uses of his studies selected for him by his parents or teachers—and yet if he shirks his studies whilst at school he may live to bitterly regret it. It is said that "the boy is father of the man." This evidently has reference to the fact that the actions of youth have a bearing upon and frequently are a father to the boy after he has grown into manhood.

"As the twig (or young tree) is bent, so is the tree (matured tree) inclined." He who shirks his studies when young, and arrives at "middle age" before he awakens to the fact that he should have followed a different course, is inclined towards ignorance for the balance of his days. And yet there are those who, having arrived at mature age and awakening to the fact that they are ignorant, apply themselves to certain branches of study with a zeal and vim which enables them to master many previously considered unsurmountable difficulties. But it is nearly always best to begin in the sunny days of youth.

It may seem to you, reader, that you can learn the banjo or guitar without the aid of musical notation just as well, and advance just as rapidly as a performer without laborious study, as you can therewith, and the study of musical notes and scales may appear to you as a useless waste of time; but you may live to see the time when you will wish that you had mastered the rudiments of music whilst your mind was active and pliable. You may see the time come when your favorite "short-method" system utterly fails to meet your requirements, and for the reason of having no foundation to stand upon you must either go back and start over again or else give up "music" in disgust. Hence, it is better to start aright.

A work, published some years ago, on the violin, speaking of *Great Violinists*, says: "I will now give you the names of some of the most celebrated performers on the violin, and a few brief facts in their history. This remark concerning each one of them is true: There was a time when they knew nothing more about the violin than you do, or did when you began to play, and the *excellence to which they attained was acquired*. Had they been idle, careless and inattentive, they would never have arrived at any degree of eminence."

The writer then proceeds with the names of violinists, beginning with Paganini, and naming others who were noted as violin virtuosi in their day.

Now, as to the latter remark, that had these artists been idle, careless and inattentive, they would never have arrived at any degree of eminence, we entirely agree with the author of the work in question, and the same is applicable to those of our banjo players. But that "*the excellence to which they attained was acquired*," is true only to a limited extent, especially if the reputation possessed by the artists is to be included in this *excellence*.

We know very well that others have spent much time and energy in practice and study of the violin, but this has not insured them the excellence of Paganini, nor his reputation; nor has it made Ole Bulls, Vieux Temps, Spohrs or De Beriot's of the great numbers who give years of study and persevering practice to the instrument. And although by practice, together with proper study and instruction, almost any musically-inclined person can become a player of the violin, guitar, banjo or other instrument, yet it is not true that anyone can, by any amount of study and practice, become a virtuoso; yet practice and study are the ways which lead to the goal.

That "there was a time when they knew nothing, &c." is indeed true; but this time in Paganini's case must have been when he was quite a young child, for we understand that he began the study of music whilst almost an infant. So this clearly does not apply to readers or students; it may, however, apply through them, to their children.

The oak tree comes from the acorn. With the elements contained in and around the earth, aided and acted upon by the sunlight, the tree comes forth. The germ, however, is in the acorn, and if that is not planted in the ground there will be no oak tree, no matter how much earth, air and sunshine there may be. Paganini was a born master of the violin. The power in him was inborn and developed by practice and study—but never *acquired*. And so with all the other virtuosi of the violin.

Precisely the same can be said of our leading banjo players and those who are to come. They develop their power of playing by *study*, coupled with proper

instruction, and perfected by *incessant practice*—they can *acquire* no talent—neither can you. It is in them developed, but it may be in you undeveloped. If so, will you stifle and stunt it by pursuing a course of instruction in the "Simplified Method?" Or will you follow the path of the masters of music? You can take either way you choose, but it will be well for you to choose the right one at the start.

"Yes, but how shall I know whether I have any musical talent? How do I know that I can learn music—or become a player?"

Mighty question this: Is not a *desire to learn*, together with the will to push on, study and practice, sufficient to teach you that you must have at least some talent or musical taste?

You may not, perhaps, have what phrenologists call the bumps of time and tune prominent in your cranial development, nor either the genius, or that something which made Paganini stand at the summit of violin virtuosi. But you may have musical abilities which, if properly directed and trained, will make you a good player and a good musician. But before you can be master you must first be pupil. If you cannot find a suitable personal teacher seek such books or printed lessons and instruction as you can readily learn to comprehend. *Begin at the beginning*. It may seem to you at the start to be a long and arduous way to learn to play on the banjo—when you can get some simple method note dropper or time killer to teach you a few tunes in so short a time. But this "short time" will surely be as so much time entirely wasted if you think to become a proficient player. If you have paid a teacher of this class in advance for lessons, don't wait until you have got all the lessons you have paid for, but drop him at once. If you do not you are on the wrong road—you are on the road to *nowhere in particular*—you have taken the long instead of the short way. We are not now speaking to those whose object is to learn some easy tunes for pastime only, or perhaps accompaniment to comic songs; we are speaking to the rising school—the coming artists and the proficient amateur that is to be.

The more time you waste on the "simplified methods" of the present day the surer you are of becoming a musical block-head. You may not realize just yet how badly the music of this class of players sounds to one who has made any progress in music, but after you have become only a little further advanced in the right way you will wonder how you could ever have been charmed by the music of such mongers.

The "Hop de dooden do" school is rapidly dying out, and carries down with it the "Plantation Jug" and Nigger on a fence" school of players.

Don't hitch on to the coat tails of such a school—Don't ship on board the fast sinking vessel, but keep a firm hold on the "Rock of Ages;" that which will never sink and never go down. This rock is the right way—the true way and the *only* short way. It is music, the music of the masters and the musical notation written on the five parallel lines without "open and closed" notes or the disconnected what-do-you-call-ems which has caused musicians to ridicule and belittle the banjo as a musical instrument. It is the music used by violinists, the music used by pianists, the music used by flutists, the music used by all legitimate musicians on any instrument, the study of which opens to you the only short and true way to becoming a musician. To him who understands all things are easy. To him who cannot comprehend all must be mysterious and hard. Then why not begin at the beginning and learn the names of all the notes? After you have

learned this, locate them all upon the fingerboard. When you do this readily, train your fingers in picking them out. When you have acquired this you have made such a start as will prove to you that you are on the right road and have found the short way. Music will then begin to lose a little of its former mystery, and as you gain confidence you will proceed by a system of steps, taking care to frequently review all that you have previously learned.

After you have learned to locate all the notes on the banjo finger board and have acquired the art of properly tuning the instrument, you will begin to consider as to which is the best course to pursue—whether to acquire the execution of a number of easy tunes or to proceed with the practice of the scales and chords.

You may have arrived at this point—or at this part of your journey, without the aid of a personal teacher (many have done so with only a book to assist them), and not being under the instruction of a teacher you must think for yourself and decide as to what course should be pursued. Soliloquising, you may say to yourself, "Now, if I go on and learn two or three tunes I'll astonish my friends and have some fun; but, perhaps if I do that, they'll want me to play more tunes and then there's no telling when I'll stop learning new 'tunes' and never get out of one or two keys." Now on the other hand, if I let the tunes pass for a while and stick to my scales, chords and time exercises, and play only such tunes as are arranged as exercises, I will then possibly be able to make up for lost time and proceed more rapidly with musical pieces with which to entertain my friends. I would like to learn some easy pieces at once—but then it may be that I'll never feel like practicing the scales again if I get into tunes, so I guess I'll wait awhile and practice the scales and chords. It looks to me as if that might be the best course to pursue."

And such is, under the circumstances, the best course to pursue—it is the right way, and the only really "short way."

It may seem strange to the lad when going to school, that his teacher compels him to study arithmetic, spelling, grammar, &c., but as he gets older and learns to progress he naturally begins to perceive that without these steps to form the ladder of his progression he would perhaps have remained an uneducated boor. And so it must be with the musical student, or he who sets out to learn the banjo. Nothing valuable can be obtained without effort. If you desire to obtain knowledge and attain perfection in any branch of art you must work for it.

Nobody ever became a musician or a banjo player by sitting down and waiting for his musical abilities to grow of themselves. You may have the natural ability or talent within you, the cultivating of which will make you one of the leading banjo artists of the coming generation. If so, it is your place to study and practice with a will. You must assist nature. If you have the natural capability, all the more reason why you should study. If you have a rare and valuable plant, you, as the gardener, would naturally take care to place it in good soil, till and cultivate it. You would not think that because you had a rare plant it should grow of itself without cultivation. So it must be with yourself—you must cultivate the talent you possess or it may dwindle down and fade away. Then "they" will say—"see that Jones, he used to be immense—now he's going down hill, he got too big for himself; he thought he was the great mogul of banjo players, but now he's getting down. Just watch him on his lunch route. He don't get a square meal once a week." Is this picture overdrawn?

We think not. For there are just such cases. They took the "long way," thinking it was safe and sure. They pleased the public for a while, drew a large salary for a time, and then began to fade just because the public had grown tired of their sameness, and they were, through lack of proper study and training, unable to advance, and as nothing in nature stands still, they were compelled to go backward.

If you are not going forward you are going backward!

Nothing stands stationary for any length of time! If you are not going forward or backward on a continuous course then you are oscillating between the two points and haven't yet struck the short road, nor the long road. You must clutch the rock of

knowledge with a firm grip, and keep on until you have acquired the capacity and power of learning how to learn without effort.

You must have the will and desire to learn music, and you will then acquire the power to master your favorite instrument, even the banjo.

You must have the will power!

But you must not be stubborn or mulish.

Some people make the mistake of supposing that mulishness and will power are one and the same thing. In this they are guided by fallacious reasoning or by lack of thought.

Will-power must be generated by thought, concentrated upon some one object in particular.

Mulishness is simply a stubborn and suffixed method of concentrating an ignorant or thoughtless vacancy upon nothing, and then going to sleep and standing still.

Avoid all such errors when you make a break for the short way—for otherwise you will in time learn the mulish art of kicking, and be ready to kick yourself for not pushing straight ahead round the circles of musical knowledge.

* * * * *

But hold a moment, as we write this a postal card floats before us, let us pause for a moment and give it a hearing.

What say'st thou, postal?

"Sedalia, Mo., Apr. 12.

Mr. S. S. Stewart, Dear Sir:—Your Banjo Book at hand. I think it is a poor excuse of a book for the money is your cheaper books any better than the one you sent me I thought by the way you Praise the Book up it was of some value write soon."

Yours Truly

"P. S. I will write you a letter soon explaining matters."

We withhold the writer's name, knowing that the time may come when he will be ashamed of having written such a card. Our correspondent kindly informs us that the book is, in his opinion, "a poor excuse of a book for the money." We should very much like to know just what "a poor excuse of a book for the money" can be.

A book can only point out the way—can only instruct so far as the comprehension of the recipient will admit. To instantly transform an undeveloped musical mind into a trained musician is a thing impossible, and not within the scope of any book. Perhaps our correspondent expected a work like "*Bogan's Banjo Manual*" or other "simplified" hocus pocus, by which one who possesses no musical ear is supposed to acquire the art of banjo playing "without notes or study." Such must be the case—for evidently to our postal card writer, notes are only as "niggers on a fence" or as Chinese characters displayed before a laundry on Sunday morning. To learn music or to successfully study musical notation requires some degree of *capacity to understand*, otherwise known as intelligence. Without the intelligence which separates man from the beast it is impossible to learn music. Nor can anyone expect for one moment that a book alone will do his work for him.

A man might possess a library consisting of nearly all the valuable books in the world, and yet be absolutely ignorant of their contents. The book can be of no benefit unless it is understood, and how can a man understand or expect to learn anything if he has previously made up his mind that he knows more than is in the book. And when a man sets himself up as either a critic or a judge of any particular book he assumes a superior knowledge to what is contained therein. There is no use in teaching such a man.

Young man you are on the long road and the wrong track.

"Playing at sight, without notes or study," is the train you are looking for. It will take you around to the station where you will read, plainly painted on the wall, "HAMTOWN." Then you will slip off the train and remain there forever, or make a shift for the only short way to knowledge, which is through up hill work and study.

Ah! here is a letter, and from afar off it has come. Hold for a moment, let's see what this correspondent has to say.

Leyburn, Queensland, Australia, March, 1887.

Mr. S. S. Stewart, Dear Sir:—First volume of your *Complete American Banjo School* to hand O. K. It is just the thing I wanted, being without a teacher—in fact never had one. The *Journal* improves at every issue in every way. I would not be without it at four times the price."

In this case our correspondent, living in Australia, sends for the same book which our previously mentioned postal card writer has received and declared is "a poor excuse of a book for the money." "There is no accounting for tastes," as the young woman said when she kissed the cow, but in all ages it has been that the will of the majority rules. And it is a fact well worth stating that of the thousands of volumes of the *American Banjo School* which have been sold, our postal-card correspondent is the *first and only one* who declares that the book was not in any and every way satisfactory.

Sometimes an inquirer asks of a teacher: "How long will it take me to learn?" and "what do you guarantee?"

The teacher should answer, "It will take you from three months up to three million ages to learn, and as to what I guarantee depends upon what intelligence, brains and pluck you can bring to the work." Don't pay for your lessons and lie down and go to sleep expecting to awaken on the summit of musical knowledge. For if you do you will find you've got hold of the long way instead of the short.

Don't expect to slip through all the difficulties like an eel through a greased rag, without notes or study, for again you'll find yourself on the road to nowhere. Again we say, that which can be had for nothing is worth just what it costs, and no more. But the book which is sold you to teach you without knowledge (notes or study) is not worth what it costs, and like the principles it inculcates is worth more to be let alone—that is, you are better off without it.

Not so very long ago a gentleman desiring to learn to play the banjo called upon a professor of that instrument and was "charmed" into paying thirty dollars or more for a quarter's lessons in advance. The professor, well versed in the business of "working snaps" as the boys call it, pocketed the money and gave the initial lesson in the usual manner. When the pupil called for his second lesson the dabster at snaps was "very busy" and could not give him as much attention on that occasion as he would like to, but promised great things for the next lesson. At the next lesson the doctor of music set his pupil to "picking out" a tune, before he had properly learned his notes, and during the process the professor would frequently leave the room to attend to another struggling student at work in an adjoining apartment—or to attend to a customer in his salesroom. The perplexed pupil was not progressing to his taste, when the professor told him that he had done well enough for the present lesson—"go home and practice what I have taught you," said he.

At this the pupil began to feel worked up, as it were. His bumps of time and tune gave way before greater activity in the regions of combativeness and destructiveness, and he felt like tearing the banjo and punching the musical juggler's nose.

"You have not taught me anything," says he; "you are not giving me any attention; I don't like the way you are treating me; how do you think I can learn when you don't show me anything?"

"Ah, now! my dear young friend, don't be angry," replies the well-drilled professor, "just stick right at it; you'll never make a banjo player unless you apply your mind right to it and bang away at it."

Now what do you suppose was the result of all this? You would naturally say that the pupil would not come again for any more lessons, as he was only wasting his time. But not so. He had paid his money and he thought that he ought to have his lessons, for he could see very plainly that to ask his money back would be useless. So he cooled down his ire and proceeded with his lesson (?) and in a very few days the D. M. Q. informed him that he must have one of his banjos if he expected to learn to play, and the result was that he juggled fifty dollars more out of his pupil for one of his fine-toned concert banjos.

But, did the pupil ever learn to play? We really can't say, but fear that we must incline to the negative. This class of teaching rarely teaches anything to a pupil unless it is the practical experience acquired. For unless you have pre-acquired knowledge of music when you go to such a teacher you have a poor chance of progressing under his tuition, or indeed of learning to play *correctly* even simple pieces of music.

This brief sketch we have introduced, by way of telling you how best *not* to become a banjo player—which is equally as important as to know how best to become one.

The "Banjo World," like the world in general, contains a proportion of indolent people. Among such are those who do not like to study or work, but are ready to get what they can without study or labor. The doctor who advertises to cure patients without any effort on their part will naturally "rake in" more money than the more honest physician who tells his sick patient that much depends upon himself.

And hence it is that there are those who, caring nothing whatever about the banjo as a musical instrument, but desiring only the money that might be gained, have gotten up and advertised so-called "simplified methods," which profess to teach any person whether musical or not, the art of banjo playing, and to do this without study—that is, almost without effort on the part of the aspiring would be banjoist.

The so-called "simplified methods," which simplify nothing, unless it be the minds of its champions, and which are not *methods* at all, whether simplified or otherwise, there being nothing methodical about them, have done more to hinder the rise of the banjo than all the "negro" stigma that could possibly be attached to it.

These methods are the long way round a short road. They totally unfit the minds of those who follow them for the study of musical notation. This we have said before and repeat it, that you, reader, may get the idea firmly imbedded in your mind. Don't forget it. Facts are well worth repeating, and a great truth will bear telling twice.



John J. Smith, of Albany, N. Y., writes: "About two weeks ago I bought one of your *Model* banjos, second-hand, of a stiff fingered young man, at a great bargain and I am astonished with it. I did not think there could possibly be so much difference in a banjo. If you know of any one that wants to buy a _____ banjo cheap, direct them to me, for I will sell it at kindling wood and old brass prices. I would not part with the *Model* banjo for ten times what it cost me. There is more genuine information in your catalogue about banjos than there is in books that people pay a dollar for. I freely acknowledge that 'Stewart is King,' and if I know of any one that wishes to purchase a first-class banjo, I will recommend them to you. One of the best banjos in the world (the *Model*) is lying in plain sight of me as I am writing this, and I am anxious to get at it, so I will have to close this letter to do it."

J. Donald Harris, of Leyburn, Queensland, Australia, writes: "First volume of your *Complete American School* to hand O. K. It is just the thing I wanted, being without a teacher—in fact, never had one. The *Journal* improves at every issue in every way. I would not be without it at four times the price."

C. F. Raymore, of Worcester, Mass., writes: "I am glad to see *Journal* prospering, and hope it will continue. I think there is a demand for just such a paper. No banjo player that has any 'get' to him would refuse to subscribe for it. The *Journal* contains valuable information that can be found in no book."

E. M. Hall's Banjeaurine act and Maria waltz are creating a sensation.

J. H. Jennings, of Providence, R. I., takes great pride in his Stewart Banjo.

Al. E. Fostell, writes: "The Imperial Banjeaurine I bought from you while in Phila., several weeks ago, is giving great satisfaction and getting better every day and, I think, for brilliancy of tone, fine finish and workmanship it far surpasses any instrument of its kind ever introduced to the public. I used it at Tony Pastor's Theatre last week for the first time, and it made an impression at the start, both with the audience and performers on account of its curious shape, and I believe it is the first one ever used before a New York audience. I will always recommend your banjos in preference to others."

Russell Fuller of Pioche, Nevada, writes: "The banjo ordered for Mrs. Olson arrived this morning. It is a beautiful instrument possessing the sweet, musical and powerful tone, characteristic of your instruments, and from the moment it was unpacked, it has been a source of admiration to many a pair of bright eyes—ladies' eyes of course. Mrs. O. requested me to express her sincere thanks to you for sending her a banjo which she esteems to be a great many degrees above perfection."

Elmer E. Vance, Columbus, Ohio, writes: "The \$30 Universal Favorite Banjo I ordered for Mr. Gibson arrived O. K., and he is perfectly delighted with it. As he had to wait two weeks after it was ordered he says he often thought of it in his sleep, but his wildest dream of a banjo did not equal the reality. It's a 'daisy,' and for tone cannot be excelled."

Gus Lec, of El Paso, Texas, writes: "Received the six string Orchestra Banjo ordered by your agent, and can truthfully say that it is beyond my expectations. I will certainly remember you to all my friends as the finest constructor of banjos, as I can prove by my own instrument. Remember me to John Lee."

Miss Kittie May Procter Hughey, of St. Louis, Mo., writes: "The \$100 banjo you made for me arrived in good shape and, to say that I am pleased with it but feebly expresses my feelings. In point of beauty of finish, sweet and penetrating tone, it surpasses anything I have ever seen for the price. I would not sell it for twice its cost. The Piccolo is indeed a 'Little Wonder,' and I am delighted with it. I have seen many banjos, but the S. S. S. Banjos are the best."

A competent teacher in the vicinity of St. Louis, writes concerning the above mentioned banjos, as follows: "One of my scholars (Miss Hughey) has just submitted to me for approval, two of your banjos,—large one (11½ inches) and Piccolo—and I found that they surpassed in tone and beauty of finish anything I ever used, and I have handled nearly all other makes. I would be pleased to know your lowest terms for such instruments, and also for your Banjeaurines, such as Mr. Hall is now using. I want one as soon as I can get it. I would like to handle your instruments, as I have only used _____'s make because of their cheapness."

You see that they are all "stuck" on the Stewart and the Stewart sticks nobody—but is the standard of excellence which is unsurpassed.

If you don't believe it, read this.

Sacramento, Cal., April 4, 1887.

S. S. Stewart, Phila.,

Dear Sir:—I have been constantly playing on the Pacific coast for the last two years, during which time I have not only used the Stewart Banjo, but have advocated the superiority of the same.

I have been instrumental in selling a number of your banjos through the music dealers in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Sacramento, and shall continue to place your instruments in the hands of those who wish a first-class article and with whom I have influence. I consider you deserving of all praise, and the first to put on the market a really good banjo. Your competitors have been forced to make a tolerably good banjo to compete at all. It does not require an expert to select a Stewart as there are no poor ones.

I am perfectly sincere in what I say. Take my remarks for what they are worth. I am well known in California and I wish you the best of luck in your new quarters, and the success you so richly deserve.

I am, believe me, yours truly,
FRANK H. VEACH

E. G. Harbaugh, of Washington, D. C., writes: "The banjos arrived safe and sound, and they are models of beauty and perfect in tone. Mr. E. M. Hall was around and played for a couple of hours on his Banjeaurine, to the delight of all present."

L. G. Chrisman, of Sigourney, Iowa, says the *Journal* is "immense," and contains more instruction than any other book at five times the price.

Geo. W. Davenport, of Detroit, Mich., writes: "The banjo came all right and was well satisfied with it. Last night we had a few in and all thought it immense. One of the boys had a "Victor" that he had been howling about, but the Stewart shut him up. He is going to raffle his off and order one from you. I will telephone the U. S. Express Co. to send the money on. I don't want 24 hours on that—ten minutes is long enough."

Frank M. Avery, of Brooklyn, N. Y., writes as follows: "The Champion Banjo, No. 3205, arrived safely on Saturday and is, in all respects, a perfectly satisfactory instrument. It will play with splendid effect with my orchestra banjo; which is something that no other instrument that I have tried can do.

It is a satisfaction to know that one's orders from a distance receive the same careful attention that a personal visit would insure—indeed, I am not certain that it is not better to order from you by mail, since that necessitates leaving much to your judgment, which cannot but be an advantage to the purchaser. Mr. C. Day of this city, who purchased my Orchestra Banjo for me at your factory, has examined the new acquisition and is loud in its praise."

Geo. E. Weitzel, of Phila., writes: "Please permit me to add my testimony in regards to the excellent qualities of the Stewart Banjo. The 'Champion' you made me is indeed a champion. I tested it last night in a large hall together with my partner's Banjeaurine and we made a big hit. We had all your music, ten pieces in all."

A. W. Kinnaman, Tiffin, O., writes: "The banjo arrived in good shape and is a beautiful instrument. I am delighted with it. The tone is just grand."

C. S. Patty, our poet, of Muncie, Ind., has been ill for some time past, but is now able to resume teaching and banjo playing.

Fred. T. McGrath, Gloucester, Mass., writes: "The Orchestra Banjo arrived in good season, and after giving it a thorough and exhaustive test, I would say that it far surpasses my expectations. The tone is powerful, yet sympathetic and sweet, and the inlaying, carving, etc., is something magnificent. I consider it an ideal instrument in every detail."

Jerome May performed lately, with his banjo quartette, at the Washington Park M. E. Church, Bridgeport, Conn.

The banjo tournament given at the Opera House, Friday evening, under the auspices of Mr. Charles Hickok, drew out a large audience, who were delighted with the novel entertainment. The programme, from beginning to end, was successfully carried out, and the selections rendered could not have been improved upon. Fraulein Kitty Berger drew music from the zither such as never had been heard here before. R. R. Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Weston and Mr. Doree, on the banjo, were received with rapturous applause, which was well merited.

The committee awarded the first prize for single championship of Dutchess county, to W. J. Connolly, the popular banjo teacher in this city, who rendered

excellent music on this instrument, and fairly won the prize. The second prize in this class was awarded to Louis Wimpelberg, and the third to Clare McGeorge. The double prize was taken by James Gemmill and Wm. Ross, two young men pupils of less than a year of Mr. Connolly. They were certainly deserving of praise for the manner in which they executed difficult pieces. Mr. Vess Ossman, of Hudson, was the only competitor for the Hudson River Championship, and secured a prize.—*Sunday Courier*, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

Al. Snoots, of Boston, says his banjeaurine continues to give unbounded satisfaction.

G. L. Lansing, of Boston, is the busiest teacher in that city.

Thos. J. Armstrong, of Philadelphia, has had more pupils this season than ever before.

Lew Keyes, of Lewiston, Me., has purchased a new Stewart banjo.

T. Z. Maffey, of Indianapolis, Ind., is a good banjo player, and speaks highly of the Stewart.

William Marsh, of Troy, N. Y., and one of the leading banjo players in that city, is also a great lover of the Stewart.

Fred. L. Campbell, banjo teacher, North East, Pa., writes: "The American Banjo School is the most thorough instructor for the banjo I have ever seen."

Arling Shaeffer, banjo and guitar artist, of Denver, Col., has issued some new music for the mandolin with guitar accompaniment.

Fantasia Rondo.....	40
My Next Waltz.....	50
Sleigh Ride Polka.....	40
Stephanie Gavotte.....	40
Kentucky Jubilee Schottische.....	40
Myosotis Waltz.....	75
Mexican Sereenade.....	45
Misererie, from "Il Trovatore".....	50
Silken Bands.....	50
Home, Sweet Home.....	25
Carnival of Venice.....	30
Pretty Primrose Flower.....	30

W. J. Jones, Rockland, Me., writes: "I received the \$100 banjo all right, and think it is the finest I ever saw or heard. I have played in public several times, and they say the banjo is better than a piano."

H. E. L. Valley, Providence, R. I., says the banjo is steadily increasing in favor in that vicinity.

C. H. Lefavour, of Salem, Mass., writes: "Your article in the last *Journal* headed 'The Progress of the Banjo,' is very commendable. Such printed matter will do much towards helping the instrument in the future."

The editor of *Mixed Pickles*, Denver, Col., can hardly write his name without signing himself "Ham," and a Cuning—ham at that.

A recent letter from Fred. Michael, of No. 49 Jane street, New York City, has the following: "I am only an amateur at present, but with the aid of the *Journal* and Lee's books I tell you I am getting there, and I have you to thank for it; for when I came to this country three years ago I was a ham player, or in other words, an ear player; but I just got hold of one of your books, 'The Banjo Players' Hand Book,' and to me it was just as a mirror. It showed me just what I was and what I was likely to remain if I did not go to work in the right way. But as you say 'Practice makes perfect,' I have stuck at it in my spare time and I hope to turn it to advantage some day. My home is in Wales, and I am thinking of going home soon to give lessons on the banjo, as the Welsh are a musical class of people as a rule."

The foregoing is from a man of good common sense. It is better to have good common sense than to have dollars. Mr. Michael will make his mark in the "banjo world" yet.

P. H. Coombs, of Bangor, Me., is fully busy with pupils.

A few pupils are instructed by L. A. Burritt, of Bayonne, N. J., during his leisure hours.

We have received the following from W. S. Holway, East Boston, Mass.: "The banjo I bought of you in March is the finest toned instrument I ever used. I am more than satisfied, and will be pleased to add my name to your list of testimonials."

Those wishing a good banjo at a price below cost of manufacturing should see our advertisement of a "Job Lot of Banjos," in another column. These are well-made instruments, and we have but a very few of them. Order soon.

D. Emerson, of New York, has lots of pupils.

Elmer E. Vance, of Columbus, O., writes that three of his pupils made a big hit at an entertainment at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 24th. The names of the trio are McCloud, Johns and Fuller. The papers, one and all, pronounced the affair to be the best thing of the kind during the season.

Ranons A. Smith, sends us as a contribution to the *Journal*, a composition for banjo and guitar, which is held for our next issue.

At the banjo concert, or tournament, held at Chickering Hall, New York, on the evening of May 10th, a very enjoyable entertainment was given. There were \$260 in cash prizes distributed, and also a gold and a silver medal. The "points" in contest were accuracy, brilliancy, harmony, tone. There were ten entries, only five of whom appeared—Reuben R. Brooks, Bertie Aldrich, W. J. Scott, H. M. Denton and W. C. Dore. Horace Weston, who was in the audience, played by special request and was enthusiastically received. The judges were J. N. Wilson, J. D. Wright, Chas. M. Weed and E. R. Walker. A. D. Cammeyer was referee. The following is a synopsis of the programme given:

No. 1. Brooks.

- 1st.—Home, Sweet Home.
2d.—Waltz, with piano accompaniment.
3d.—Medley, with piano accompaniment.

No. 2. Aldrich.

- 1st.—Spanish Fandango, broke string.
2d.—Medley, { Swance River, } with piano
 { Annie Laurie, } accompaniment.

No. 3. Scott.

- 1st.—Galop.
2d.—Clog, with banjo accompaniment.

Special.

Mandolin Quartette.

No. 4. Denton, pupil of Brooks.

- 1st.—Galop.
2d.—March, with piano accompaniment.
3d.—Polka, with piano accompaniment.

No. 5. Dore.

- 1st.—Medley, on piccolo banjo.
2d.—British Patrol, with piano accompaniment.
3d.—Galop, with piano accompaniment.

By Special Request—Horace Weston.

- 1st.—Last Rose of Summer.
2d.—Galop.
3d.—Trick Solo, with left hand only.
4th.—Twenty-second Regiment March.

By Special Request Brooks again played.

- By Special Request Dore played "Home, Sweet Home," on piccolo banjo.

Prizes Awarded.

- 1st.—Brooks, \$100 and gold medal.
2d.—Denton, \$75 and silver medal.
3d.—Dore, \$50.
4th.—Scott, \$25.
5th.—Aldrich, \$10.

Horace Weston was not in competition.

In a future issue we may have something to say concerning "Banjo Contests," but at present our space is already filled.

(From Wisconsin State *Journal*, Madison, Wis.)

A PLEASANT CONCERT.—The joint concert given by the University Glee club and the Madison Banjo and Guitar club, at library hall, last evening, was a musical and financial success, and at the same time possessed the merit of novelty. With the Glee club the Madison public is well acquainted. It sang, last evening, with its customary excellence and its numbers were cordially applauded. The Banjo and Guitar club is a new organization, composed of the following young gentlemen: George C. Main, director and banjeaurine; W. A. Oppel, first banjo; W. C. Off, second banjo; L. M. Hanks, piccolo banjo; A. G. Schmedeman, bass banjo; E. S. Main, six-string banjo; B. D. Shear, accompaniment banjo; T. A. Polleys, guitar, and F. P. Meyer, guitar. Its initial appearance was awaited with considerable curiosity, and as its members, attired in a full dress, stepped upon the platform, instruments in hand, warm, welcoming applause broke out. The young men acquitted themselves creditably, treated their auditors to a series of pleasant renditions on instruments heretofore seldom heard in Madison at polite entertainments, and generally made quite a hit. They deserved the encouragement which was freely extended, and our people are justified in hoping to hear much more from them.

At the tournament in Po'keepsie, on April 22d, there were fifteen Stewart Banjos on the stage.

We will soon publish some waltzes for the banjo with piano accompaniment, carefully arranged by J. H. Lee.

The increasing popularity of the banjo, together with the growing demand for a higher grade of music for the banjo and piano, makes it necessary to issue standard music of the best writers, properly adapted and arranged.

E. H. Ferguson, the well-known teacher, of Rochester, N. Y., gave a concert in that city on the 23th of April, at Washington Hall. He had ten banjos, two guitars, a harp, a violin and a cello in his orchestra. The affair was a complete success. Mr. Ferguson was the recipient of an elegant gold badge, handsomely engraved, and also of a floral tribute.

The stage was tastefully decorated for the occasion; hanging on one side was an "old tub," the banjo of 20 years ago, whilst on the other side hung gracefully a very fine Stewart Banjo.

Just before going to press we had a letter from Wm. A. Huntley, saying that his new yacht would be finished in about two weeks, and that he would, if we desired it, send us two quarts of shrimps to be used as bait for bass and perch fishing. Thanks, thanks, thanks.

A correspondent from Wisconsin writes:—"If my subscription to the *Journal* has expired please let me know, for I would not miss having the *Journal* if it cost \$5.00 a year."

Philadelphia has a few good banjo teachers, but needs more, for "there is always room in the upper stories." The good ones are Thos. J. Armstrong, 418 N. Sixth Street; D. C. Everett, 1428 Spruce Street; O. H. Albrecht, 545 W. Lehigh Avenue.

Fred. O. Oehler contributes a very fine guitar duet to this issue of the *Journal*. Our guitar readers will no doubt remember him in their prayers.

M. Slater, the old reliable and well-known manufacturer of band instruments, who owns an extensive factory in Europe, and whose New York warehouse is situated at No. 42 Cortlandt Street, is, as is generally well known, general agent for the Stewart Banjo. He does an extensive business. See advertisement in another column.

Theodore Lohr, of 298 Grand Street, New York, is the greatest importer of zithers in this country. If you want a zither go to Lohr

The Primrose Mazourka, composed by William Learned and arranged for the banjo by J. H. Lee, is held for our next issue, owing to lack of space.

As the art of "putting a head on a banjo" seems to remain veiled in obscurity with many of our readers, we shall endeavor to re-write the subject, illustrating the same with wood engravings, for our next issue.

The Stewart Banjos may be ordered from Kohler & Chase, San Francisco, No. 137 Post Street.

A STEADY MARCH FORWARD.

S. S. Stewart's Banjo Manufactory and Banjo Music Publishing House is the largest and most extensive institution of its kind in America. Few passers by, who are not directly interested in the banjo, would have any idea of the work going on within the three buildings where Stewart's banjo business is carried on. The entire building at No. 223 Church Street is occupied by the banjo business; as are also portions of the two adjoining buildings, situated at Nos. 221 and 219. The basement of 223 Church Street is used as a storage department for packing boxes, and also contains a vault where all the music plates are stored.

The first floor of the building is used as a store and salesroom for banjos and music. The second floor is used as an office and packing department. The third floor is used exclusively for music plate printing, where banjo music and books are printed exclusively and the best plate printing in America, so far as music is concerned, is turned out. Going through a door-way on this, the third floor, we come to the third floor of the building adjoining, which is somewhat deeper than the music printing room and is used as a stock and storage room.

Ascending another flight of stairs we enter the fourth floor, which we find extends over three buildings. The fourth floor of building No. 223 Church Street is filled with rims, hoops, etc., and men are at work at banjo making. The adjoining room contains several benches where men are at work polishing and fitting banjo necks in rims, whilst at the further end of the room the steam-power machinery is found to be in operation. Here is the main shaft, together with boiler and engine, carving and turning lathes, band-saw, circular saw, grind stone, emery wheels, etc. In the next room, situated in building No. 219 Church Street, are more benches with men putting on heads and doing other work on banjos, here we find a large stock of sawed necks, sawed ebony, as well as other materials in process of construction, and take it all in all, is a most interesting sight and will well pay any one interested in the banjo to spend a short time viewing.

The entire establishment makes banjos and no other instruments, excepting a few tambourines for minstrel men, and as nearly all the banjos are of the higher-priced kind it will be seen that the interest in the "Banjo as a musical instrument" and the "Banjo as an art" is greatly on the increase.

Those who doubt the great advance of the banjo in musical ranks have only to go through the list of banjo books noticed in this issue of the *Journal*, to be convinced. No instrument has ever made such progress in the face of the opposition of musical bigots as the instrument known to the world to day as the Banjo. And so rapid has been the advance in the character of its music that the publication of comic banjo songs and such truck has been in a great measure suspended.

Good banjo teachers are being educated and locating in various cities and towns throughout America, and as the banjo has only needed more competent

teachers and less variety show exponents, we anticipate rapid strides in the art and a consequent increase in the sale of our banjos in the coming months.

With the downfall of the simple method (or simple-minded) school of banjo teachers and the rapid rise of a new school of teachers who are competent to instruct, as well as judicious and conscientious in dealing with their pupils, we can look for great things for our friend, the banjo. Our friend, the banjo, must be well taken care of, and he will do his duty and sing down the horn blowing musical discords of over-heated jealous sore-heads who say "he is no musical instrument."

We again extend the hand of friendship to all the well-disposed banjo teachers in the world. But we want no monkeying.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting."

Yes, "sorry to have kept you waiting," but couldn't help it, for during the past four months it has been almost impossible to keep pace with orders, and our heretofore prompt method of filling orders has been somewhat encroached upon.

"Send me one of your Orchestra Banjos at once," says one telegram. "Send one Banjeaurine by return express," says another. "When can you send a set of banjos for our club?" says another. And so on. And here are orders from Kohler & Chase, San Francisco, away behind hand in being filled. Then "Look at this list," says the foreman, "and working every night till 9 o'clock, too."

Well, that's the way it has been with us, many who have visited our factory can testify.

We are not grumbling about it.

We are catching right up now.

We have the best facilities in the country for making fine banjos.

We do not rush our work so as to cause a botch, and whenever we keep you waiting a little while you are amply rewarded by getting an instrument which tickles you all over.

We are now filling all orders for our standard banjos as promptly as ever.

Send in your orders.

MORE "SIMPLE METHOD."

In an advertisement of recent date we read that a noted banjo professor (noted in various ways and sometimes without notes) I as just issued a fresh calamity in the form of a "new simple method, containing ninety new pieces and diagrams of all the chords." Although the advertisement states that it is a "new simple method," we are greatly inclined to believe that it is the same old half-starved beast—the old worm-eaten and ridicule riddled "open and shut." Indeed, the very advertising card which announces its issue is tinged with the flavor of the "open and closed note" garbage—even to the use of the same old electrotype, so catching to the eyes of many innocent gudgeons. But the old fish who have tasted of that kind of bait will not bite on it any longer, and the young ones are learning that "open and closed" notes have often a sharp-pointed hook to be swallowed with the "simple method."

This hook hooks the money out of the pockets of its victims and gives them in return ignorance, simple mindedness and loss of valuable time.

The advertisement aforesaid, goes on to state that "the most unmusical person can learn without the aid of a teacher." Nobody but a fool or a very ignorant unthinking person believes such a thing is possible, in reality. Nor, in fact, does the professor, who inflicts the method on the public, think so. He doubtless means that "the most unmusical person can learn without the aid of a teacher," just as readily as he could possibly learn from such teachers as either himself or his "simple method" book. Then again, he fails to state in his advertisement just what he means by learning without the aid of a teacher, and what it is that a person is expected to learn. If he means that the purchasers of "simple method" books will learn to beware of such books after they have purchased a copy or two, there may be some truth in it. If he means that some people can only be taught by experience, and that they must pay for their experience so gained, there may be some truth in it. But

he will get the money all the same, and they will learn that much at any rate, even if they fail to learn to play a tune correctly on the banjo.

"Where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise."

Therefore remain thou ignorant, Mr. Simple Method.

A MUSICAL LIBRARY.

THE COST OF A BANJO MUSICAL LIBRARY.

As our brief article in last issue, entitled "Musical Literature," seems to have caused some inquiry among banjo teachers regarding the cost of all banjo books, we have endeavored to obtain from the various publishers, a complete list of all books published for the banjo during the past twenty years, the result of which is given in the following list, together with those of our own publications. The prices given are the regular retail prices at which the various books are sold, but it must be borne in mind that on the books of our own publication when *four dollars' worth* are purchased at one time there is a discount of twenty-five per cent. off the retail prices and as some of the other books named in the list can be purchased at a reduction, the entire value of the "Banjo Musical Library" is less than a simple footing of the figures would indicate. Excluding "Simplified Method" books. The list is as follows:

Lee's Eclectic School, Part 1, Stew't, Pub.*	\$1 50
" " " " 2, " " "	3 00
" " " " 3, " " "	not yet is.
Stewart's Thor. School, " " "	* 2 00
Stewart's Am. School, " 1, " *	" 2 00
Stewart's Am. School, " 2, " "	" 2 00
Baur's "New Era" Prof. Ban't, " "	" 2 00
Artistic Banjoist, " " "	" 1 00
"Banjoists' Compendium," " " "	" .60
"Banjoists' Delight," " " "	" 1 50
Banjoists' Own Collection, " " "	" .50
Ban. Pl'r's Hand Bk. & Instruc. " * "	" .75
The Young Banjoist, " * "	" 1 00
The Minstrel Banjoist, " * "	" .50
The Univ. Banjo Instructor, " * "	" .10
Sketches of noted Ban. Players, " " "	" .10
The Banjo; its m'k'rs. & Pl'r's, " " "	" .10
The Banjo and Guitar Journal, " " "	" .50
Subscription per year, " " "	" .75
The Banjoist, Converse, * Pond & Co., Pub.	.75
Baur's New Method, * " " "	.75
Winner's New Ban. Prim. * " " "	.75
Converse's New Meth., * Gordon & Sons, Pub.	.75
" Analyt'l Meth., " " "	1.25
Howe's New American, * " " "	.50
Winner's Amer. Banjoist, * Shaw Co., Pub.	.75
Artist's Prize Col., No. 1, Fairbanks & Cole,	1.50
" " " 2, " " "	1.50
1st Ten Studies for Banjo, * " " "	.50
F. & C. Banjoist, " " "	1.00
Vocal Gems, " " "	1.00
International Ban. Instruc. * " " "	1.00
The Banjo without a Master, by Converse, *	.50
The Banjo, and how to play it, " * "	.50
Com. Instruc., Dobson, * White, Smith & Co.	1.00
Dobson Bros.' Mod. Meth. * " " "	1.00
Geo. C. Dobson's New S'h'l, * " " "	.75
National Method, Dobson, * " " "	1.50
Star Method, Dobson, * " " "	.25
Shay's Method, * " " "	.75
Winner's New Am Sch'l, * " " "	.50
Victor Ban. Meth., Dobson, * " " "	1.00
(The above in preparation.)	
The Prize Banjo Instructor, * J. White, Pub.	.75
The Solo Banjoist, " " "	.75
Monarch Ban. Meth., Lansing, * " " "	.75
Briggs' Banjo Instructor, old, * Ditson & Co.	.75
Buckley's Banjo Guide, * " " "	.75
" New Ban Meth., Ancient, * " " "	1.00
Curtiss' Acme Banjo Method, * " " "	1.25
Dobson's New System, * " " "	1.00
Dobson's Universal Instructor, * " " "	1.00
Instrumental Banjoist, " " "	1.00
Phil. Rice's Meth., Antidiluvian, * " " "	1.00
Robinson's Instructor, * " " "	1.00
Vocal Banjoist, " " "	1.00

Winner's Easy System,* Ditson & Co.,	.50
Winner's Ideal Method,* " "	.50
Winner's New School,* " "	.50
Blackmar's Prac. Meth.,* sect'ns., Stewart,	4 00

We handle only the books named in the list bearing our own name as publisher; those wishing any of the others should write direct to the publishers of the same, as we cannot undertake to supply the books of other publishers at our own rates, but will supply any book published in the country when the marked price is forwarded to us with the order. As only a portion of the books in the list contain instruction in banjo playing (those marked with an asterisk * only) it will be seen that it would require the expenditure of no very large sum to make ourself proprietor of all the books of instruction published during the past twenty years. And then to purchase a copy of each newly issued work would cost but a few dollars a year. This list, of course, has nothing to do with the publications classed as *Sheet Music* for the banjo, but deals only with those classed as books.

GUITARS.

There seems to be an idea with some persons that American guitars cannot crack or warp, and that cracking and warping is an almost universal failing with imported guitars. This has been for so many years drummed into the heads of the public by manufacturers of and dealers in high-priced guitars here in America, that to attempt to teach the public anything different is almost like "putting new wine into old bottles."

It is true that the variable climate of this part of the country is very trying to the guitar, which is a delicate instrument and not very difficult to crack, but the question is, do the instruments made in America stand any better than those made in Europe? It is generally conceded that they do and they certainly should, as they cost twice or three times as much as their imported competitors. But it is by no means a fact that American guitars do not split or warp. Any guitar is apt to crack if exposed to sudden changes of temperature. Ebony and some other hard woods have a tendency to crack. Flutes crack frequently—so do clarionets. The rosewood backs of guitars, whether made in this country or abroad, frequently crack. Banjo fingerboards of ebony sometimes crack. Indeed, there is no law to be found in the statutes of any of the U. S. which prohibits the checking, cracking or warping of woods, and even if there were, the woods would frequently crack in direct opposition and defiance of human law. Ebony is not much used in guitars, it is the rosewood back, or sometimes the pine top which takes a notion to crack.

Not long ago we purchased a sample American guitar made in Boston, Mass. After it had been in our show case for a while the bridge came unglued. Not long after this it was found that the wood in fingerboard had shrunk so that the frets stood out like a buzz saw. After this had been repaired in our banjo factory, we next discovered that two beautiful cracks had made their appearance in the rosewood back. This was an American guitar, beautifully made and finished, but outside of that no better, if as good, as our ordinary imported maple \$10 guitars.

The fact is that there are very few practical guitar makers in this country, and many music houses who have attempted the manufacture of a first-class American guitar have, after losing considerable money, "given it up as a bad job."

The guitar is a delicate instrument to construct, and the treating of the woods for making such an instrument requires long experience and correct judgment, as the slightest shrinkage in any part of the body after the work is done will cause the instrument to check or crack.

A correspondent, as we are writing this sends us the following communication.

"I am desirous of buying a Guitar, want one full size in every way except the neck, that I would like to have a little smaller where it rests in my hand in order that I can use my fingers to a better advantage. I would also like to have the three first frets nearer together than you usually find them."

Now, owing to the scarcity of guitar makers such a customer as this would find some trouble in getting an instrument made with the alterations in the neck he speaks of. But when it comes to having a guitar made with the first three frets nearer together than

usual we would state for the enlightenment of our correspondent and others that such a thing is simply impossible. In a guitar, as in any other stringed instrument, the position of the frets is governed by the divisions of the vibrating string—that portion of string which vibrates—in other words, the length or distance between the nut and bridge. If a guitar measures twenty-four inches from the nut to the bridge, it stands to reason that the frets throughout the entire fret board will be further apart than if the guitar measures say, twenty inches between the nut and the bridge, and this difference must be equally distributed among all the frets according to a mathematical calculation or proportion which is governed by immutable law.

Should a guitar be fretted in the way in which our correspondent desires, it would be impossible to use it as a musical instrument—and yet, we are sorry to say that there are many purchasers of guitars who are equally ignorant of the principles governing musical stringed instruments.

—:O:—

[For Stewart's Journal.]

THE PLUNKER.

Over the way I heard a sound,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk,
Borne on the breeze, a mile around,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
He sits by the window and smiles so bland
While he imitates a German band
And pounds it out with a master hand,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.

The boys on the side-walk catch the air,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk,
Of "Clinin' up de Golden Stairs,"
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
The disease is catching, for a sigh
Is heard from a servant girl near by,
"I've gone on that masher, let me die,"
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.

But the people's mind is filled with doubt,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
When that same old tune he hammers out,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
At first they thought him a gilt-edge trump,
But now they say "let up, you chump,
I'm tired, so tired to hear you thump,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk."

What was that dropped with a sickening thud,
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
Out of the window into the mud?
Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk.
'Twas a banjo player in wild despair,
But the force of habit ever was there,
Far we heard as he shot through the midnight air,
"Ka plink, ka plank, ka plunk."

—IKE BROWN.

—x—

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

Do you think?

What do you think?

Women have always some mental reservation.

The ear is the road to the heart.

If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent one.

Why do you think?

He who has not the spirit of his age, has all its unhappiness.

Your fate is that of a man, and your wishes are those of a God.

Experience has always shown, and reason shows, that affairs that depend on many, seldom succeed.

How do you think?

There is nothing assuredly more necessary in matters of difficulty, and nothing more dangerous, than to ask advice.

Pretexts are not wanting when one wishes a thing.

Delay has always been unfortunate to those who are ready.

First thoughts are not always the best.

When do you think?

Well does Heaven take care that no man secures happiness by crime.

To live, is often a greater proof of a firm soul, than to die.

Liars are always ready to give their oath.

Best wishes! What avails that phrase, unless Best services attend them?

Where do you think?

Love enjoys the falling tear.

The pain of the mind is worse than the pain of the body.

How can you think about nothing when you cannot think at all?

DON'T GET LEFT.

The tide is going out.
Yes, the simple method tide is receding.
Don't get left.

When the tide goes out "simple method" players will be left high and dry on the beach.

Don't be among those who are left on the beach.

The Banjo is rising. It will find its level. It will reach its proper place.

The "simplified method" school is bound to go out with the tide.

Don't be found among such a class.

If you are, you will be left, sure.

For remember the "simple method" school is going out with the tide, and some will be found lying in the rut after the tide has gone out.

E. M. HALL.

This artist was in our city recently with Haverly's Minstrels. His banjo and Banjeaurine solos with orchestral accompaniment were the most pleasing portion of the entertainment and won the most flattering notices from the press.

His new waltz, the Lilla Waltz, price, 40 cts., for the banjo, is now ready and can be had of us. He will spend the summer at his home in Chicago, fishing, hunting and playing the 'jo.

THE HENNINGS.

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Henning have been meeting with much success at their Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin Academy, in Chicago, during the season. Their academy in McVicker's Theatre Building is the most reliable place to study either of these instruments.

W. A. HUNTLEY.

This artist has been for the past few months giving lessons on the Banjo, assisted by Mr. John H. Lee, at his academy, No. 332½ Broad street, Providence, R. I. He will close his teaching season about July 1st and take a vacation.

On May 31st he gives his first annual Banjo Concert, but owing to our paper going to press rather earlier than usual we are unable to give an account of it in this issue.

P. C. SHORTIS.

This gentleman was in Philadelphia, recently with the Dockstader's Minstrels. He is doing some fine playing.

HORACE WESTON.

This never-to-be-forgotten artist has lately been doing some fine work on the banjo. When last heard from he was traveling with the Georgia Minstrels.

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MINUET.

FOR TWO GUITARS.

Arranged by FRED. O. OEHLER.
Moderato.

By J. PLEYEL.

1st Guitar. *mf*

2nd Guitar.

3

TRIO.

p

The first system of the Trio section consists of two staves. The treble staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1. There are rests in the bass staff for the first two measures.

The second system of the Trio section consists of two staves. The treble staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1. There are rests in the bass staff for the first two measures.

The third system of the Trio section consists of two staves. The treble staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1. There are rests in the bass staff for the first two measures.

D.C. al Fine.

The fourth system of the Trio section consists of two staves. The treble staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass staff contains a sequence of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1. There are rests in the bass staff for the first two measures.

Minuet.



"JUNE ROSES POLKA"

By F. L. RAYMOND.

1st Banjo.

2nd Banjo.

2nd Pos.

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1887
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S.S.

"SONG AND DANCE" INTRODUCTION.

By ARLING SCHAFFER.

Tune Bass to B.

Banjo.

BANJO NECKS.

Few would recognize in the symmetrical and finely finished banjo neck of to-day, any semblance to the neck of the old plantation banjo of thirty years ago. This might be said of almost any part of the instrument however, as well as of the neck, but in this instance we are writing and illustrating the banjo neck alone, not treating upon the banjo generally.

The neck, handle, arm or stock of the banjo (we use the term *neck*, as it appears to be more in general use than any of the other names) may be constructed from various kinds of woods, as we have stated in "*The Banjo Philosophically*" and other treatise, and our purpose is now to tell how the necks are made, and as they are now being constructed at S. S. Stewart's Banjo Manufactory in Philadelphia.

By way of illustration, we present a number of cuts to convey an idea as to the appearance of the neck in its several stages of manufacture, but were we to undertake to present cuts or diagrams of the neck at every different stage or process of its construction, it would require some twenty or more different cuts, which we have not space for at present. We will illustrate only the making of one of our fine necks such as is put in a banjo costing say from \$40.00 or \$50.00

and upwards. Illustration No. 1, represents a neck after being "band sawed." This is just as it is sawed out of the plank, and before any veneers have been put on. Those of our readers who have seen the necks band-sawed at Stewart's, or those who are familiar with the band saw, will understand just what the cut represents. The projection piece at the heel end of the neck, as shown in the cut, is left there merely for convenience in handling the work, during the making of the neck, holding same in vise, etc., and is cut off after a certain stage in the work has been reached. After the necks are band-sawed from the planks it is customary to allow them to stand in racks a few weeks before proceeding with the veneering. For it is a known fact with practical workmen, that no matter how well seasoned the plank may be from which the necks are sawed there is almost certain to be more or less warping and shrinking of the wood after it has been sawed and the outer surface removed. Therefore to proceed at once with veneering without allowing the wood time to shrink is a hazardous undertaking for fine work.

We propose soon to illustrate banjo making in general, showing cuts of the various machines etc., in use at Stewart's factory at the present time, but in this article we shall only speak of banjo necks, and that as briefly as the subject will admit of.

After the sawed neck is ready for veneering (the face having been planed perfectly level), it may be veneered with a single thick strip of ebony or rosewood, or with several thin veneers as the case may be. It is however customary in the finer or high-priced instruments to use several veneers together with the ebony strip. Each veneer is layed upon the face of the neck with the hot block commonly used for veneering purposes, and after the glue has become thoroughly dry the clamps and block is removed and the same process gone through with on that part of neck known as the "peg-head" or "screw-head." Now as there are frequently seven strips glued upon the face of neck and the same number upon the "peg-head," each of which requires a separate clamping, and as time must be allowed for each veneer to become firmly set and dry before another is glued on, it will be seen that it is a matter of several days time before the neck has assumed even the crude appearance in Cut No. 2.

Then it must be taken to the band-saw again and the superfluous wood together with the glue which has been pressed out from between the veneers and become hard, removed. Now if the neck has remained perfectly straight and shown no signs of warping or cracking, it is ready for the scroll saw. But if on the contrary, it shows any appearance of warping, it is layed away for a time in order to give the wood time to set. Supposing the neck now to be ready to proceed with the making of, the peg-head or scroll is marked out from a suitable pattern and then sawed—which may be done either by hand or by power—as in either case the work must be dressed off with a rasp and brought up perfectly to the line.

Now the neck is ready to be shaped or roughed out. This may be done with a draw knife by hand or may be done by a revolving file (or knife), a tool used for wood carving, which has a circular shape, and is attached to a lathe running by steam-power, very rapidly.

The neck having been brought into proper shape, the next step is to sand paper. For this, various grades of sand paper are attached to different wooden circular shaped blocks which revolve on a lathe. After this has been done the neck is ready for real hand work. It must now be carefully gone over with fine sand paper by hand before a coat of varnish or wood filler is put on. Then on being varnished and becoming perfectly dry the entire coat of varnish is sand papered off by hand again. This has been done to produce a moderately clear and smooth surface. Now if the neck is intended for a very fine banjo, it is ready for the *carver*,

and may be carved similar to what is shown in Cut No. 4. (This is similar to the style of carving on our hundred dollar banjo.) During these processes the piece of wood at heel or butt of neck has been left on for the purpose of holding the work during carving, varnishing, etc. This piece is finally removed by the band saw, but only when the neck is wanted for use or is ready to be fitted to a rim.

The pearl position marks or pearl work in peg-head is all inlaid previous to cutting off the superfluous wood at base of neck, as this renders the work so much easier to handle. If the neck is to be handsomely and elaborately inlaid, the pearl for which is sawed out and filed up in advance, there may be several days (or sometimes weeks) work yet on the neck, and as

frequently as many as seven different coats of varnish must be put on the neck proper—each of which is sand papered off before polishing—it will be seen that before the neck assumes an appearance similar to that shown in Cut No. 5, it must have "gone through the mill," so to speak. It has been handled by several different workmen, all of whom are masters of their various branches of the trade. The wooden piece which extends through the rim (sometimes called the sound bar), is set into the neck proper after the work is completed and ready for polishing. Sometimes the neck is constructed throughout of one solid piece, but it is generally conceded a better piece of work if the extension piece or sound bar is made from a separate piece and let into the heel of the neck. At all events the bar is less liable to warp or spring when so made. The object in making a neck with a number of veneers is not only to present a more beautiful appearance, but also to add greatly to the strength of the neck, rendering it less liable to warp and giving it a greater power of resistance to the tension of the strings.

Where a great deal of inlaying in pearl or wood is put in a banjo finger-board, it is better that such a banjo should be made with raised frets. For otherwise the friction of the strings, together with the pressure of the fingers (which must be much greater on a smooth board than with raised frets) is apt to sooner wear the finger-board and cause the strings to jar.

The less pearl or other inlaying a professional player who travels about has in his banjo finger-board, the better—for it is so much quicker and easier to repair a neck in case of jarring of the strings caused by warping or wear.

To say that a neck will never warp under any circumstances is to go outside of reason and common sense. A man might as well say that he would never get sick no matter where he traveled. A neck that is carried from place to place in variable climates is of course more apt to warp or change than a neck which is kept in an even temperature, and as the making of a perfect neck has been made a scientific and philosophic study at Stewart's factory, we can assert that there is no neck made which is so well calculated to give perfect satisfaction as those in the Stewart Banjos.

It will be seen from this brief sketch that many weeks must elapse before the rough plank,



together with the ebony log (which is sawed into strips) and other veneers becomes a banjo neck in reality. Sometimes the wood which goes into the factory in the shape of a plank, comes not out in the shape of a neck for three years or more. The time required *must be* weeks, it *may be* months, and sometimes *is* years. For it is ever the aim of the manufacturer of the celebrated Stewart Banjo, to turn out the best work and the best and most perfect toned banjo in the world. The Stewart Banjo is recognized as such and no pains will be spared to maintain its high standard of excellence.

The standard banjo neck of the present day is 19 inches in length—that is, if there is any such thing as a “standard” in the length of banjo necks—and the width and thickness varies according to the tastes of manufacturer and performer. Now, the length of vibrating string—that is, the distance between the nodes, or from the nut to the bridge, governs entirely the measurement or relative distances of the frets. Hence, if a banjo-neck of 19 inches is put in a rim of 12 inches (in diameter), the length of vibrating string will be one inch more than if the same length of neck is fitted to a rim of 11 inches; and should a 19 inch neck be fitted to a rim 13 inches in diameter, the length of vibrating string, will, of course, be an inch greater than with the 12 inch rim. Hence, with the same length of necks but with rims of different diameter, the measurement or relative distances of the frets must be different. The frets on the 12 inch rim banjo will be wider apart than on the 11 inch rim banjo; and the frets on the 13 inch rim banjo will be further apart and more difficult to finger than on either the 11 or 12 inch rim banjos.

We are now speaking briefly and merely generalizing upon the subject. Of course it would be possible to write many hundred pages on the subject were we to undertake a complete or only partial analysis of its various parts.

Now reverse the operation: Keep the rim of one size and vary the length of necks and we have the same result, only that with lengthening the neck, and thereby increasing the length of string, we are enabled to get an additional note or notes upon the neck, whereas by increasing the length of vibrating string by raising the diameter of the rim we are apt to have less notes on the neck (finger-board) and are compelled to stop the string upon the head, over the rim of the banjo to produce notes, which in the other case fall upon the neck.

A banjo made with a very small rim and long neck, such as Stewart's “Banjoret,” will have many more frets upon the neck or finger-board than a banjo made with a large rim and short neck, although they may each have the same length of vibrating string.

EXAMPLES.

A player who has been using a banjo of 12 inch rim and 19 inch neck, similar to Stewart's “Orchestra” Banjo, thinks it is too hard for him to finger, so desiring a shorter neck, he has the 19 inch neck replaced by one of 18 inches. Much to his surprise, he finds the instrument scarcely any easier to finger. Why is this?

Simply because the string has been lessened only *one inch* by the neck being one inch shorter, and this one inch being divided among the frets of the entire scale, makes so little difference in their relative measurement or distances, that the 19 inch neck might just as well have remained.

The length of string having been decreased by one inch causes the 12th fret—which is the

middle of the string, and must be equi-distant from the nut and bridge—to lie one-half inch nearer the nut, as a matter of course. The 5th fret being one-quarter the distance between the nut and bridge and one-half the distance from nut to 12th fret, will be one-quarter inch nearer to the nut. Hence, it is to be readily seen that such a small decrease in the relative distances of the frets and positions can scarcely render the instrument much easier to finger. Then what is the remedy in such a case? He has his choice of two remedies, one of which is to adopt raised frets, which will render the fingering much easier, and the other is to use a smaller banjo. He must either do this or else endeavor by practice, to render his fingers more supple and flexible.

There is a remedy for each and every evil in the world, but before you undertake to remedy an evil be sure that it is an evil that you are attempting to remedy, and be likewise sure that the remedy is the right one. For there are those who have had their banjo necks replaced by shorter ones, and again there are those who have had their banjo necks replaced by longer ones, and in neither case been any better off.

It isn't the length of neck that makes the banjo player; not always, at least. Nor is there any good reason why a banjo player should torture himself by working at a longer neck than nature has adapted him for.

FRETTING, ETC.

In fretting a neck with raised frets, care must be taken that the saw used will make a cut to fit the wire. It must not be loosely put in, for if so, it is apt to work out. Then again, if the saw cut is not sufficiently large the frets are apt to cause the neck to spring downwards on being driven in, acting like so many small wedges and forcing the neck to bend slightly.

If a neck warps or bends downwards, the strings will clank on the frets, and if the neck is much “out of true,” it becomes impossible to perform upon it.

But if the neck is sprung upwards and is hollow, so to speak, the strings will lie too far off the finger-board along the surface of the neck, and it then becomes difficult to finger chords, to say nothing of the false notes produced by the *change in tension* of the string in bringing it down upon the fret.

If the “open” strings on a raised fret banjo jar or clank, it is generally the case that the nut (or the notches in the nut) are cut too low. A new nut is the best remedy.

If the strings when stopped on any particular fret, jar or clank against the next fret instead of making a clear tone, it may be that the bridge is too low. If the bridge is of a proper height, it may be that one or more of the frets have sprung out and is higher than the lower fret at which the strings are stopped. The surface of the frets should be on a level always.

When a “straight-edge” is placed over the neck on the top of the fret board, should it not rest perfectly straight it will generally be found that the neck is not true. If made true in the beginning it has likely sprung or warped. This is often found in banjos carelessly made—especially in cheap instruments, but sometimes happens in instruments of the very best manufacture.

A walnut neck, with ebony face, is apt to warp on account of the different shrinkage capacities of the two woods. The same may be said of rosewood necks, which are very treacherous. But some players are so careless and clumsy that almost any neck would warp in their hands.

REPAIRING A WARPED NECK.

When a neck is found to have warped, if it is still in the manufactory, it is placed away for a time in order to await further changes in the wood, as it is not safe to repair such a neck and make immediate use of it. But if, on the contrary, such neck is in the hands of a performer and it thus becomes necessary to repair it immediately, the following course may be pursued:

First remove all the frets, if it is a raised fret instrument. Next ascertain, with the aid of a perfectly true straight-edge or leveling rule, just where and how much the neck is out of a line. If not too great, the neck can be “trued up” perfectly straight with sand paper blocks, that is, sand paper placed upon perfectly level blocks of wood. This cannot well be done by machinery, as great care must be taken with the work. After this is done, the finger-board can be finished up and new frets put in.

In case the neck is too badly warped to be leveled up in this way, the strip or veneer, forming the finger-board, must be taken off and a new one put on. But as such processes are likely to cause some trouble in case the neck should warp back into its original position, such work can only be done by an experienced workman, and it is better to send such instruments to Stewart's factory for repairs.

PEGS.

Stewart generally introduced ivory pegs (made from walrus tusk) in banjos, in the year 1879, from which time such pegs became popular among banjo players, and in demand.

Walrus ivory makes a handsome and durable peg for banjos, but as a matter of course, such pegs are brittle and easily broken if struck or from a slight blow, etc.

Of late there have been excellent imitations of the ivory pegs made in celluloid, a composition which is not so liable to break, and which has all the appearance of ivory, and therefore is equally as good for the purpose. Wood pegs, made of ebony or box-wood, have been in use for many years, and it is not to be supposed that their use will ever be entirely superseded by either celluloid, ivory, or other styles.

It is generally conceded however, that a light color peg, such as bone or ivory, has a better appearance, owing to contrast, in a neck with black finger-board, than those of dark color.

FITTING PEGS.

The holes for pegs are to be bored in the “peg-head” or “scroll,” with a drill somewhat smaller than the end of the peg, and then reamed out with a taper-reamer made to the same taper as the peg to be fitted; otherwise, the peg cannot fit the hole, and it becomes very hard to correctly tune the banjo.

SLIPPING PEGS.

If pegs, which are properly fitted, slip, or do not work easily, try a little chalk on them with perhaps a drop of oil. But do not rub rosin on them—reserve the rosin for a slipping BRIDGE.



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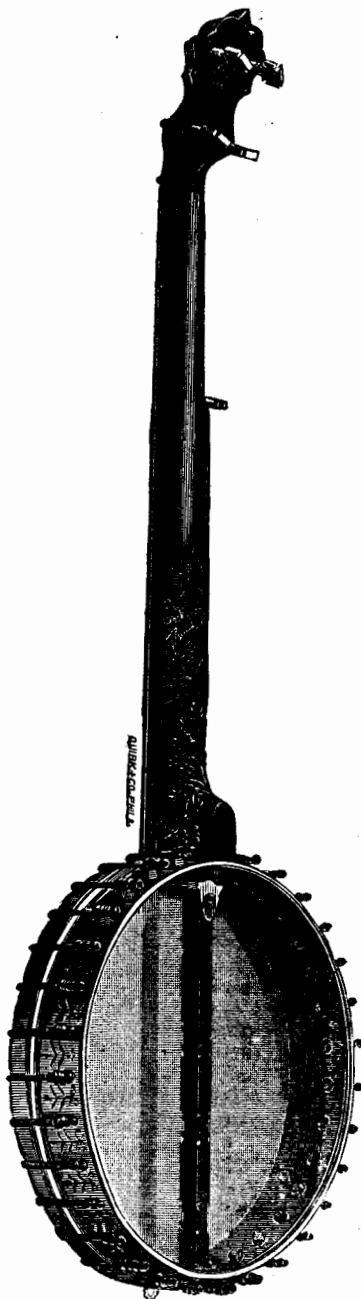
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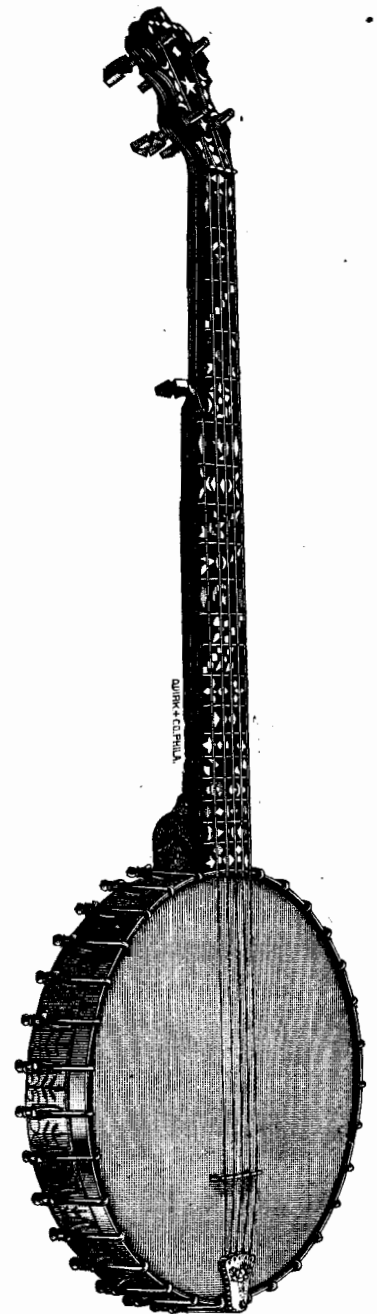
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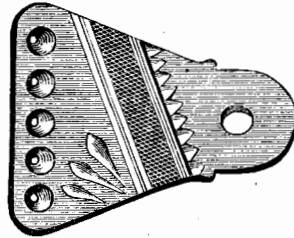
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