NOTES ON THE FOURTH STRING

THUMB TECHNIQUE

The lower three strings are usually played with the thumb. The thumb may play a rest or a free stroke, the free stroke being by far the most common. The reason for this is that the lower strings tend to have greater natural resonance and therefore respond sufficiently to the lighter free stroke. In addition in a fast passage with the thumb, it is easier to repeat free strokes than rest strokes.

The thumb rest stroke does have its place, but this is usually reserved for passages of particular emphasis.

The illustrations demonstrate the two strokes, which should be tried experimentally before proceeding to the exercises.

Play Exercises 11 and 12, first with the free stroke, then for completeness try them with the rest stroke as well.
THUMB TECHNIQUE

Fig. 10 THE THUMB.

A. Like the fingernail the thumbnail is filed to an even curve.

B. The angle of the thumb as it prepares to play.

C. Preparation. The string is in contact with the pad of the thumb, close to, but not touching the nail.

D. Completion, rest stroke. The thumb comes to rest against the next string.

E. Completion, the free stroke. The thumb sweeps clear of the adjacent string.

F. This joint does not bend while doing either stroke.
Exercise 11

Use the thumb throughout.
Exercise 12

Notice the use of the letter $p$ to indicate the thumb, derived from the Spanish word "pulgar."
Exercise 13

This exercise is based on a famous chorale theme, for which J. S. Bach did many settings. In moving from thumb to fingers, try to avoid moving the hand. First use free strokes with the thumb, rest strokes with the fingers.

After you have played the piece a few times, try using free strokes with the fingers on all third-string notes, and rest strokes on the second and first strings. Although a little complicated to remember, this fingering will feel more natural.
NOTES ON THE FIFTH AND SIXTH STRINGS

The notes below the staff are harder to memorize for some students, so the following exercises should be studied carefully and repeated where necessary. Distinguish particularly between the A on the second ledger line and the F on the third. In the same way be careful not to confuse the low E with the G since at first they look somewhat similar.

As soon as you are really familiar with these lower notes the way will be open to playing chords, arpeggios, and more complex pieces.

Exercise 14
In measure eleven notice that the fourth finger is used on the C, instead of the more usual third finger. This is to avoid jumping the third finger from string to string.
Exercise 15

The bass notes have been left unfingered so that you may check how well you know them.
Ties

When two notes are joined by a TIE SIGN only the first is played, but it is held for the time value of both notes. This is particularly useful when a note is required to last from one measure to another.

In the example the F is held for two beats. The correct count for the two measures would be: "One Two Three Four One Two Three Four."

Exercise 16