

THE YOST SYSTEM FOR VIOLIN

*"The Key to the Mastery
of the Finger-Board"*

By

Gaylord Yost

CHAPPELL & CO. LTD.

50 New Bond Street, London, W.1

THE BOSTON MUSIC CO.

Boston, Mass.

What the World's Foremost Violinists and Teachers Say:

"My dear Mr. Yost:

"After thoroughly examining your 'Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board,' I am very much impressed by the logic in your approach toward solving the difficulties of the finger-board. Your system should prove to be a great time-saver for every violinist. In the training of students it should be very helpful in developing very quickly their sense for intonation."

(Signed) HANS LETZ

(Violin Department Juilliard School
of Music, New York)

"The YOST SYSTEM, or 'The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board,' which you have submitted to me, has proven of very great interest. After serious perusal of your *very remarkable work*, I am happy to inform you that *I believe it will prove of great benefit to violin students.*"

(Signed) TOSCHA SEIDEL

"I have examined with keen interest the YOST SYSTEM, or 'The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board,' and am completely convinced that it is a *ritally important contribution to the advancement of violin study*. You have summed up concisely what many progressive violin pedagogues have intuitively felt to be right. Clearing away the bewildering mass of technical studies that confront the violin student, and giving him only that which is important, will enable him to devote more time to the study of important repertoire and music in general. Today, with the stimulus of successful professionalism greatly diminished, it is more important than ever for the violin student to have all time possible to devote to acquiring a broad musical culture. This was hardly possible under the old system which required hours and hours of wading through etudes and so-called student concerti. *The violin world is to be congratulated on your achievement.*"

(Signed) ALBERT STOESSEL

"In looking over your 'Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board,' I find it very sound in principle and believe that it will be of great benefit to the violin student in acquiring perfect control of the finger-board."

(Signed) PAUL STASSEVITCH

(Violinist and teacher at the
David Mannes Music School)

"Thank you for the proof of 'The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board' for violin. I have read these studies with great interest, and congratulate you on the clarity with which you have set forth *very interesting and new principles* of left-hand technic. I think these studies will prove a *very valuable contribution to pedagogic literature.*"

(Signed) ALBERT SPALDING

"It gives me pleasure to tell you that your 'Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board' inspires perfect confidence to recommend your system to all advanced students and teachers as new principles to acquire violin technic in a shorter time than with many other methods."

(Signed) MISHEL PIASTRO

(Concert Master, New York
Philharmonic Orchestra)

"After carefully examining the YOST SYSTEM, or 'The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board,' by Gaylord Yost, I take sincere pleasure in warmly recommending the work to anyone seeking a comparatively quick means of attaining thorough command of the finger-board."

"Mr. Yost's exercises are far removed from the conventional technical drudgery. The work is concise and, in many respects, absolutely new. In my opinion it should prove a very great time-saver to anyone who is able to apply its principles intelligently."

(Signed) LOUIS PERSINGER

(Distinguished violinist, successor of the
late Leopold Auer at the Juilliard School
of Music in New York and who has num-
bered among his pupils such outstanding
violinists as Yehudi Menuhin, Ruggiero
Ricci, Guila Bustabo, etc.)

"I have had the pleasure of examining the YOST SYSTEM, or 'The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board' for violin, by Gaylord Yost, and I am not hesitant in stating that I consider this work of the greatest importance. The application of the new and simple principles presented will produce a technical command of the finger-board in a shorter time than with any other system with which I am acquainted."

"I can only recommend the work with the greatest enthusiasm and with absolute conviction of its ultimate success."

(Signed) PAUL KOCHANSKI

FOREWORD

Up to the present time, to learn to play the violin with technical proficiency, except for the unusually talented, has been a long and laborious task, requiring not alone an unlimited expenditure of energy but the assiduous application of intelligence and an alert and sensitive auditory sense. And it may be stated unequivocally that no one can reach a high degree of excellence in playing the violin without submitting to a few years of disciplined practice routine. However, I wish to point out that the older methods and systems of acquiring sufficient technical command, to permit a free expression of the intellectual and emotional reactions, are more often so unsystematically propagated as to make the period of technical growth drawn out and unnecessarily laboured.

Prior to the meteoric rise of Paganini, violinists were unaccustomed to playing above the third position except for an occasional extension. Then came Paganini and exhausted the technical possibilities of violin playing over night, as it were. Such rapid development in a single individual can only be explained on the ground of the radically different principles employed by Paganini since he had no traditional background for such unprecedented attainment. Little wonder that spellbound audiences imagined that his hands were guided by the devil and that all sorts of myths were fabricated around this brilliant genius! But there was nothing mysterious about Paganini's accomplishment. He possessed a profoundly analytical mind that fathomed the *true nature* of the violin and its technical possibilities, and he knew that "sound principles breed sound results." An examination of his music reveals that he must have practised much on single strings, for do we not have the "Moses Fantasy" on the G string and many passages in his compositions indicative of such practice? Therefore, it is entirely within the realm of logical inference that the principles of practice employed by Paganini constituted his "secret" which he stated he would some day give to the world. Since the principles set forth in this work are fundamentally basic, containing the essential difficulties of execution, and their practice will promote a rapid development of facility in a much shorter time than with any heretofore indicated, it seems quite reasonable to assume that, in all probability, Paganini employed a similar system.

While it is obviously impossible to verify any system which lays claim to being the "secret" which died with Paganini in 1840, still I desire to set forth, in as clear and lucid a form as possible, why I believe that "The Yost System" or "The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board" must be founded upon the identical principles used by Paganini in producing his remarkable mastery of the violin. Now since Paganini, many distinguished violin

technicians have been produced and, so far as I am aware, none of them has laid claim to the possession of any but theories or principles which have been patent to all for a generation. It must be clearly borne in mind that these extraordinarily brilliant executants have succeeded in spite of the haphazard and illogical methods of procedure, their success being due wholly to the preponderant talent which they possessed for their task. But as everyone knows this brilliant type is the rare exception and with exceptions we have no concern. There are, however, many near-geniuses, who, because of interferences such as wrongly conditioned reflexes, have been unable to become technically free and proficient and who are, thereby, prevented from completely realizing themselves in self-expression. It is to this large majority that I address myself in indicating a system of practice which, if followed for a short period, will definitely remove these interferences and give a facility, ease and accuracy in playing hitherto denied them.

Schottky, in his biography of Paganini, states that: "In his conversations with me, Paganini would remark very frequently that at some future time, after having ended his travels and retired from active life, he would bequeath a musical secret to the world, in possession of which, a young player could perfect himself completely within a space of hardly three years at the most; whereas with the customary plan of study he would, as a rule, require at least ten. I asked him repeatedly if he were not jesting and whether he were really in earnest with his assertion, but invariably he would answer: 'I swear to you that I am telling the truth, and authorize you to make particular mention of this in my biography. My secret, if I may call it such, might become the means of indicating certain paths, which would enable a violinist to fathom the *real nature of the instrument in a much better and more thorough manner than has been the case heretofore*. In addition to simplifying matters to a remarkable extent, my ideas, in this respect, are also much more plausible than would seem apparent at first glance. Not to accident but to deep and earnest study am I indebted for this discovery, the application of which will make it entirely unnecessary to practise four or five hours every day. Ultimately it will be the means of doing away with the present methods of teaching, which, in my opinion, are inclined to increase the difficulties of playing, rather than to lessen them. However, it is a decided mistake for any one to imagine that this secret, the execution of which necessitates and demands unquestionable intellectual ability, is merely contained in my style of tuning the violin, or what is more unlikely still, in my particular manipulation of the bow.'" Schottky further states that: "Paganini referred to Camillo Sivori, son of a

Genoese merchant, and then in his sixteenth year. In speaking of this young man, who, in his estimation, was possessed of the most perfect ear in the world, he remarked: 'He was hardly seven years old when I imparted the first ideas of *scale playing* to him, and within three days he was capable of playing several pieces in an astonishingly clever manner; and when after a short period of merely fourteen days this boy appeared in public as a soloist, the world proclaimed that still another wonder had been added to the many which Paganini had already brought about.'

Paganini's statement regarding his secret is precisely applicable to "The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board."

Now what is the real nature of the violin? Certainly the difficulties in finger-board execution are in no way concerned with crossing the strings in the same position but rather in ascending and descending the whole range of the finger-board with facility and accuracy, commanding all positions with equal ease. To be able to execute scales, arpeggios and all of the broken intervals from thirds to tenths, in any position and with any fingering, moving up and down the finger-board, constitutes the real difficulty of left-hand execution and, therefore, *the real nature of the instrument*. It must be remembered that no style of bowing is articulate until there is free articulation of the left hand. Now such a system as is outlined in this book, first of all, strikes directly at this difficulty and its practice rapidly brings about facile coördination of execution, embracing, as it does, the entire finger-board range for each scale or arpeggio. *I wish to emphasize the fact that this important principle has been previously ignored* and to acquire a familiarity with the finger-board range has taken years of practice heretofore simply because of that fact. The simplicity of this system will come as a surprise to those who have trodden the narrow path of tradition and are snugly ensconced in one-tracked thinking.

All systems of violin technique thus far devised start with the false assumption that the violin is an exceedingly complex instrument and, thereby, the first great error is made. Examine any of the technical schools and observe the unlimited number and types of special exercises designed for every specific phase of technique. Practically all of the curricula still persist in pursuing the study of etudes which are neither designed for musical or technical growth but more often merely as a means of consuming time. The study of most of these antiquated etudes is a sheer waste of time and, with exception of a few, should be abandoned. It is rather singular that the mastery of the finger-board has been so haphazardly outlined in the past and it is to be wondered at that so many accomplished violinists have been produced with such faulty methods.

The violin is the simplest of all musical instruments and the first problem for the beginner is to

learn the stopping of intervals in small groups such as tetrachords and triads in the first position. After this is done and correct postures are established the point is reached that will permit a rapid and healthy development of facility, provided the logical system is followed. Let us take, for instance, scale and arpeggio practice, the foundation of left-hand technique: the immense amount of time and energy spent in practising three and four octave scales and arpeggios can be astonishingly minimized by practising two octave scales and arpeggios on each of the four strings. The surprising development of facility resulting from a short period of daily practice of the diatonic major and minor, chromatic and broken interval scales will be immediately evident; and with the set of fingerings I have devised, embracing every possible way of fingering these scales, arpeggios and intervals, the entire finger-board range is thoroughly and systematically covered. This system is highly efficacious because its serious and intense application is a guarantee of concentration due to the great diversity in execution and thus a tremendous resourcefulness is developed. *It may be herewith stated that a universal misconception has previously existed. The nature of this misconception has been that while the tonal range of the instrument is three and four octaves, the actual finger-board range is only two octaves. THEREFORE, IT FOLLOWS THAT OUR TASK IS TO MASTER THESE TWO OCTAVES, AND THE AUTHOR HEREWITH OUTLINES A NEW SYSTEM, IN CONCISE FORM, WHEREBY SUCH MASTERY MAY BE ATTAINED IN A FEW MONTHS, PROVIDED THE PRINCIPLES ARE DAILY APPLIED.* The principles of this system are also perfectly adaptable to the viola and 'cello.

From the standpoint of manual adaptability there are only two types of two octave scales on each of the four strings, viz.: those beginning on the open strings and those beginning on the first semitone above. An analysis of these two types of scales discloses the fact that they embrace every semitone within the two octave range. Subsequently, it follows that no violinist or violin student can pursue such daily routine without extending and perfecting his facility and intonation to a remarkable degree. It may be asked: "What benefit comes from practising scales and arpeggios with one finger?" Such practice, first of all, facilitates the most important coördination of the auditory sense with the movements of the arm, hand and fingers and ensures an easy posture no matter in which position one plays. Furthermore, a solid foundation is laid for the playing of octaves and tenths by strengthening the flexor, interosseous and lumbricale muscles, thus stabilizing finger-posture in all positions and perfecting the minute adjustments of finger-placement and in no way interfering with the synergistic action of the flexor and extensor group of tendons. Such practice is of the utmost value. The practice

of such fingerings as 1-2, 2-3 and 3-4 on the major and minor scales facilitates the playing of such double-stopping as thirds, sixths and fingered octaves.

According to our psychologists all memory and learning is based upon association of ideas or impressions. To bring about the most rapid development of technical resources there must be a logical sequence of associated ideas and this fundamentally important principle has been almost totally ignored in technical schools of the past and, consequently, it has required prolonged years of practice to establish even a fair degree of velocity and accuracy. The present system corrects this error of procedure.

It is most important that the fingerings be practised in their proper order or logical sequence to get the greatest possible benefit from their application. This sequential order is as follows: arpeggios, first with the 1st finger, then 2nd, 3rd and 4th, followed by the conventional or practical fingering printed below. Scales, likewise first with the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, following these with the pairs 1-2, 2-3, 3-4; then 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4-2-3-4, et cetera, and 1-2-3-4, et cetera. Then the substitution fingerings in the order given. All broken interval scales should be practised in the following order: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4; 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4; 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4; 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4, each pair of fingerings applying to the entire ascending and descending scales.

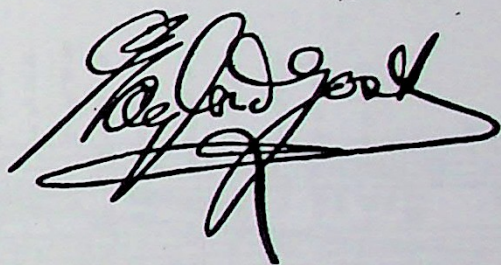
After a period of practice such as I have outlined in this book, the matter of playing three and four octave scales, arpeggios and broken intervals in all of the various keys, beginning with any finger or in any position, becomes merely a matter of

identification of key-signatures and offers no manual difficulties whatsoever.

I have appended a reduction of the system to the one-octave range for those beginners who have studied six months or more. It is suggested that these one-octave scales, arpeggios and intervals should be played in the first position to begin with in order to familiarize the student with the intervals and tonality before attempting to play them on one string.

IN PRACTICE, THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE CAREFULLY OBSERVED:

1. Practise slowly and softly with the utmost repose.
2. Strict attention to intonation.
3. These exercises must be transposed and practised on the D, A and E strings respectively. Two strings each day are sufficient but it is advisable to practise Exercise I, say on the G string, and Exercise II on the E.
4. All exercises are to be practised slurring each ascending and descending scale or arpeggio in one bow.
5. Keep the unemployed fingers on the strings whenever possible.



POSTSCRIPT TO THE FOREWORD

It is most important that correct principles be rigidly followed in practising the following exercises. I shall not enter into discussion of the various theories of postures, many of which are diametrically opposed in principle, but for the benefit of the student who is in doubt of the proper procedure of practice, the following is added as a postscript to the Foreword.

Let it be remembered that the thumb acts purely as a guide in the change of position. Its action is secondary. There are two theories in connection with the thumb's function in change of position, viz.: one school advises that the thumb precedes the hand in shifting up and down the finger-board while the other school maintains that the thumb moves simultaneously with the hand. The author is convinced that the latter is most favourable since it eliminates unnecessary movement of the thumb. However, it is important to maintain, at all times, an easy and unconstrained thumb-position with absolutely no thumb-pressure against the neck of the instrument. *Such an easy thumb-position cannot be established without ease and security in holding the violin with the jaw-bone and collar-bone.* A chin-rest of proper height and shape to fit the individual need is, likewise, necessary. Furthermore, the position of the thumb, in all positions above the sixth, should be maintained by keeping its proper posture at the extreme end and crotch of the neck of the violin. Many students permit the thumb to leave the neck of the violin, following up the finger-board or resting on the upper shoulder of the body of the instrument, both of which are unfavourable to facility in shifting. It is also important to avoid attempting to keep the thumb clutched around the neck of the violin in the higher positions since this posture prevents freedom of finger and hand movements.

The rule for making the change of position is as follows: Always slide with the finger which precedes the change of position and substitute the other finger the moment the desired position is reached.

G. Y.

Dedicated to the memory of Nicolo Paganini

The Yost System

The Key to the Mastery of the Finger-Board

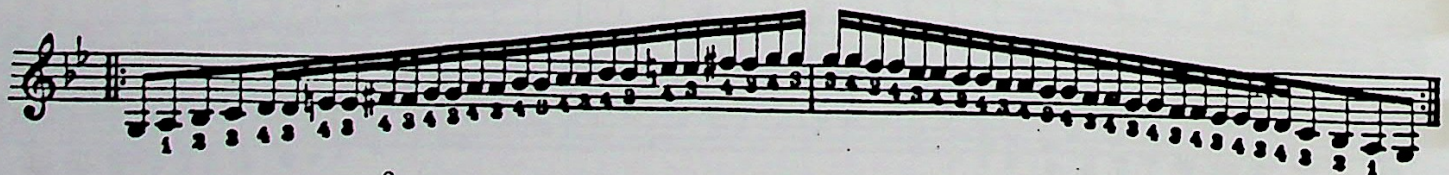
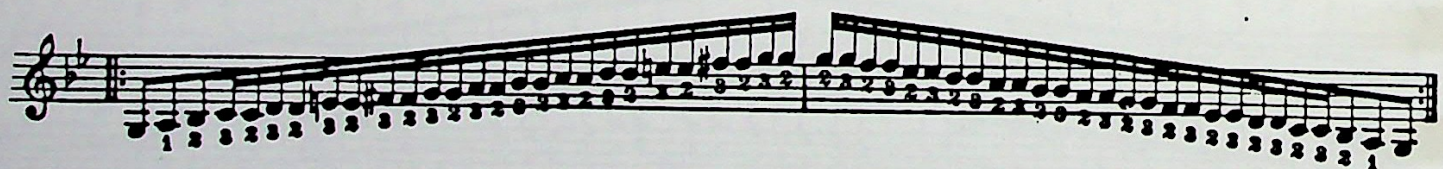
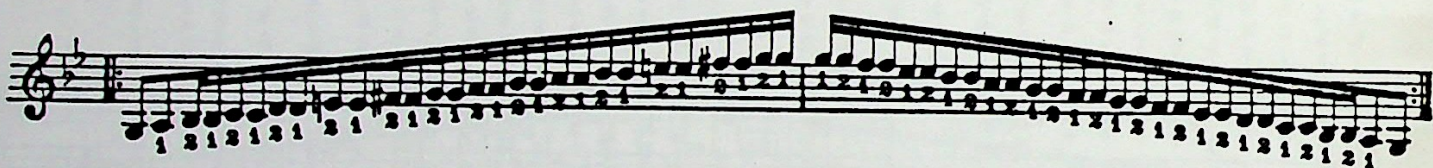
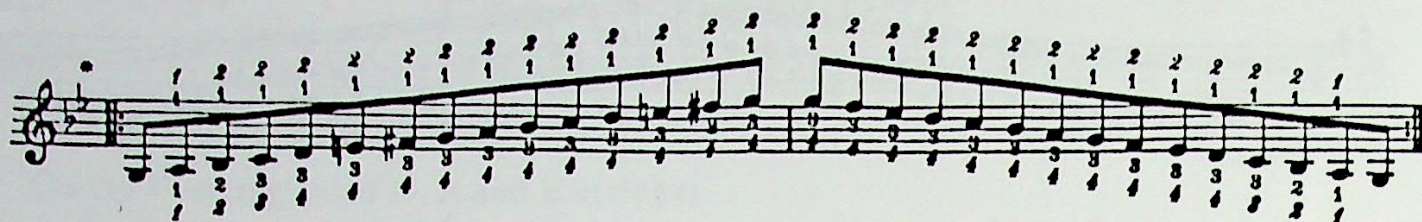
Gaylord Yost

On the G string (also D, A and E strings)

The musical score is a technical exercise for guitar, specifically for the G string (and also D, A, and E strings). It consists of five staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a single melodic line. Above the notes, there are extensive fingerings indicated by numbers 1 through 4. Some notes are circled, and there are 'X' marks at the end of the first and fourth staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and rests. The overall style is that of a technical exercise or a piece of music designed to demonstrate the Yost System of guitar playing.

Copyright MCMXXXIV, by The Boston Music Co.
International Copyright Secured

CHAPPELL & CO. LTD., 50 New Bond St., London, W.1



* The harmonic minor must be practised also

The page contains five systems of musical notation, each consisting of a staff with a treble clef and a staff with a bass clef. The notation is for a piano piece, featuring a variety of note values, rests, and accidentals. Below each system of staves, there are lines of numbers (1-5) indicating fingerings for the notes. The page is numbered 7 in the top right corner.

* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.

[illegible]

Chappell

First musical staff with treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of fingerings (1-4) written above and below the notes.

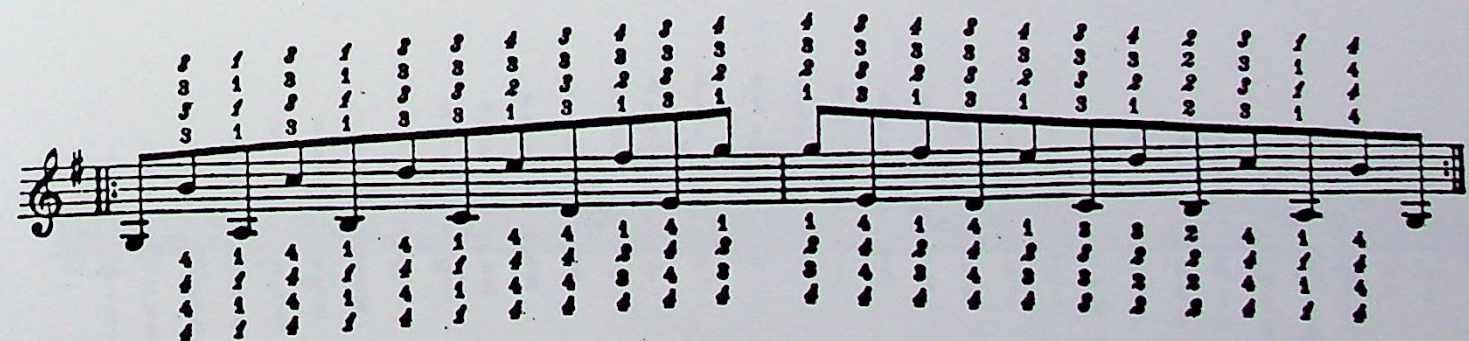
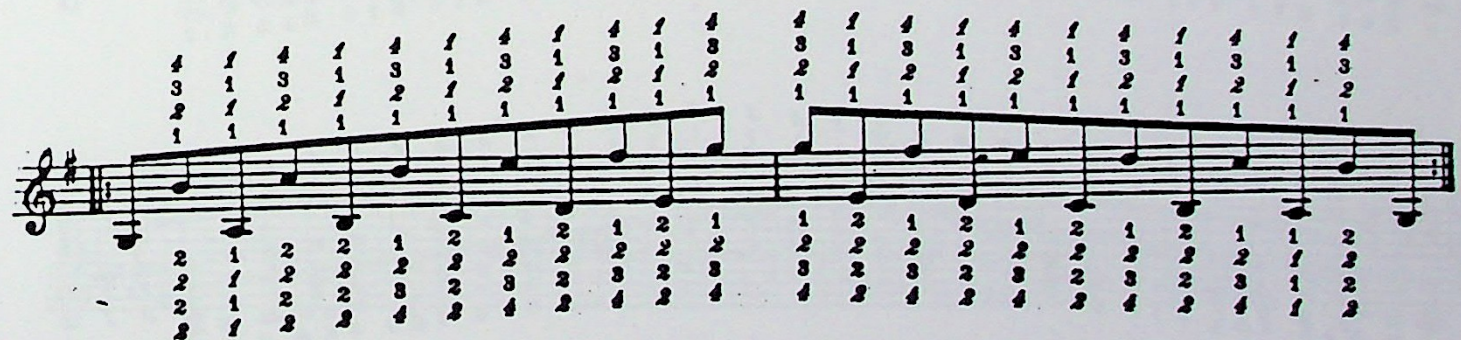
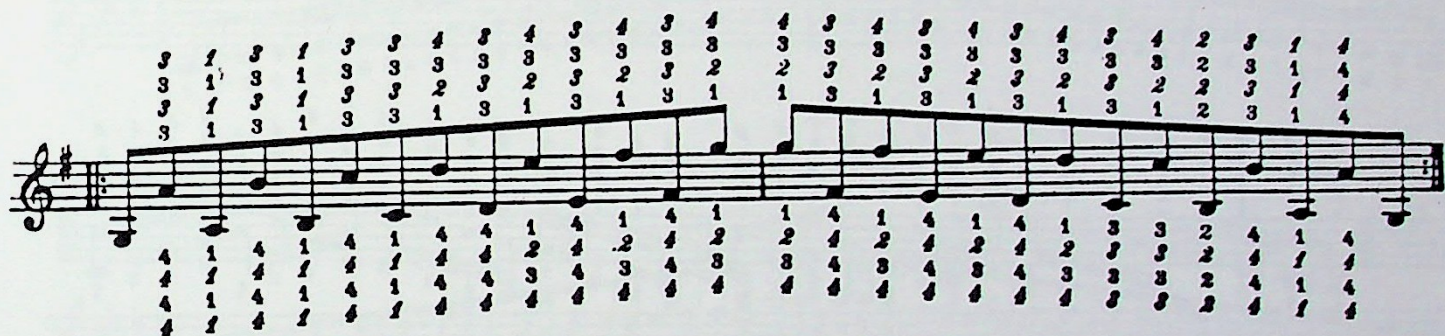
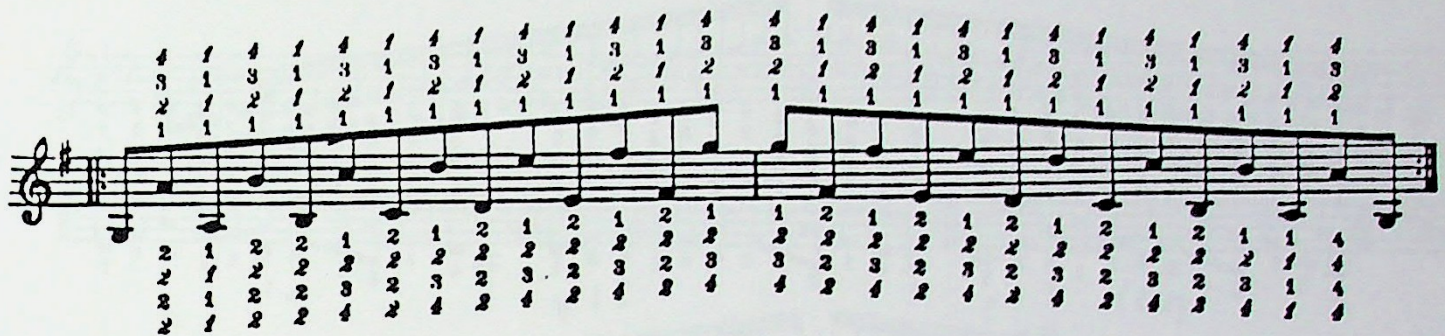
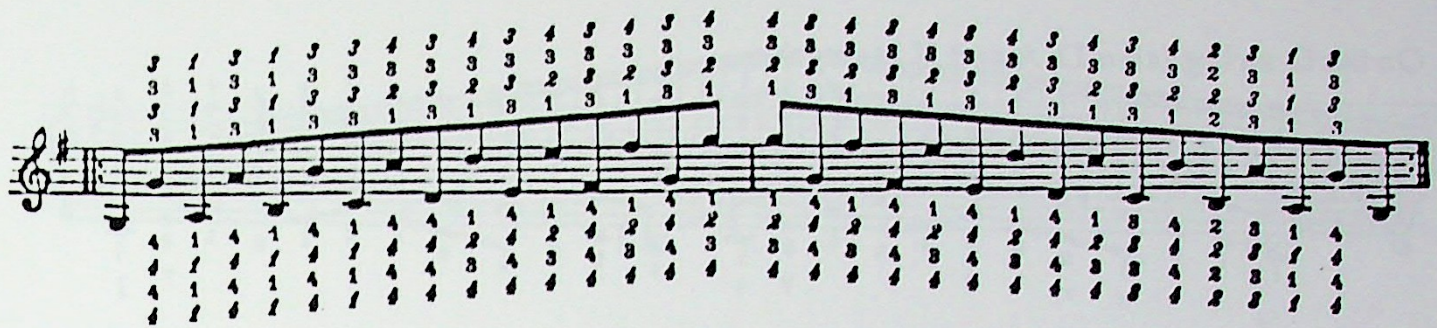
Second musical staff with treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of fingerings (1-4) written above and below the notes.

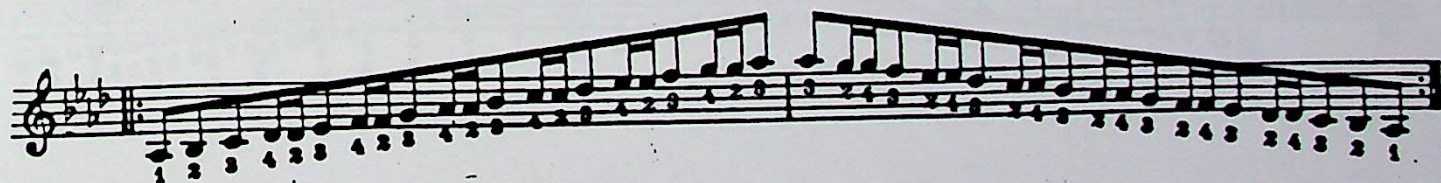
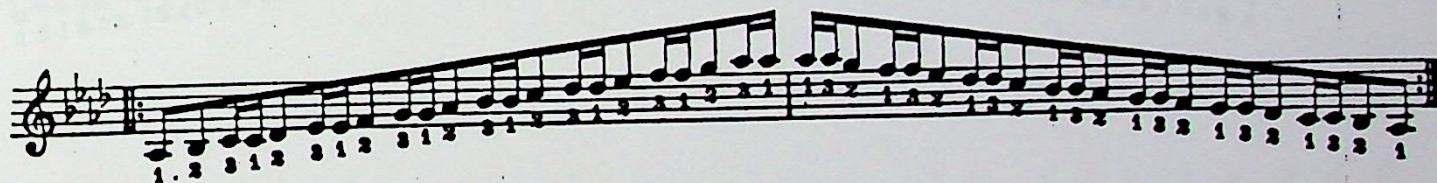
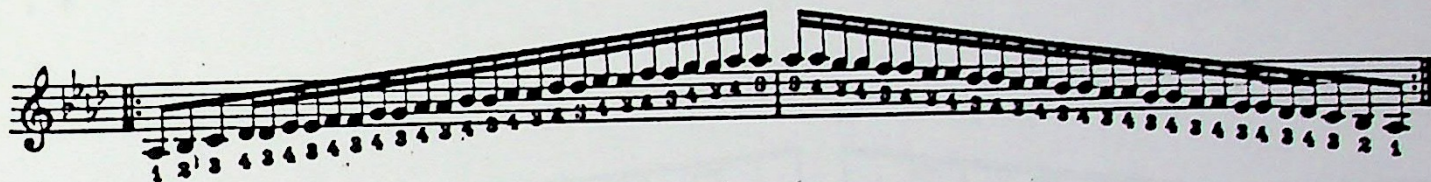
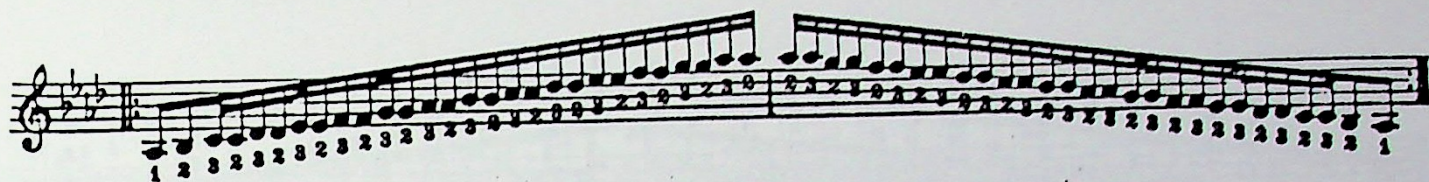
Third musical staff with treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of fingerings (1-4) written above and below the notes.

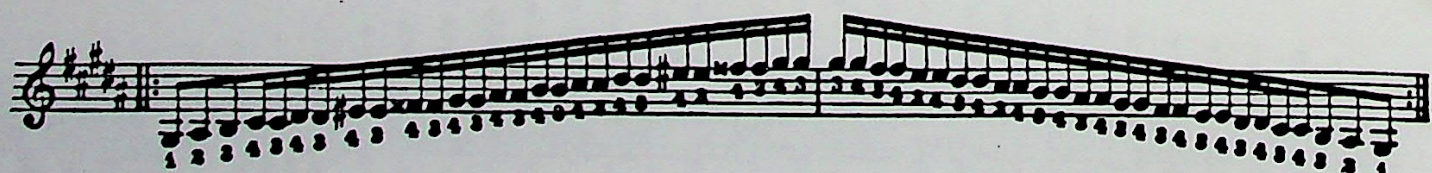
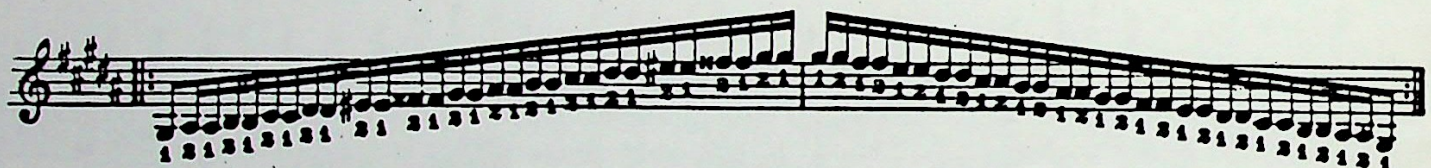
Fourth musical staff with treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of fingerings (1-4) written above and below the notes.

Fifth musical staff with treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a series of fingerings (1-4) written above and below the notes.

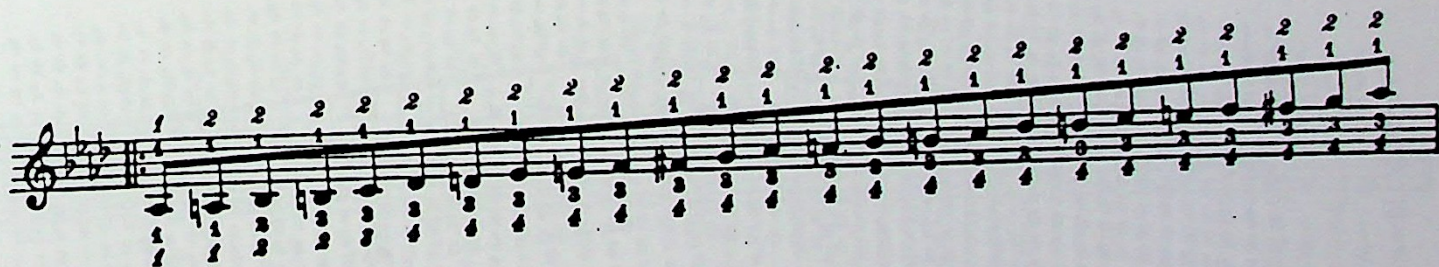
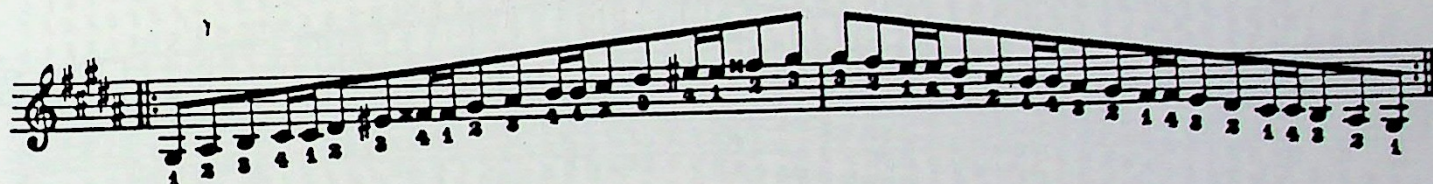
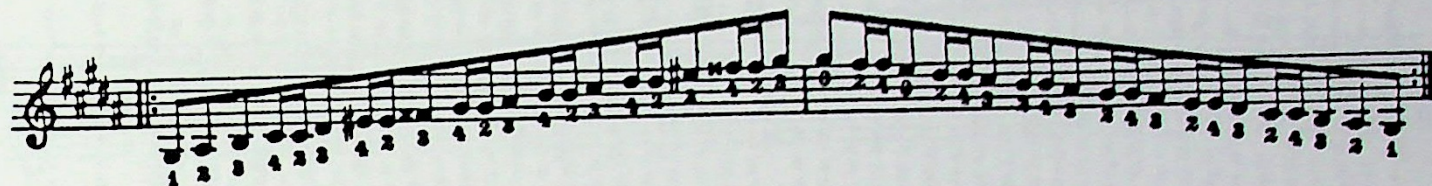
• Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.







* The harmonic minor must be practised also



[illegible]

A musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written on a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef, and the guitar accompaniment is in the bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a descending line. The guitar accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and a more complex pattern in the right hand, including chords and single notes. The score is labeled "The Rose Tree" at the top left.

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree." It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is in 2/4 time and G major. The vocal melody is simple and catchy, with lyrics written below the notes. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. The score is written on a single page with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature of 2/4.

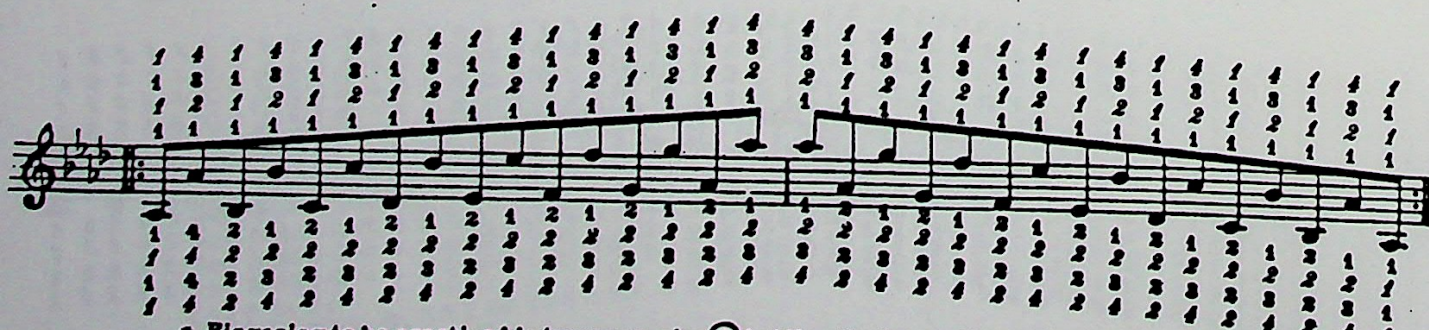
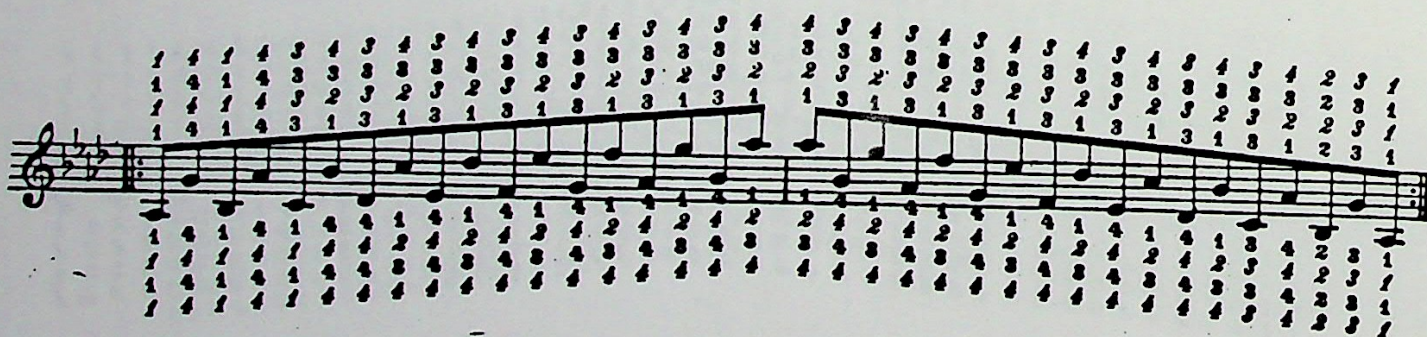
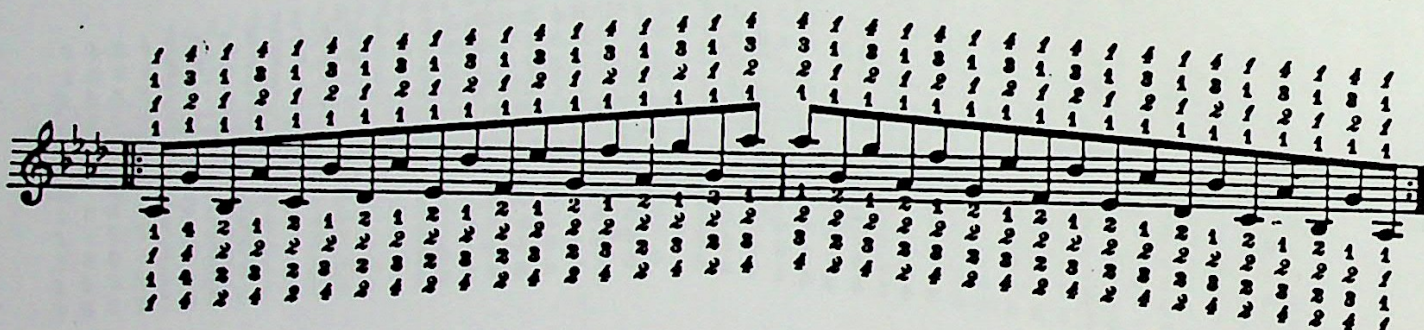
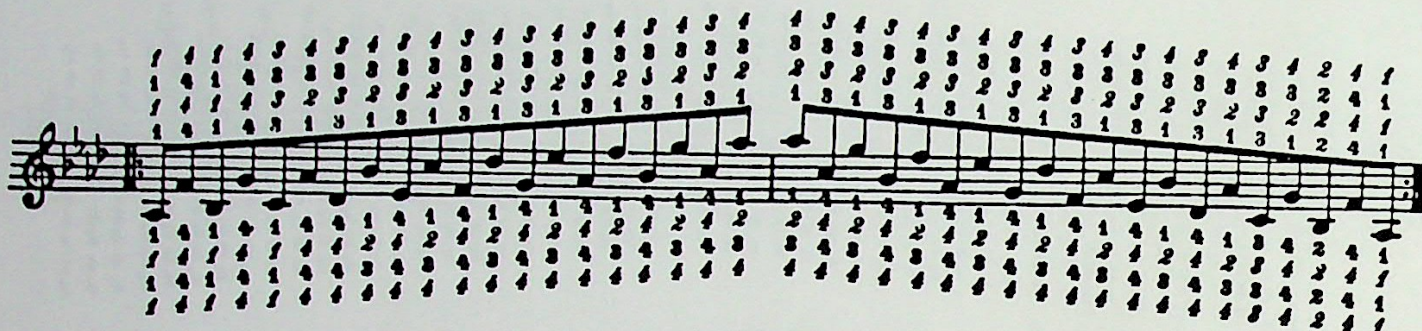
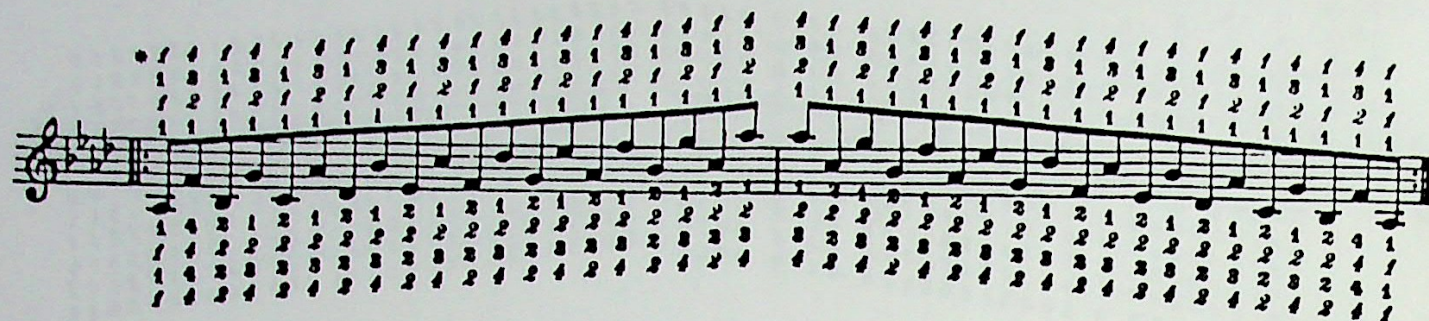
[illegible]

A musical score for a piece titled "Fingering to be practised in two ways". The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a descending line. Above the staff, there are two rows of numbers (1-5) indicating fingerings for each note. Below the staff, there are two rows of numbers (1-5) indicating fingerings for each note. The piece is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign at the beginning. The title is written in a decorative font at the top.

* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.

10

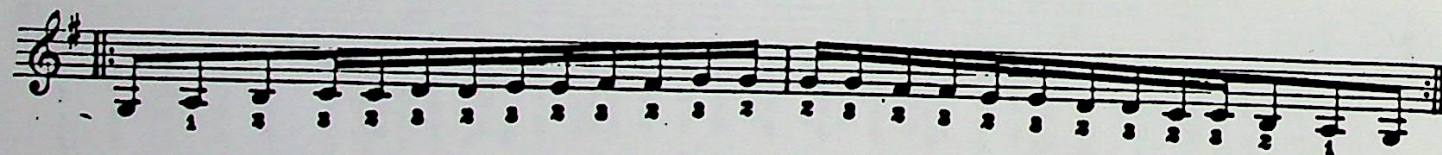
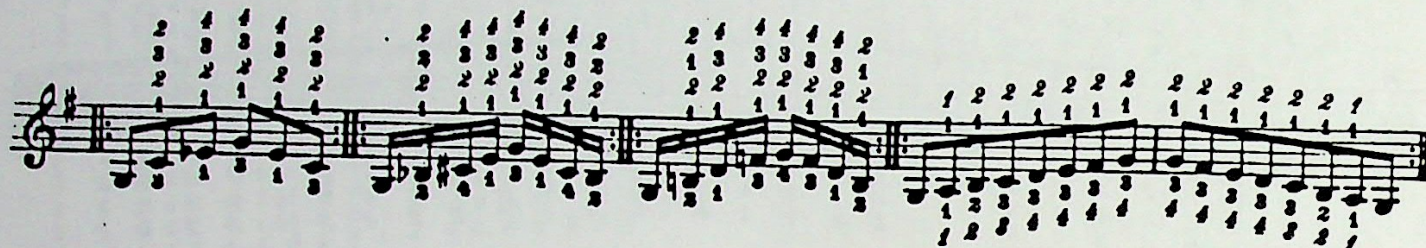
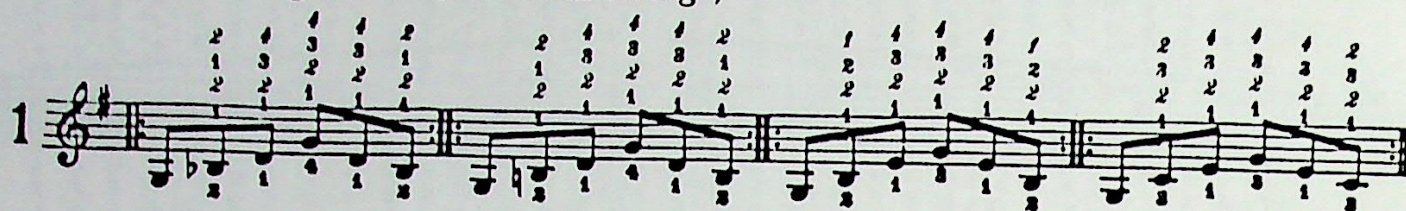
* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.

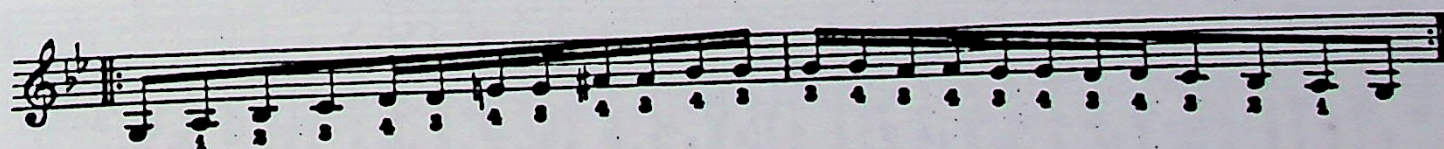
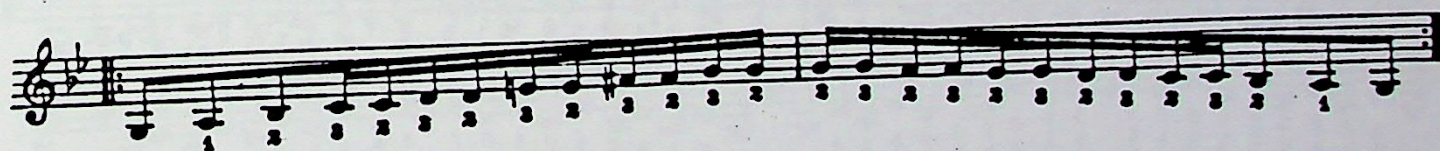
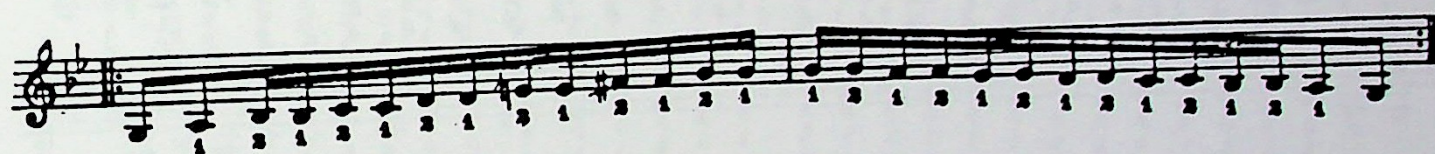


* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.

The following exercises, covering a one-octave range, are designed for beginners who have studied six months or more

On the G string (also D, A and E strings)

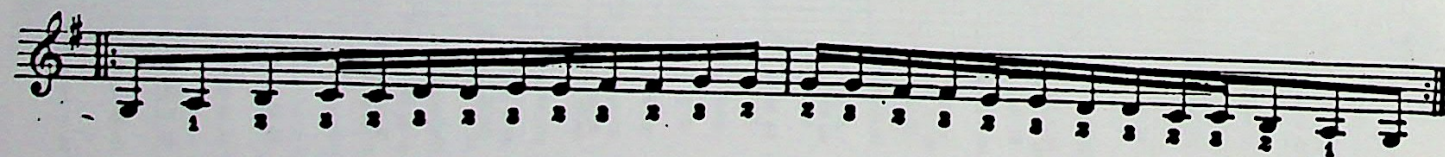
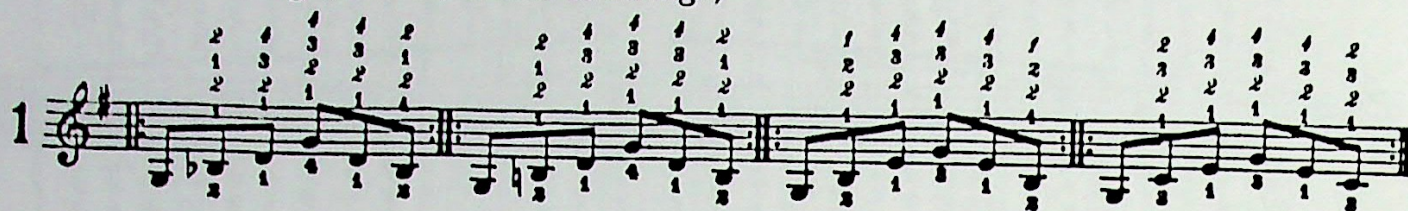


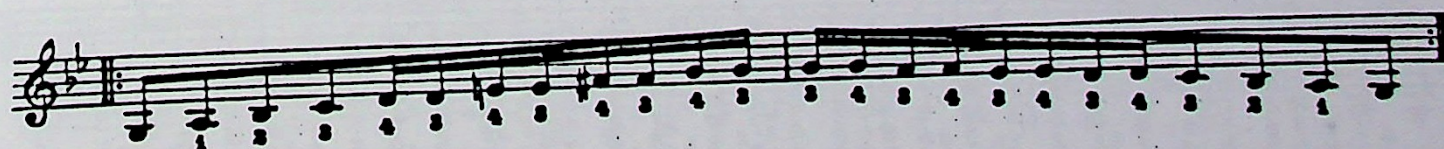
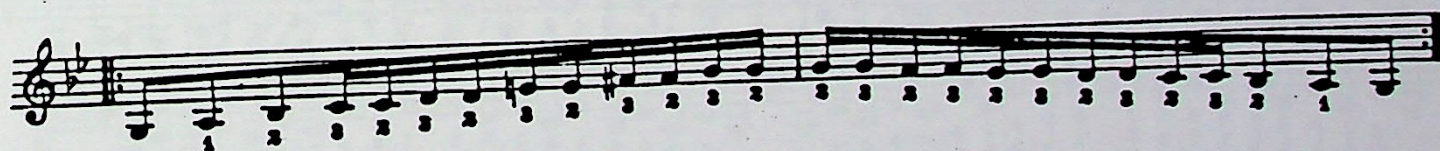
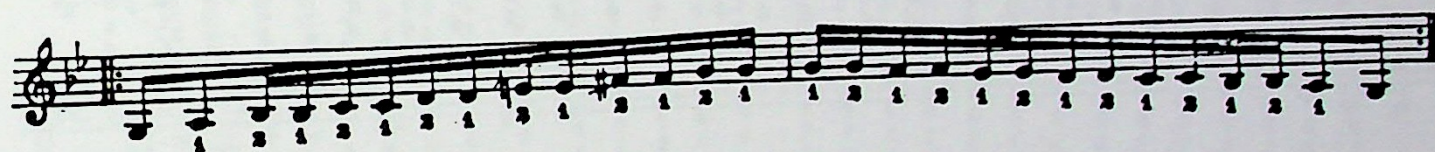
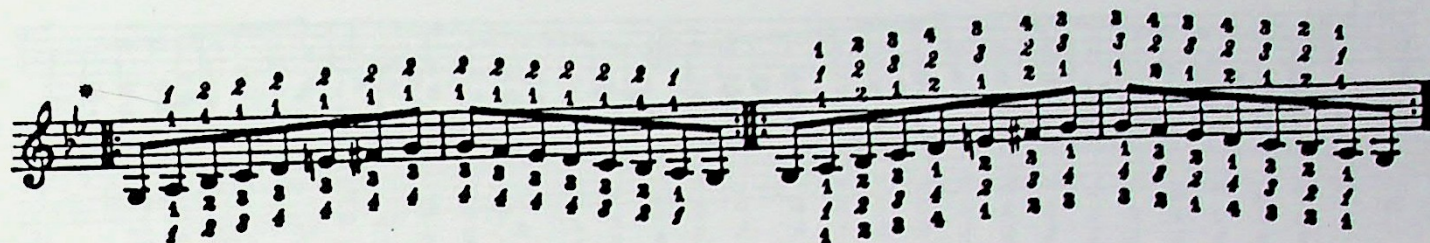


* The harmonic minor must be practised also

The following exercises, covering a one-octave range, are designed for beginners who have studied six months or more

On the G string (also D, A and E strings)



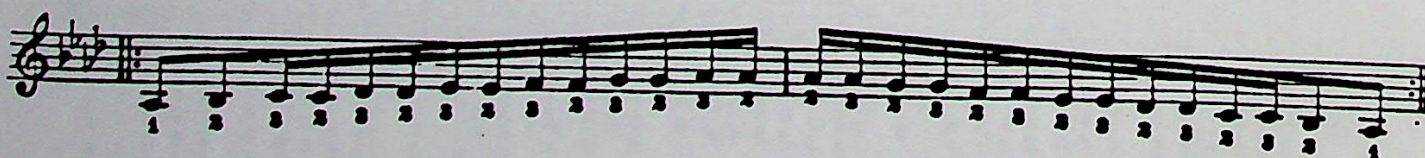
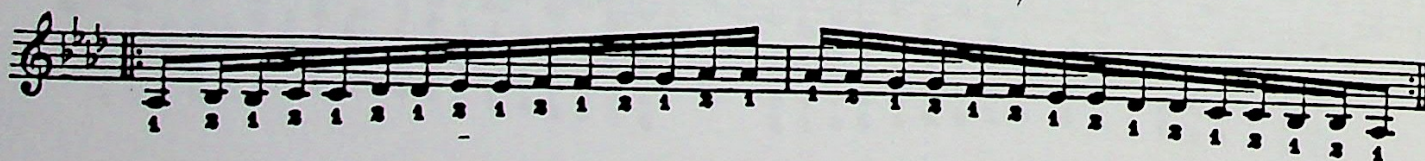
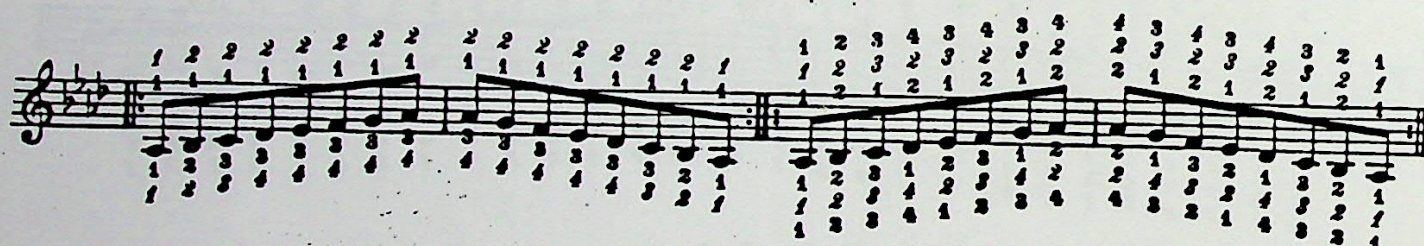
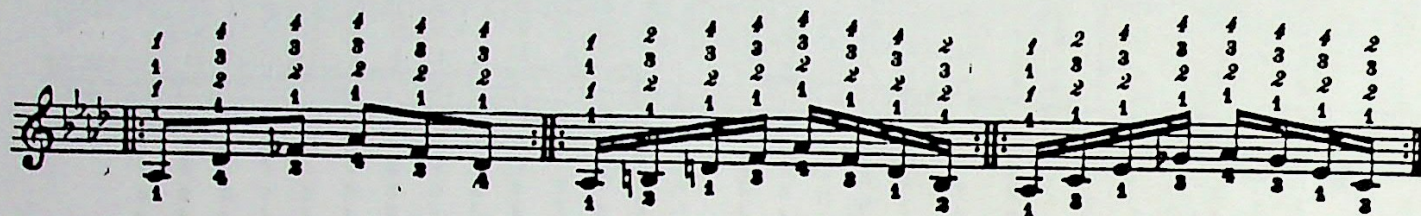


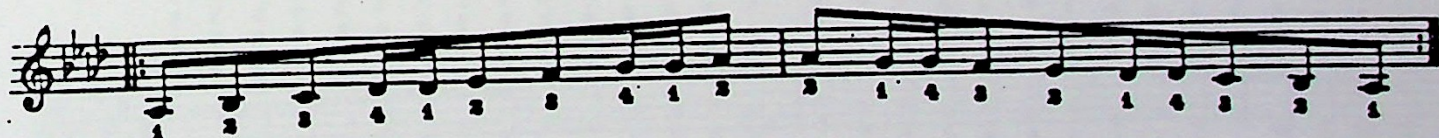
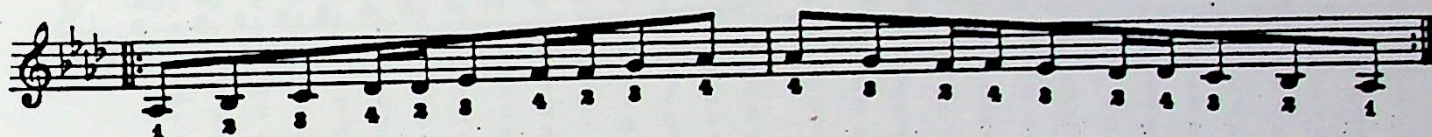
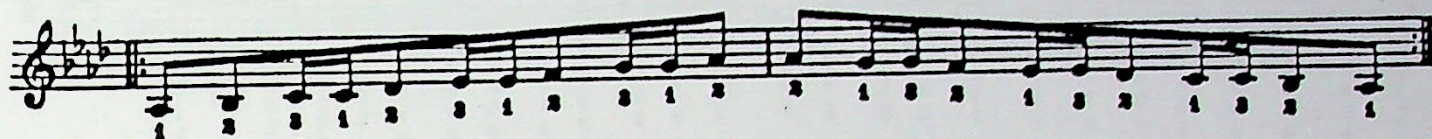
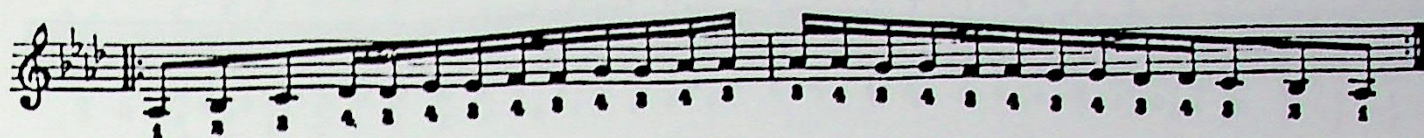
* The harmonic minor must be practised also

The page contains five systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). Below each staff is a series of numbers representing fingerings. The numbers are arranged in columns, often with multiple numbers per column indicating different fingerings for the same note. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

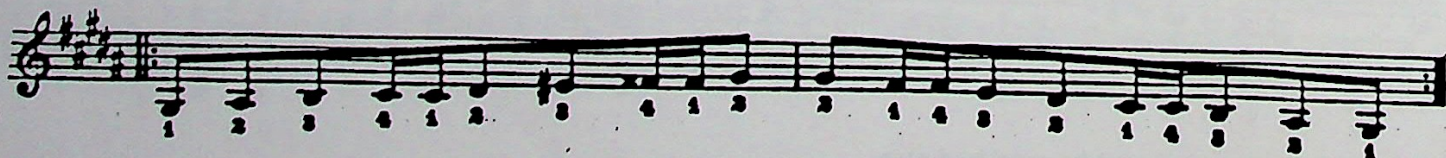
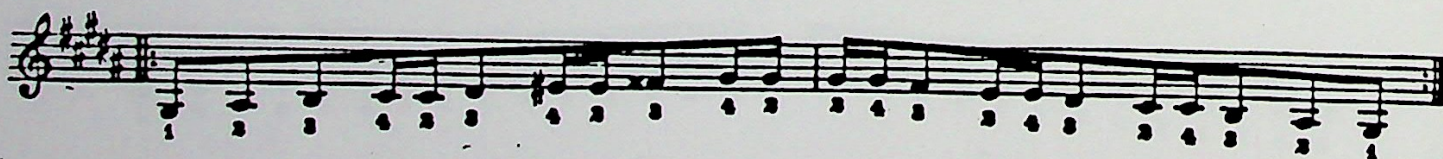
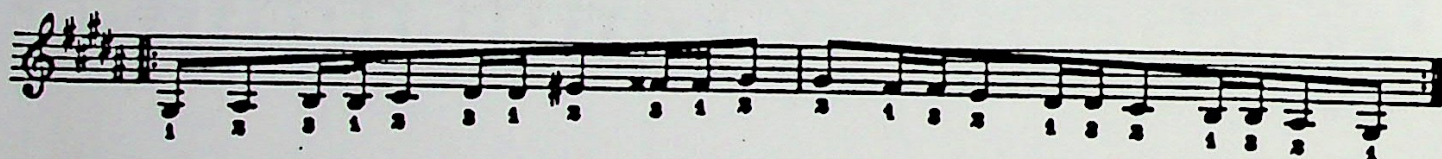
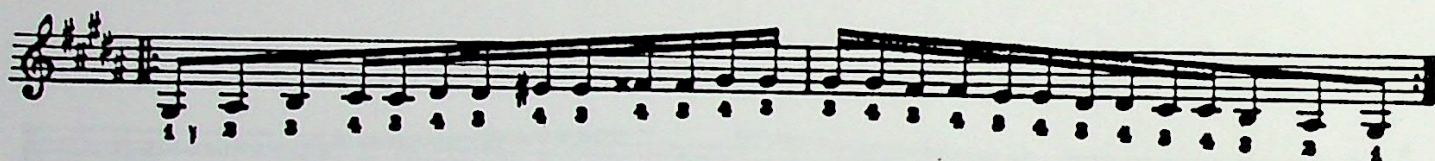
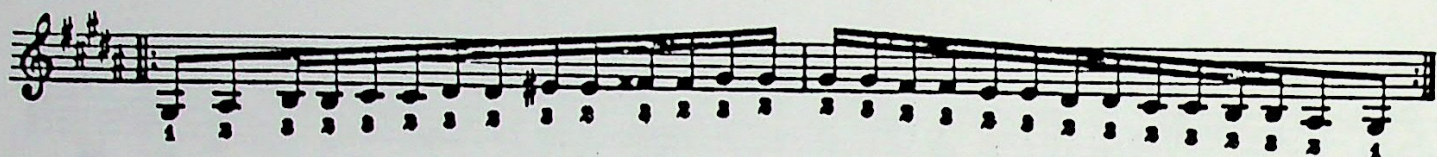
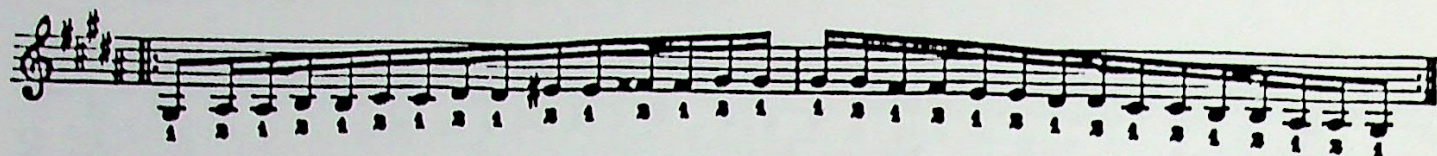
* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.

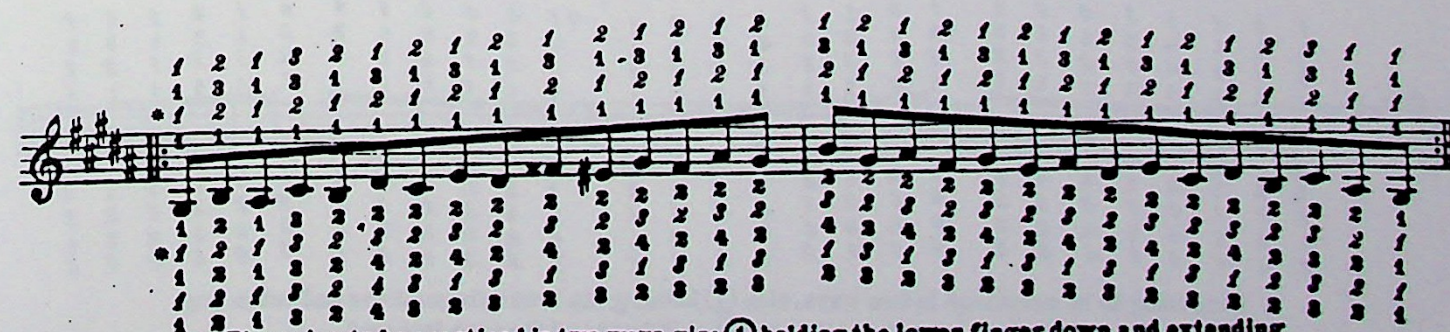
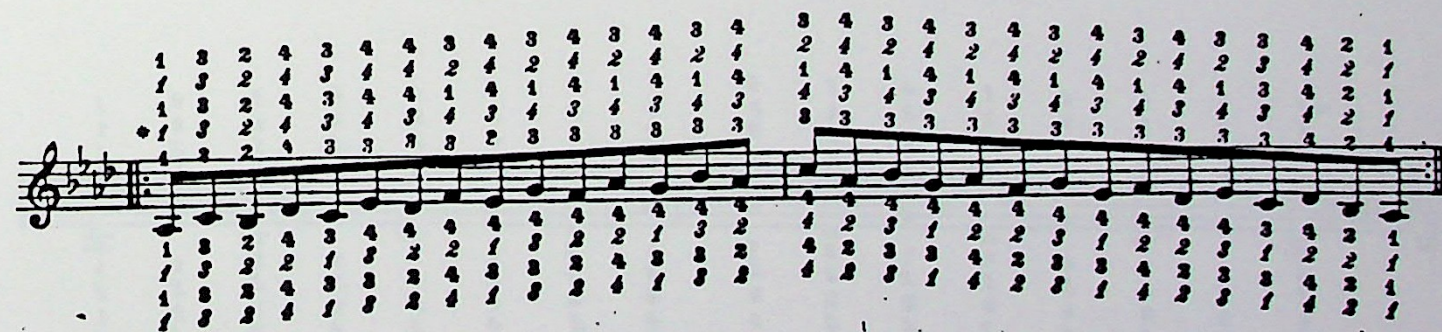
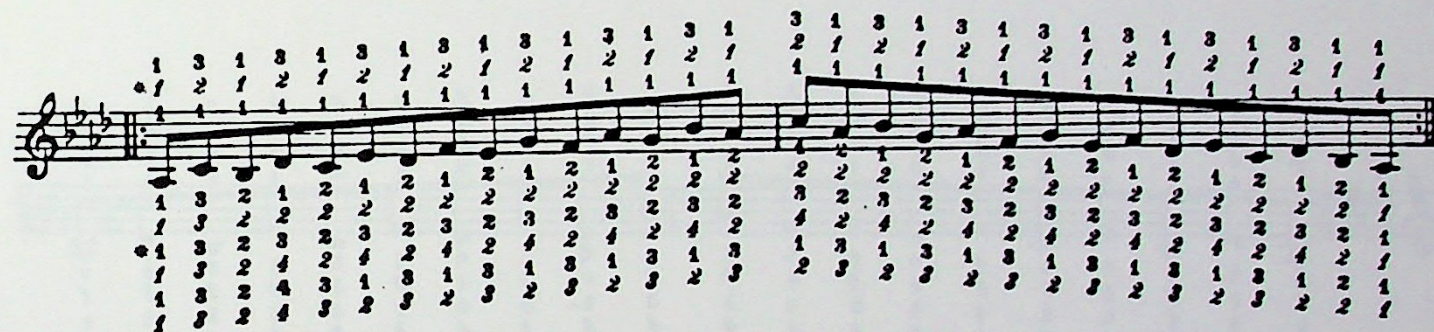
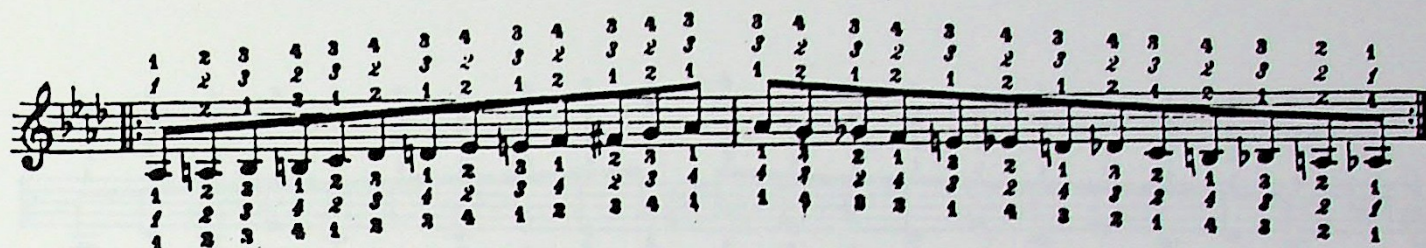
On the G string (also D, A and E strings)





* The harmonic minor must be practised also





* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.



* Fingering to be practised in two ways, viz: ① holding the lower finger down and extending the upper finger before making the shift and ② shifting hand for each interval.