GEO. C. DOBSON'S

SIMPLIFIED METHOD

AND

THOROUGH SCHOOL FOR THE BANJO,

Two Books in One.

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GEORGE C. DOBSON'S Simplified Method and Thorough School for the Banjo, containing Two Books in One,

Which are so arranged that the student is pleased, and finds amusement as well as valuable knowledge concerning the Banjo, from beginning to end. In Book No. 1, the Simplified Method enables the student to play the instrument practically and correctly without study, while Book No. 2. is designed to give a theoretical as well as practical knowledge. In addition to the above are a number of new Exercises, Pieces, Songs, &c., composed, selected and arranged expressly for this work, by the author.

PREFACE.

SOME thirteen years since, a circumstance happened, the result of which was the production of the *Simplified* method for the Banjo. I was giving lessons to a lady, and the system by which she was receiving instruction requiring more time to comprehend than the lady had to devote to it, I then and there (seeing the necessity of something more simple) received the idea of the simplified method for the Banjo, written on five *lines*, and the tones represented by two kinds of notes: namely, a black dot for a tone required to be stopped by a finger of the left hand (termed closed), or a round ring which was to represent the open tone (a string to be played open, with the touch of the right hand without the left). Although I have given lessons by the simplified method (more or less) from that day to this, I had never attached so great an importance to the same as to publish it; but seeing the pleasure the many have experienced by its simplicity (especially those who have other duties that would preclude the possibility of their making a study of music), after due consideration I have written this work, that all lovers of the Banjo may be benefitted by it. My knowledge of music has enabled me greatly, in first writing them by music, then transposing the same to the simplified method; therefore, the student can rely upon each example, *chord*, exercise or piece being as correct as though written by music.

GEO. C. DOBSON.

GILES MUSIC STEREOTYPER & PRINTER 3 Court Avenue, Boston, Mass.

PROPER STRINGS FOR THE BANJO.

The first and fifth should each be an E string; the first may be the heaviest. The second string should also be an E string, much heavier than the one selected for the first; the third string should be the same as the second for the guitar (called B); the fourth should be a silver wound on white silk. Great care should be taken in the selection of this string, as those unaccustomed to the use of the instrument are likely to purchase a guitar D for the Banjo, A, or bass. The silver string for banjo are manufactured, of late, expressly for the instrument, and are much finer wound than the guitar D.

EVERY BANJO SHOULD BE FRETTED.

An important step is to have frets upon the banjo. If your banjo is not fretted, the following guide will enable you to fret it correctly:

The distance between the bridge and nut should be divided into eighteen equal parts. Then place the first fret one-eighteenth from the nut (the nut is the small piece of wood where the strings cross to the pegs); then divide the space from the first fret to the bridge into eighteen equal parts, and then put in the second fret. Then divide again from the second fret to the bridge into eighteen equal parts, and put in the third fret, and so on until you have as many frets as you desire.

The frets should be inlaid, level with the surface of the finger-board, an eighth of an inch in width

— the full width of the handle. The bridge should sit about four inches from the tail-piece, and always be stationary. To ascertain if the bridge is in the correct place, measure the distance from the nut to the twelfth fret; then place the bridge on the parchment the same distance from the twelfth fret that the twelfth fret is from the nut.

BY THE FOLLOWING METHOD THE BANJO MAY BE TUNED BY EAR OR MUSIC.

First tune the fourth string to A, by a pitch-pipe. Then place the second finger on the seventh fret of the fourth string, and tune the third string in unison — the note produced will be E. Then place the second finger on the third string at the fourth fret, and tune the second string in unison, which will give ♯G. Then place the second finger on the third fret on the second string, and tune the first string in unison, which will give the note B. Then place the second finger at the fifth fret, first string, and tune the fifth string in unison, which will give E, one octave above the third string.

HANDLING THE INSTRUMENT — MANNER OF SITTING WHILE PERFORMING — POSITION OF THE RIGHT AND LEFT HAND, ARM, &C.

Sit in an easy position; rest the hoop (or rim) of the banjo in the centre of the right thigh; place the neck (the upper portion of the handle) of the instrument in the hollow of the left hand, leaving no space between the thumb and forefinger, or beneath the neck; the right arm should lightly rest on the rim of the instrument, bringing the right hand directly in front of the bridge; rest the little finger on the parchment to steady the hand — not firmly, but with ease, that it may move at will

GEO. C. DOBSON'S

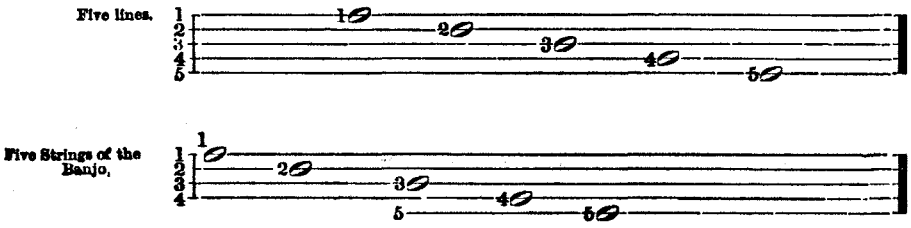
SIMPLIFIED METHOD FOR BANJO.

EXPLANATION.

The five lines numbering from the uppermost downwards, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, represent the five strings of the banjo numbering from the lowest uppermost, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, the short string being the fifth. It will be seen that there are no added lines or spaces used, each line representing a string. There are only two kinds of notes made use of, namely, the round ring, thus –o–, which represents an open note; the black dot: thus –●–, represents a closed note. The closed note is made by stopping the string with a finger of the left hand; the open note signifies that the string is to be played open with the right hand. When a curved line, thus ⁀ covers one or more notes, it denotes that the said notes (covered by the curved lines) are to be performed much quicker. A × thus, under or beneath any note, implies that the little finger of the left hand is employed to stop the string at the third fret. Should a figure also be added to the × thus ×7, the little finger plays at the fret the figure designates. Two or more notes directly beneath each other are called a chord, and are to be played as one note, or quickly after each other, commencing with the lowest note, which in most cases has a much better effect

The second finger of the left hand is employed to make the closed note on the first, third and fourth strings at the second fret, the first finger to make the second string closed at the first fret. Such notes are all represented upon the five lines by a plain dot only, and when the string is to be made closed at any other position, a figure is added above the five lines, which names the fret, and at the same time another figure is placed beneath the staff, which names the finger employed in stopping the closed note. The *S* added to a note implies the first note should be performed with the right hand, and a second note made by quickly pulling the finger of the left hand off of the string, which makes two notes in quick succession. Such is called snapping the string, and admits of greater facility in executing quick pieces.

The following diagram shows the five lines representing the five strings of the banjo.

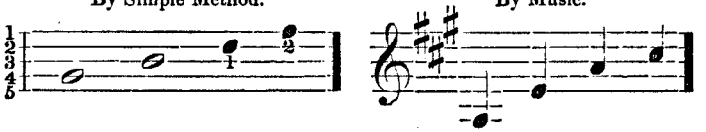


THE FRETS AND POSITIONS.

The frets indicate the different positions. When the forefinger is at the first fret, the hand is in the first position; when the forefinger is at the second fret, at the second position, and so on. The following chord illustrates the first position: The neck of the banjo placed well in the hollow of the hand, the forefinger placed endwise on the first fret, the second string; the second finger place endwise on the first string, second fret.

EXAMPLE.

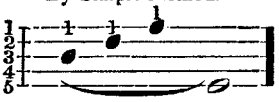
By Simple Method. By Music.



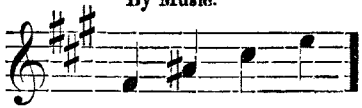
THE BARRE CHORD.

A Barre chord is when the forefinger of the left hand is placed directly across the finger-board at any position. While the finger making the barre presses firm against the finger-board, the ball of the thumb presses firmly in the opposite direction, in the immediate centre of the handle. The following example illustrates a barre chord.

2D POSITION BARRE.
By Simple Method.



2D POSITION BARRE.
By Music.



There are two styles of playing the banjo, in common, namely, *picking* or guitar style, stroke playing or banjo style. The former admits of expression, feeling, a display of taste, &c. The latter is characteristic of the instrument, and much admired by all lovers of the banjo. It is best that the student should become familiar with the instrument, and master the former style of playing, before practising the stroke. To be called a good banjoist, it is requisite to acquire each style of playing, and by so doing, be capable of producing the rich music of the guitar in soft, silver strains, also the genuine banjo music by the stroke.

HOW TO PLAY THE BANJO GUITAR STYLE OR PICKING.

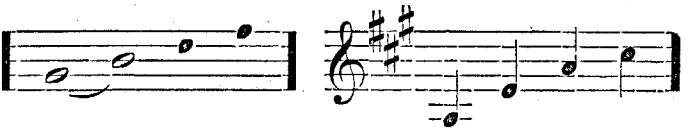
Rest the little finger on the parchment, about two inches from the end of the bridge, to steady the hand; pick up the first string with the second finger, the second string with the first finger; the thumb is used on the remaining three strings.

In playing chords, the thumb glides from the fourth to the third string; at the same time the first and second fingers pick up the second and first strings.

HOW TO PLAY CHORDS OF FOUR NOTES, WITH THE THUMB, FIRST AND SECOND FINGERS.

(CHORD OF FOUR NOTES.)

Example by Simple Method. Example by Music.



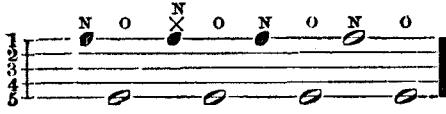
Glide the thumb quickly over the fourth and third strings, picking up the second and first strings in quick succession with the first and second fingers.

HOW TO STROKE OR PLAY BANJO STYLE.

Close the right hand about two-thirds, in a circle; allow the nail of the forefinger to rest on the first string, which will bring the thumb directly over the 5th string, and as the forefinger strokes a note on either the first or second string, the thumb is brought in immediate contact with the fifth by one effort: that is, not to strike the first note with the nail; then make a separate motion for the next note with the thumb

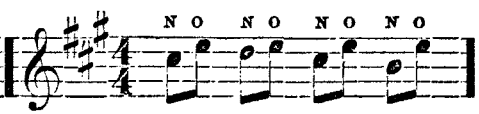
EXAMPLE 1.

By Simple Method.



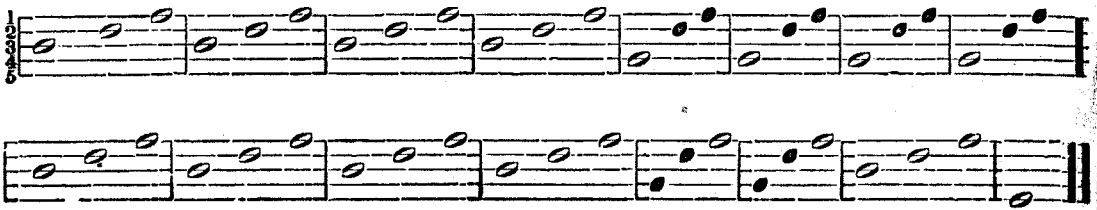
EXAMPLE I

By Music.

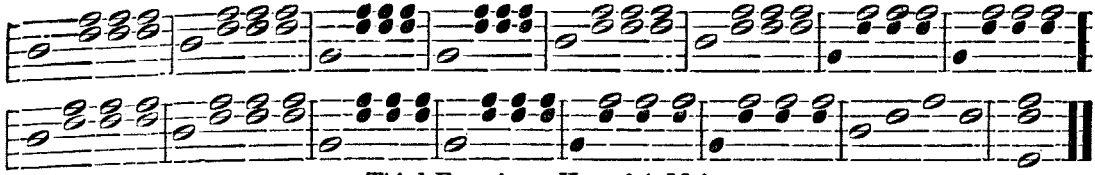


All notes to be performed by the stroke are indicated by the letter N; all by the thumb by the nero, thus 0.

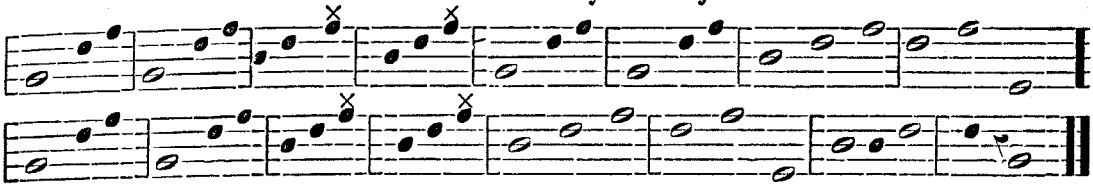
First Exercise. Key of E Major.



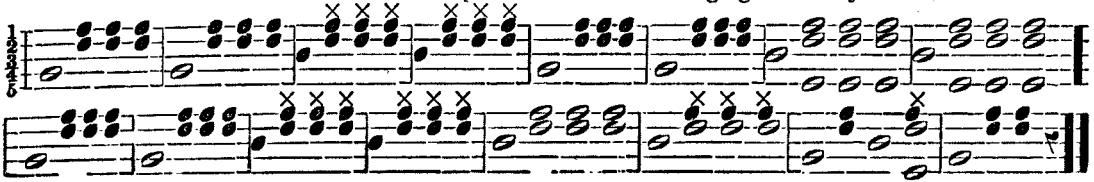
Second Exercise. Accompaniment Chords belonging to E Major.



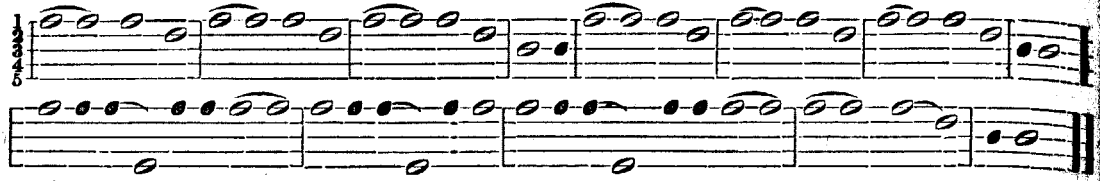
Third Exercise. Key of A Major.



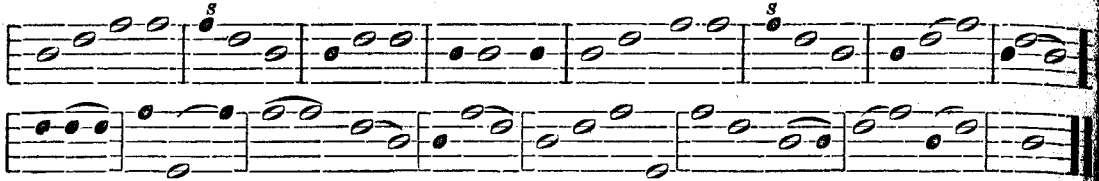
Fourth Exercise. Accompaniment Chords belonging to A Major.



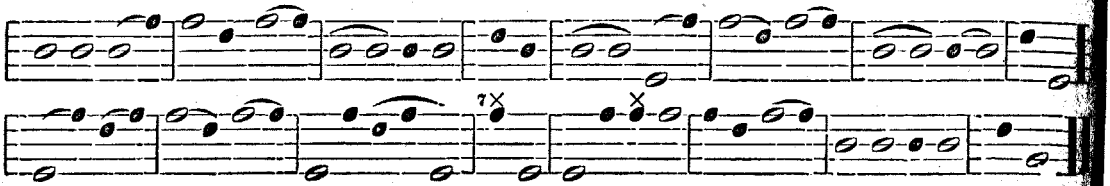
OH CARRY ME BACK.



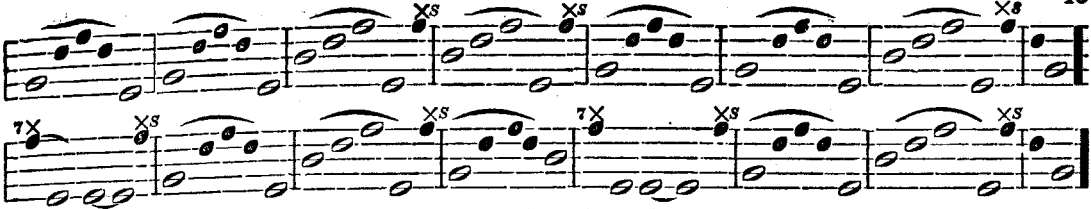
OH SUSANNAH.



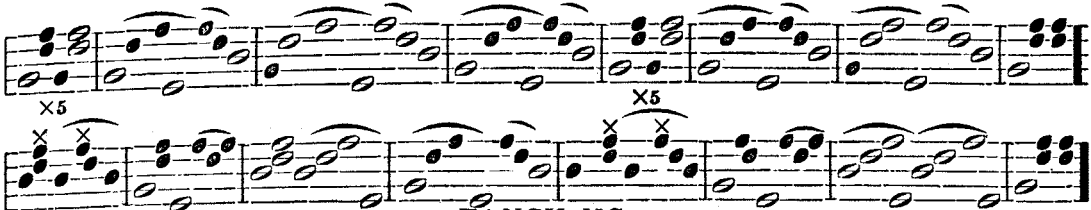
COMING THROUGH THE RYE.



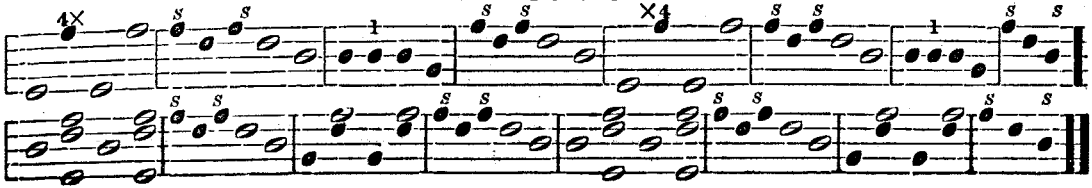
BANJO WALTZ.



BANJO POLKA.

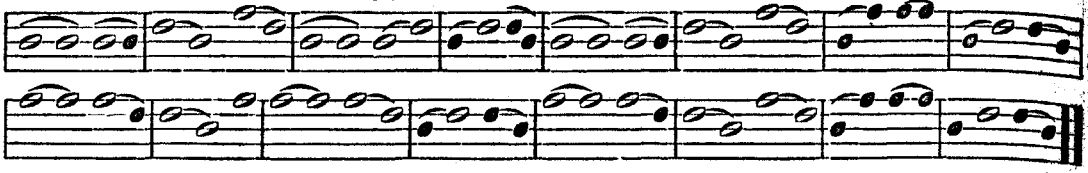


FANCY JIG.

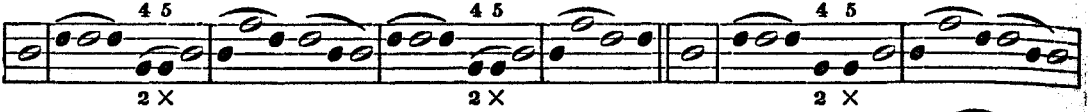


Note.—When there is but one figure added to a note, either above or below the five lines, it refers to the fret at which the string is to be stopped, while the × is always for the little finger.

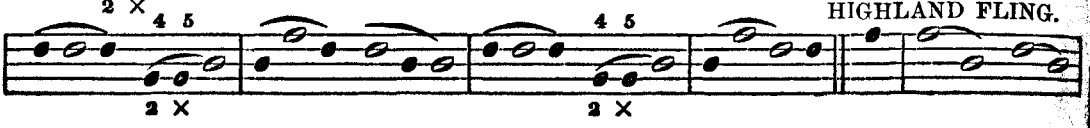
NEW POLICEMAN.

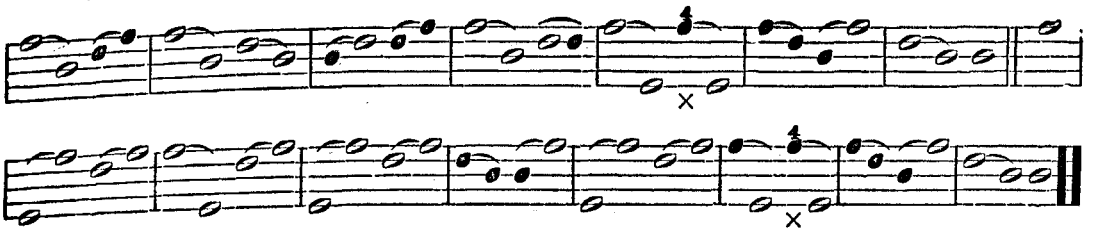


GRANDFATHERS' DAYS.

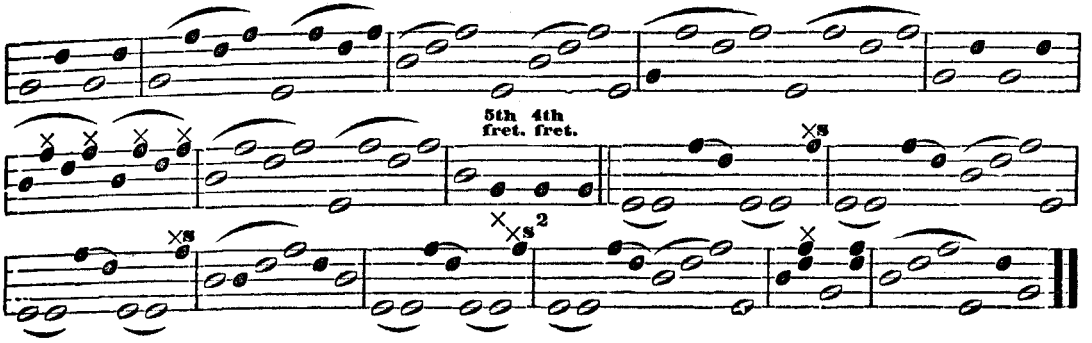


HIGHLAND FLING.

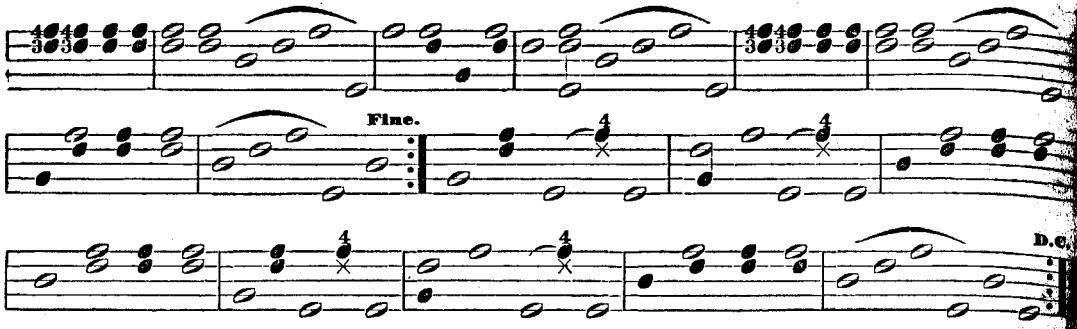




PHILADELPHIA JIG.



WILLIAMS POLKA



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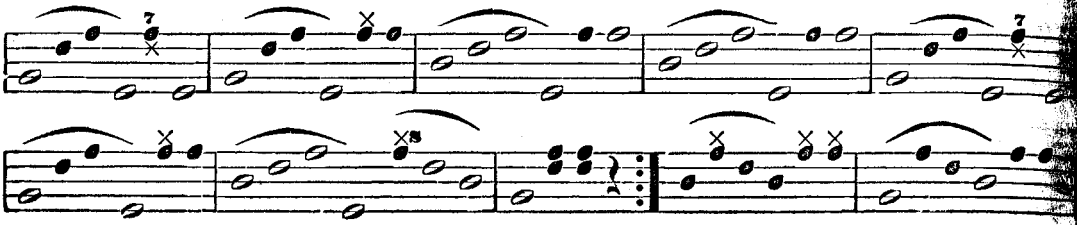

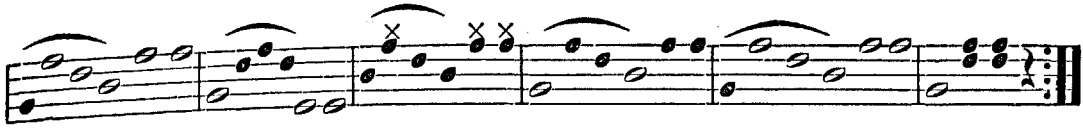

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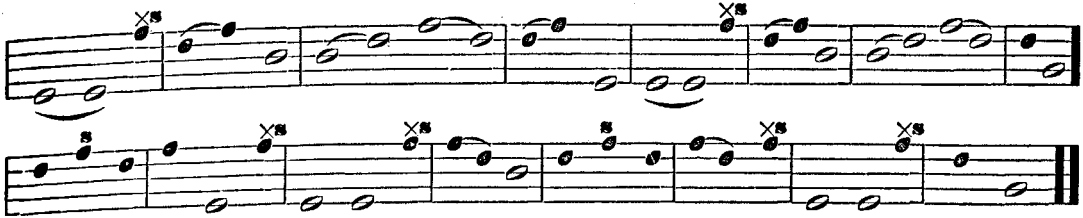

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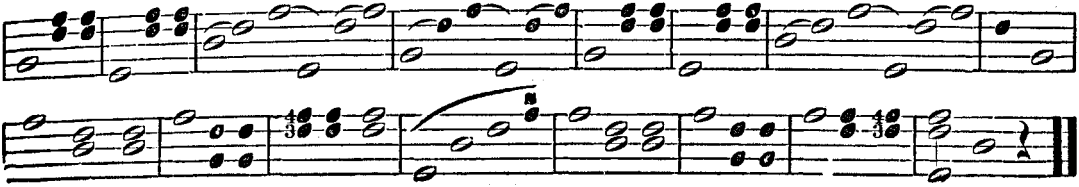
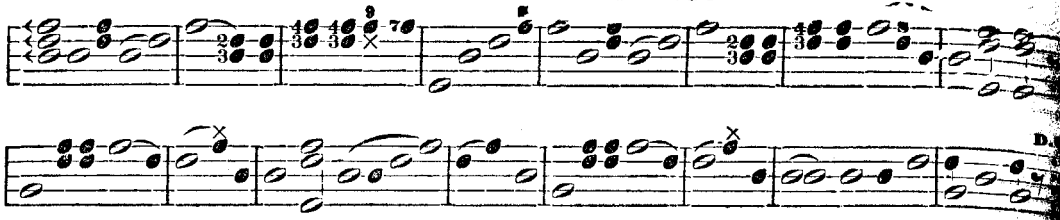
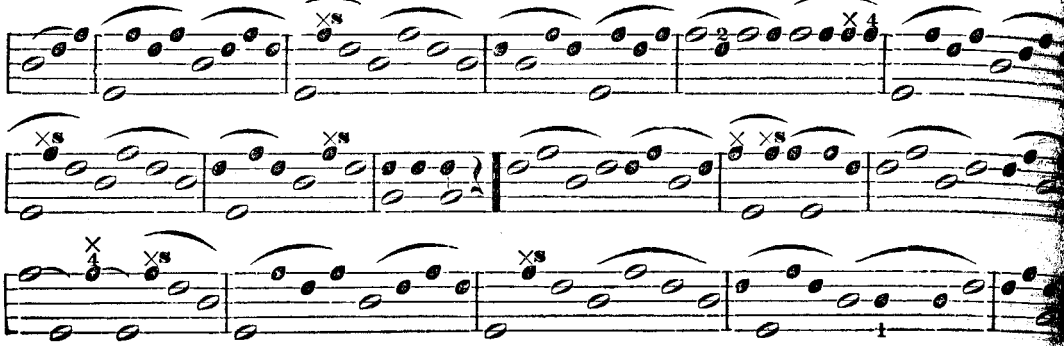
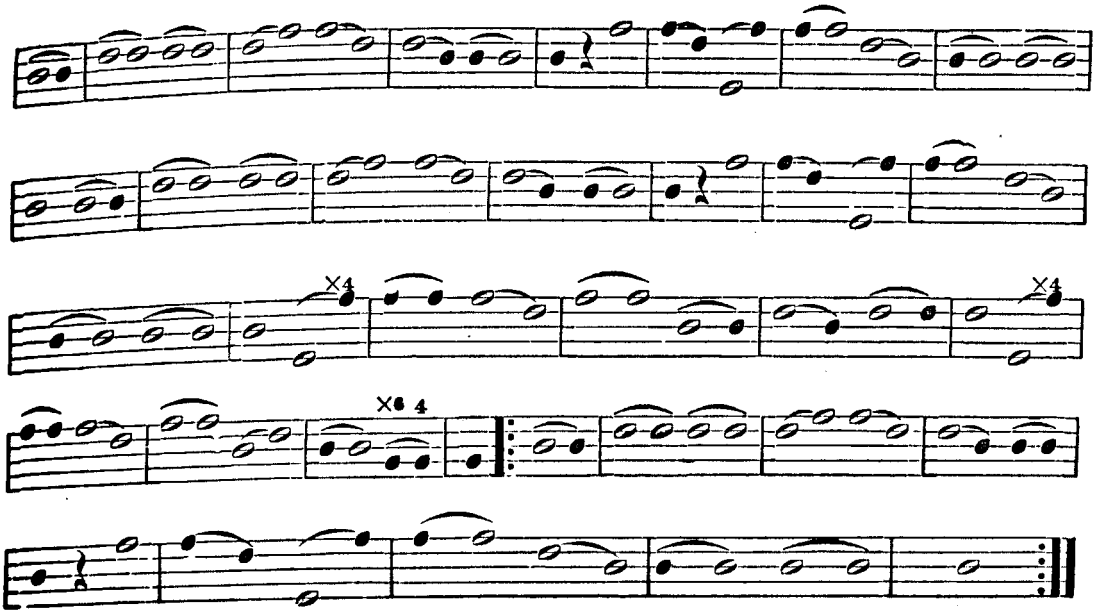


ROSELLE POLKA



CLOG HORNPIPE.

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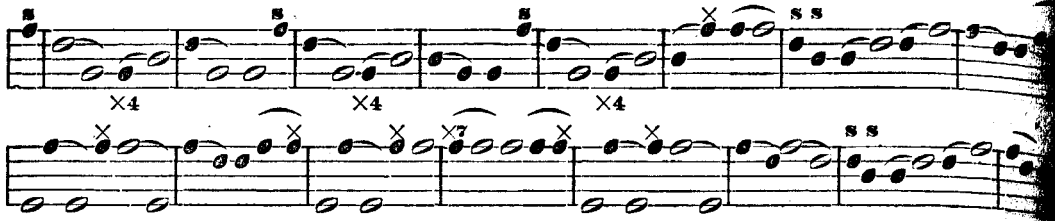
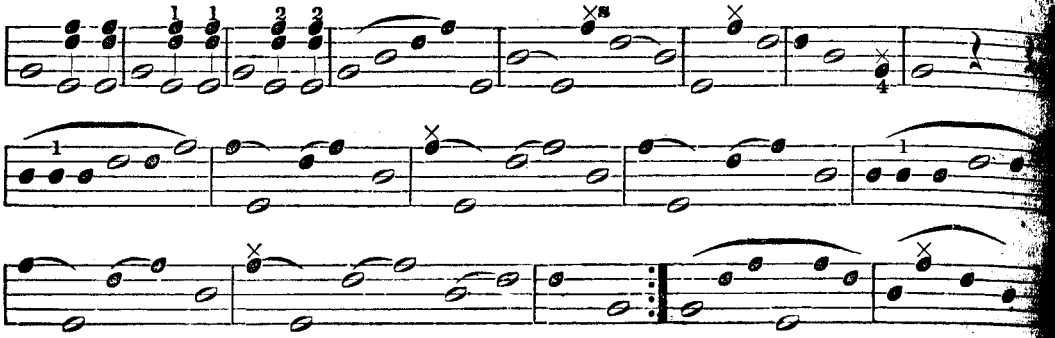
X4
X6 4

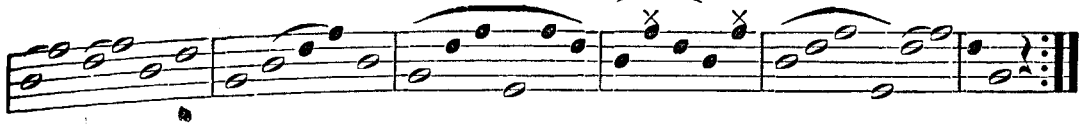
MY LOVE SHE IS A LASSIE, O!



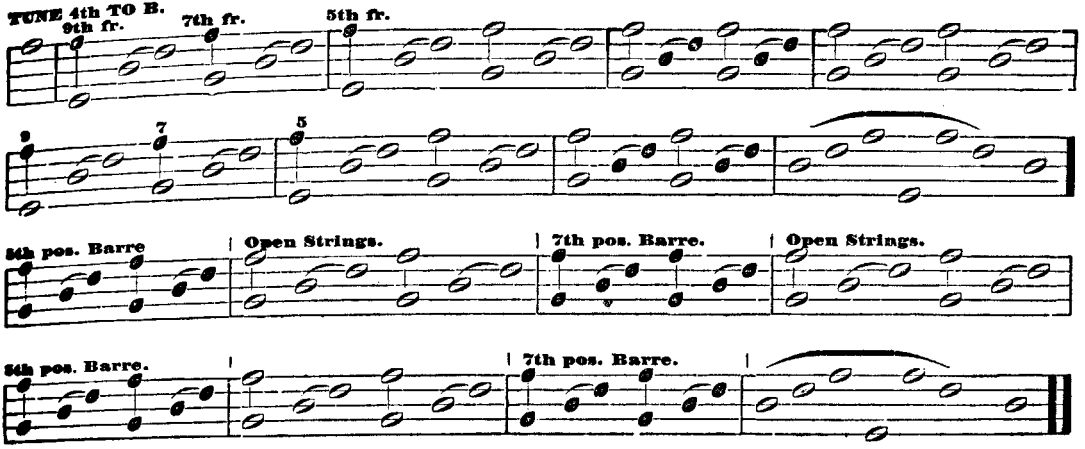
PIERCE'S WALTZ.



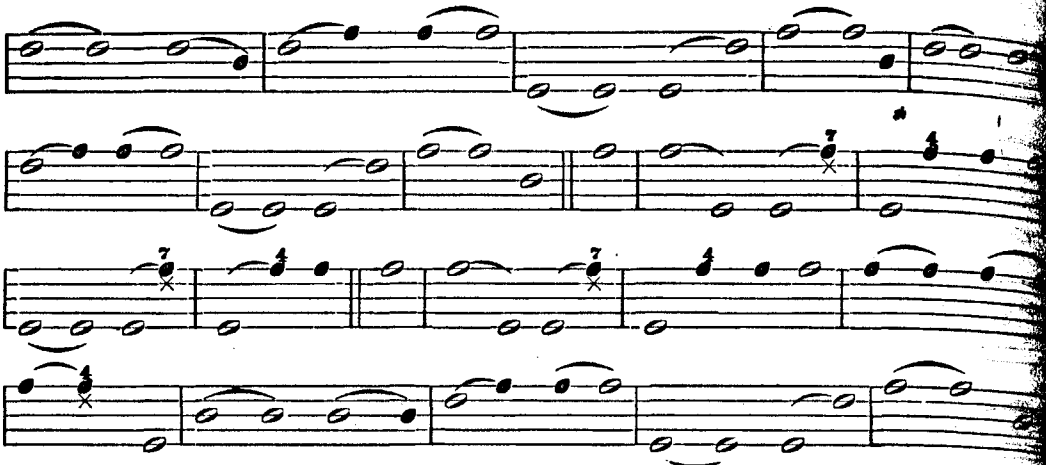
PIERCE'S WALTZ. Concluded,



SPANISH FANDANGO.

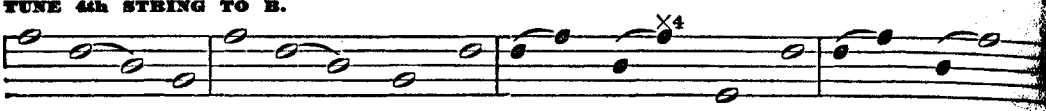


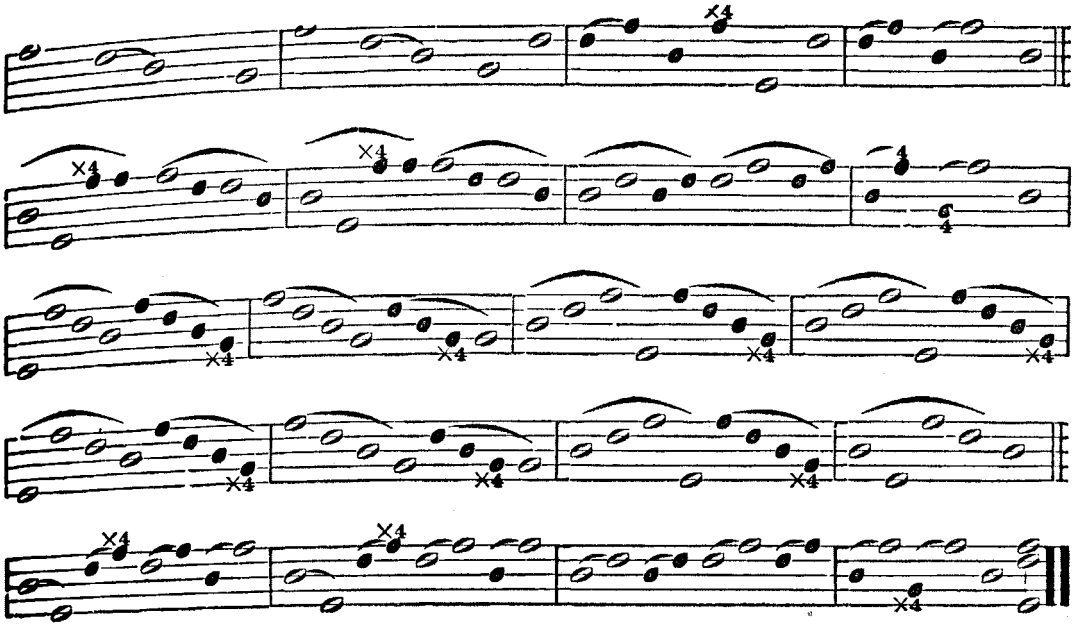
FINNIGAN'S WAKE.



BELL CHIMES.

TUNE 4th STRING TO B.

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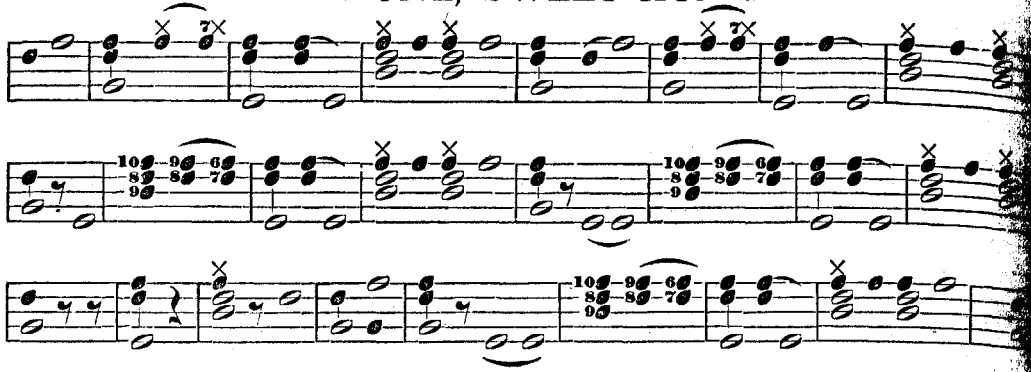
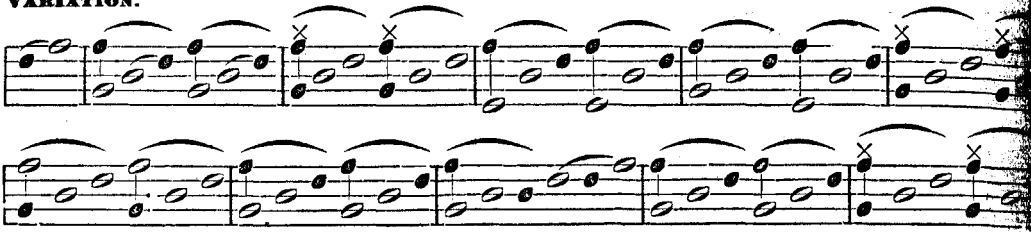
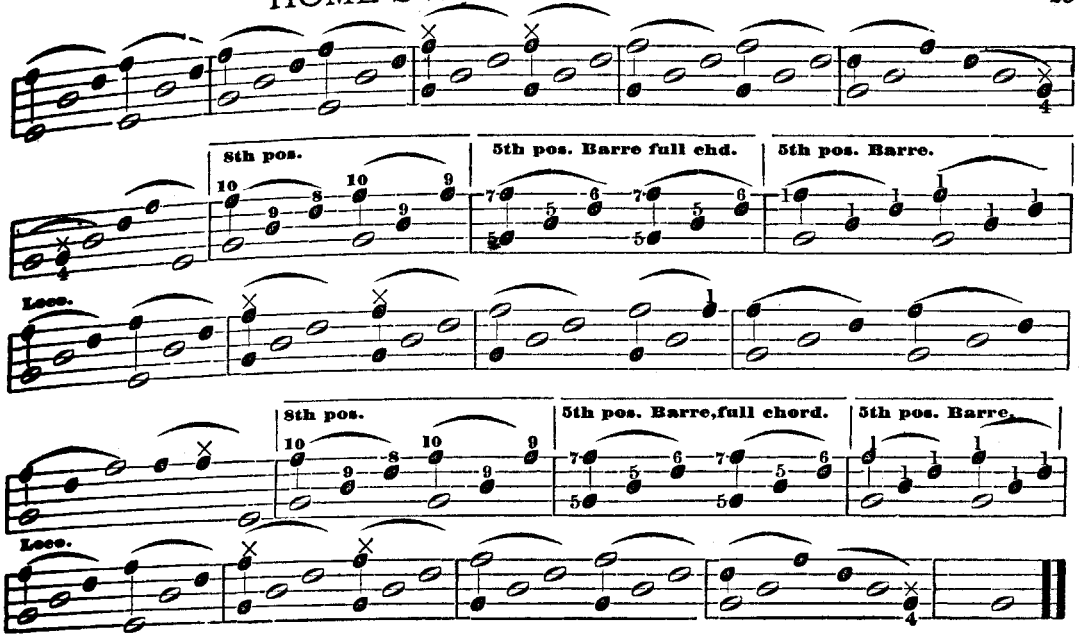
×4

HOME, SWEET HOME.

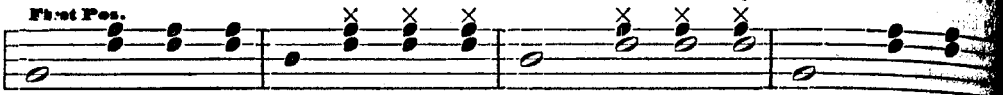


VARIATION.

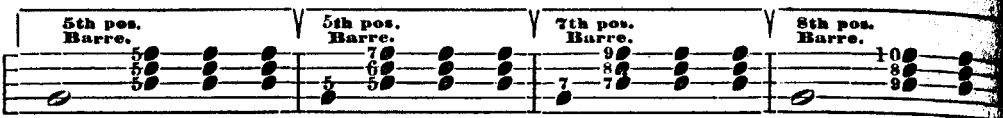



8th pos.
5th pos. Barre full chd.
5th pos. Barre.
Loco.
8th pos.
5th pos. Barre, full chord.
5th pos. Barre.
Loco.

Chords in the Different Positions most commonly used.

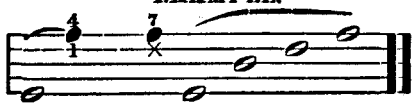


The figures indicate the frets.



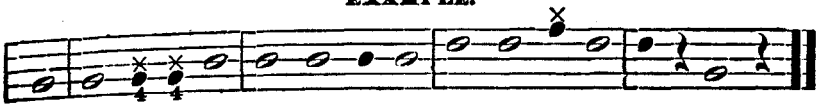
During the progess of a Piece we are often required to stop the first string at the 4th fret, then lowing note at the 7th fret thus :—

EXAMPLE.



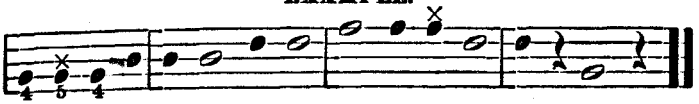
In such a case, the first finger should be employed for the first note at the 4th fret, and the little finger at the 7th fret. Then, should the next note come at the 3rd fret, employ the little finger as at the 7th. In making the fourth string closed at the 4th fret, employ the little finger to stop the string; but should the following tone be at the 5th fret, employ the second finger for the first tone, then the little finger at the 5th fret for the second tone. Thus, when only going to the 4th fret:—

EXAMPLE.

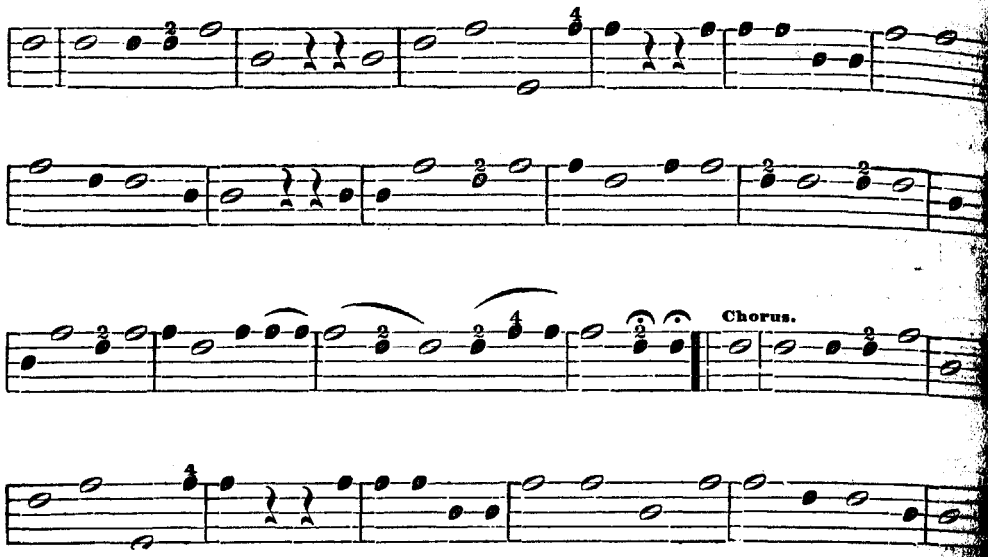


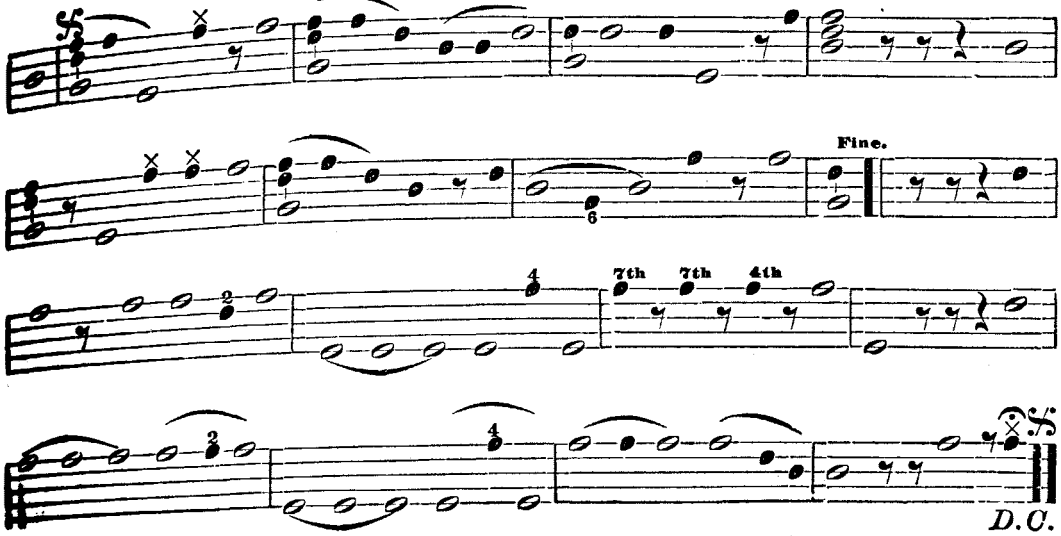
Or thus, when going to the 4th and 5th then returning to the 4th fret:—

EXAMPLE.

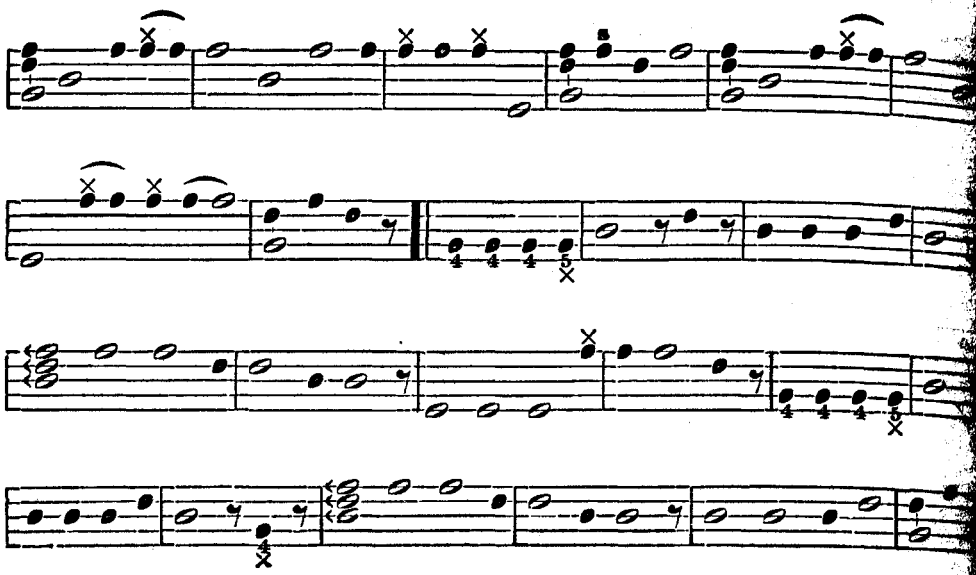


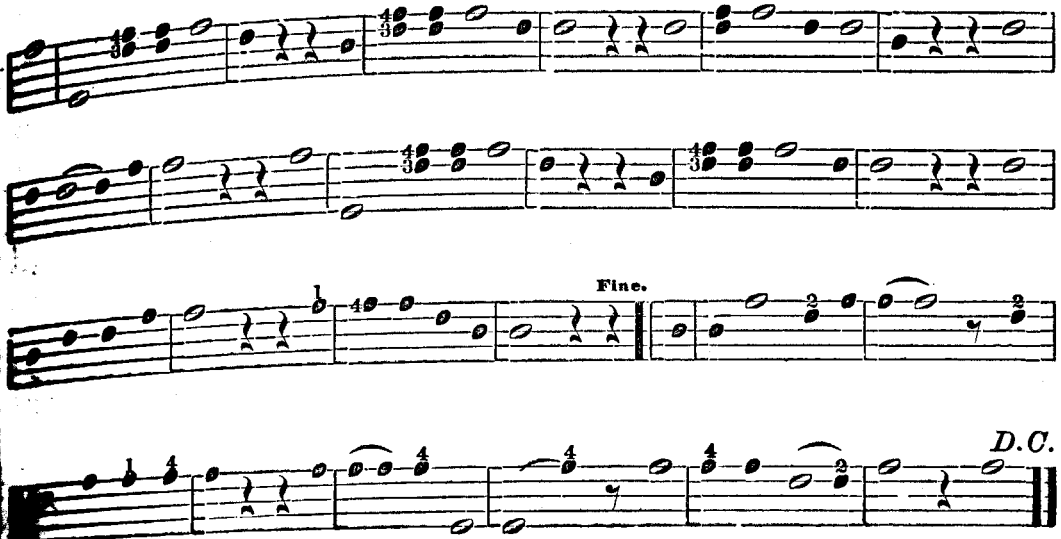
Observe the above fingering carefully, and pieces may be well executed with much less practice.

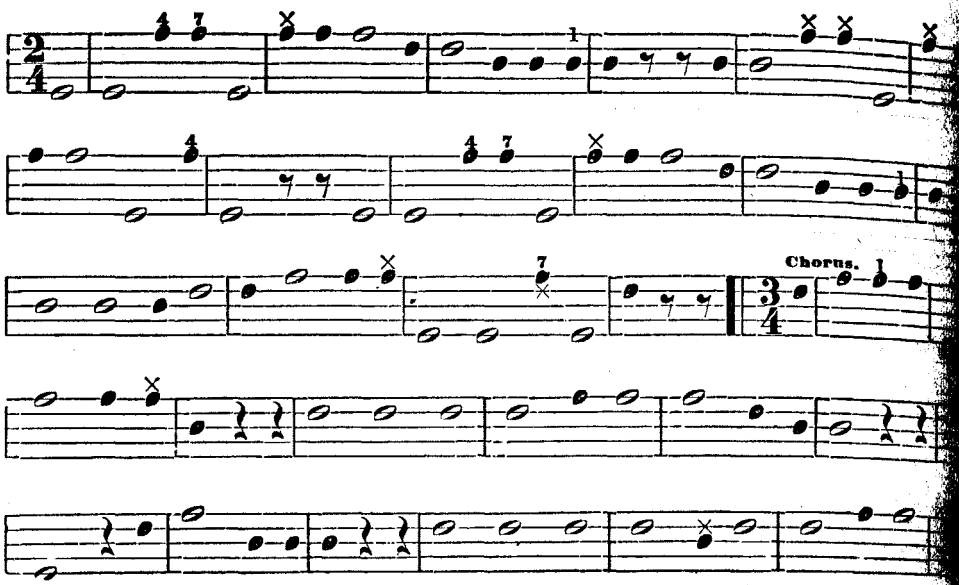

Chorus.

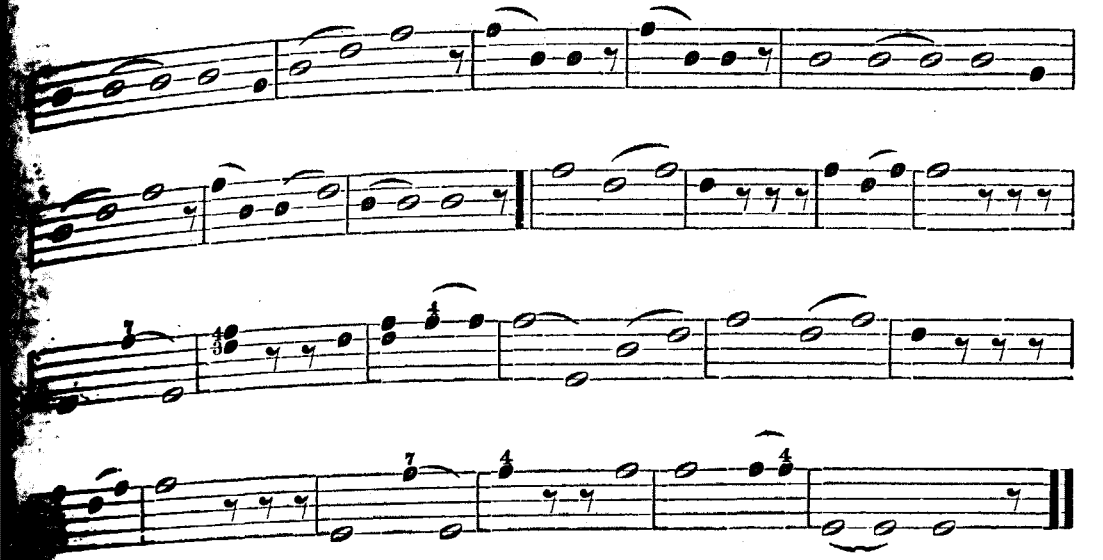

Fine.
7th
7th
4th
D.C.

SLUMBER POLKA.

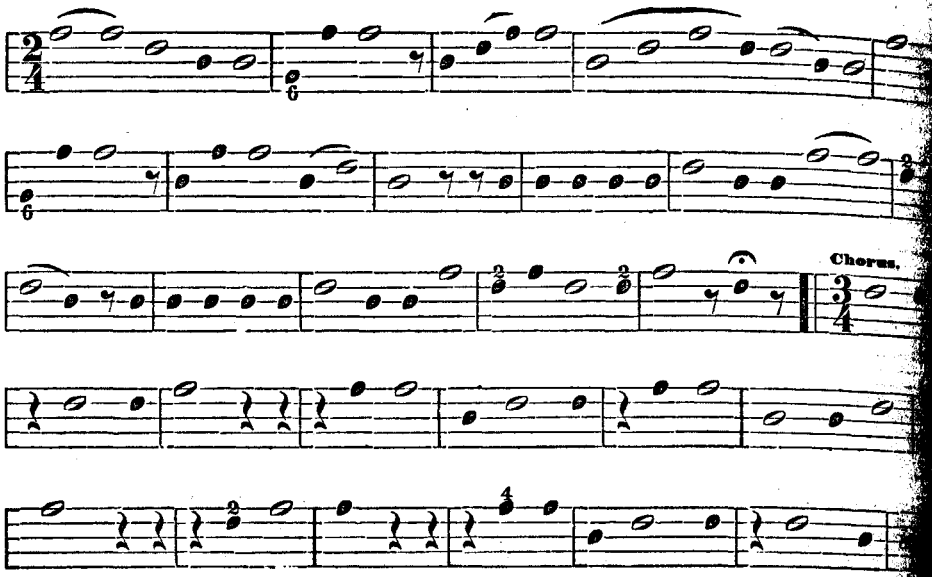


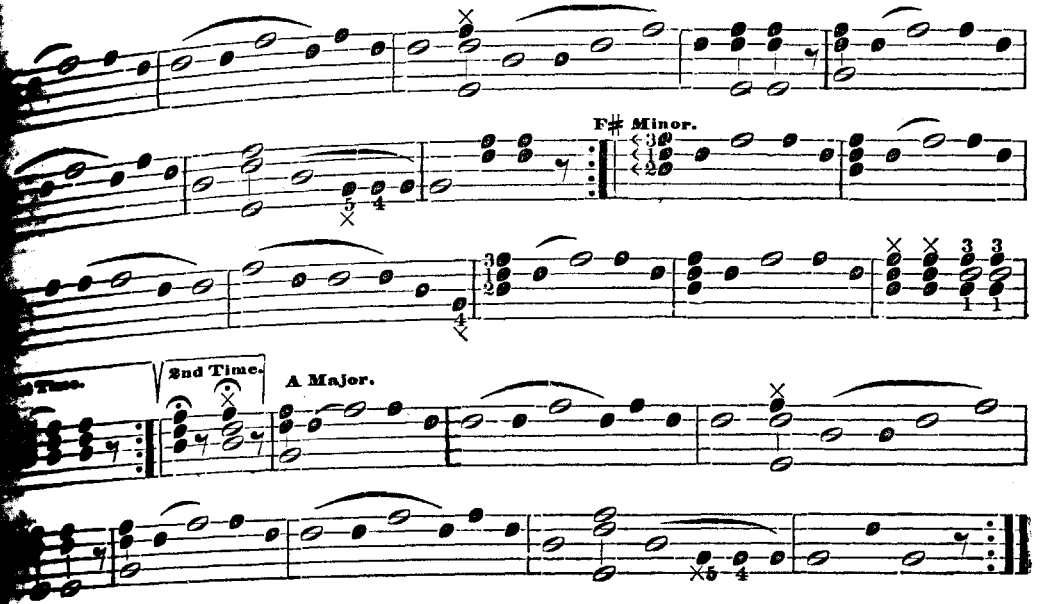

Fine.
D.C.


Chorus.

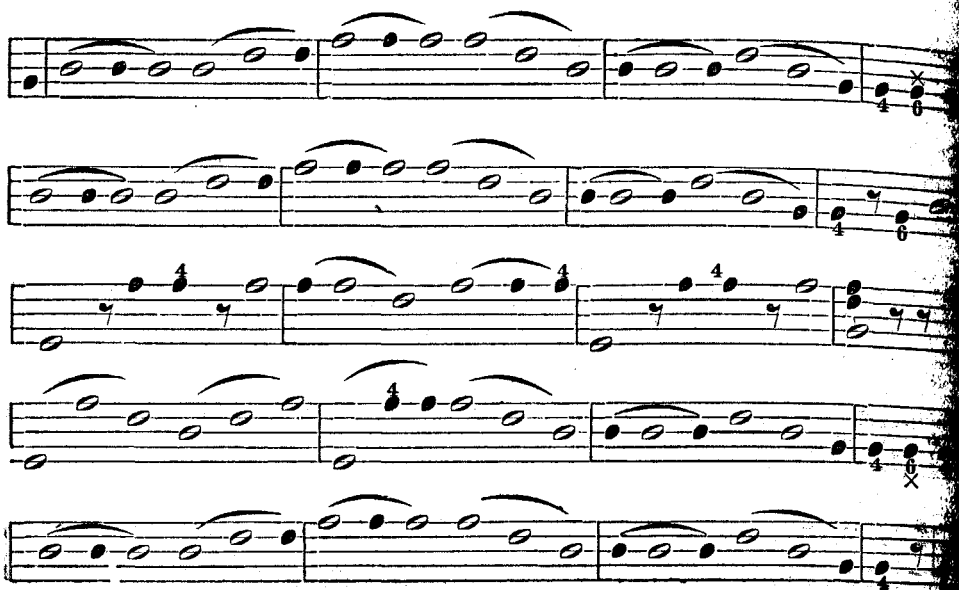


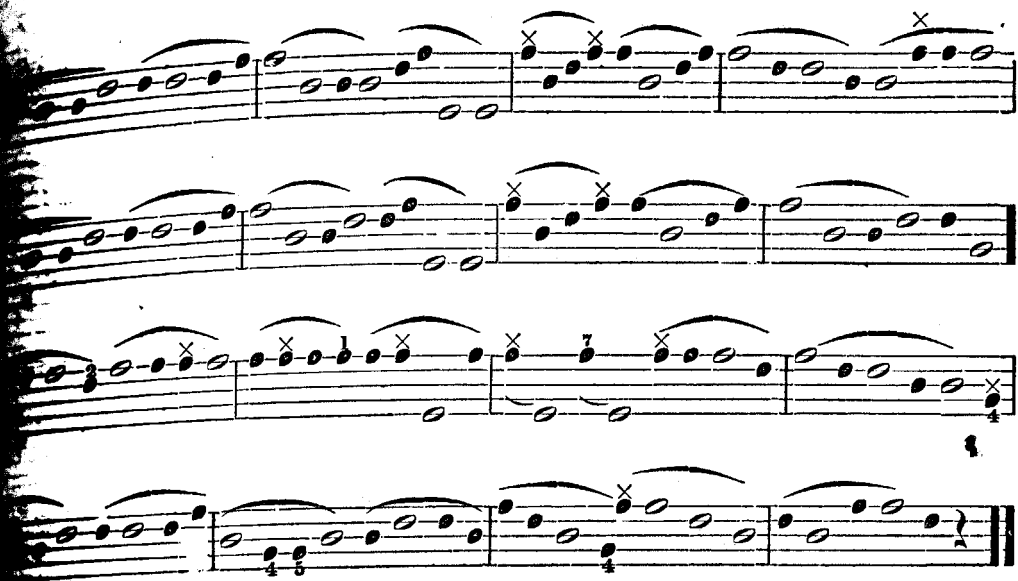
HE'S A PAL OF MINE.



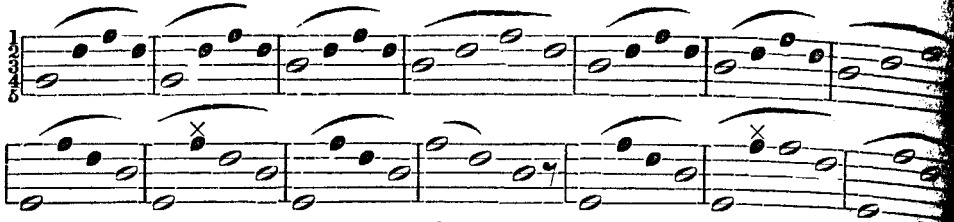

F♯ Minor.
2nd Time.
A Major.

PATRICK'S DAY.

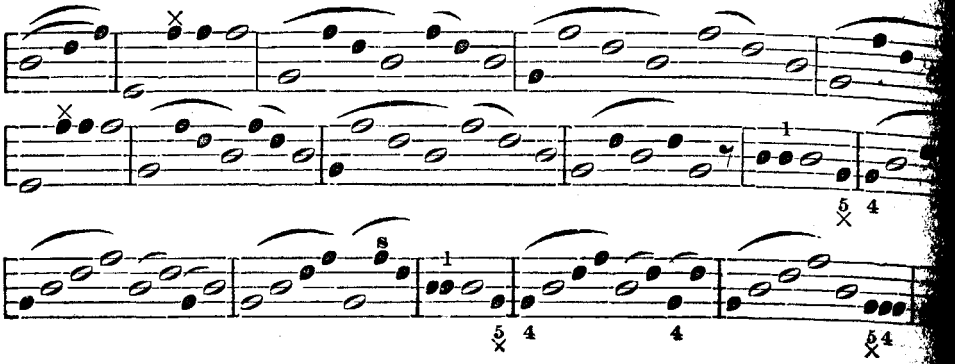




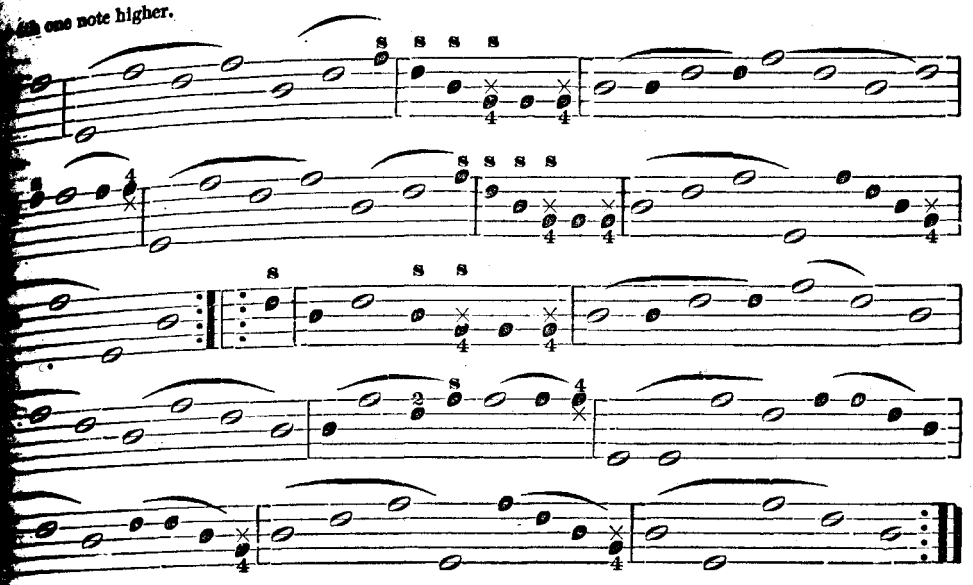
FAVORITE JIG.

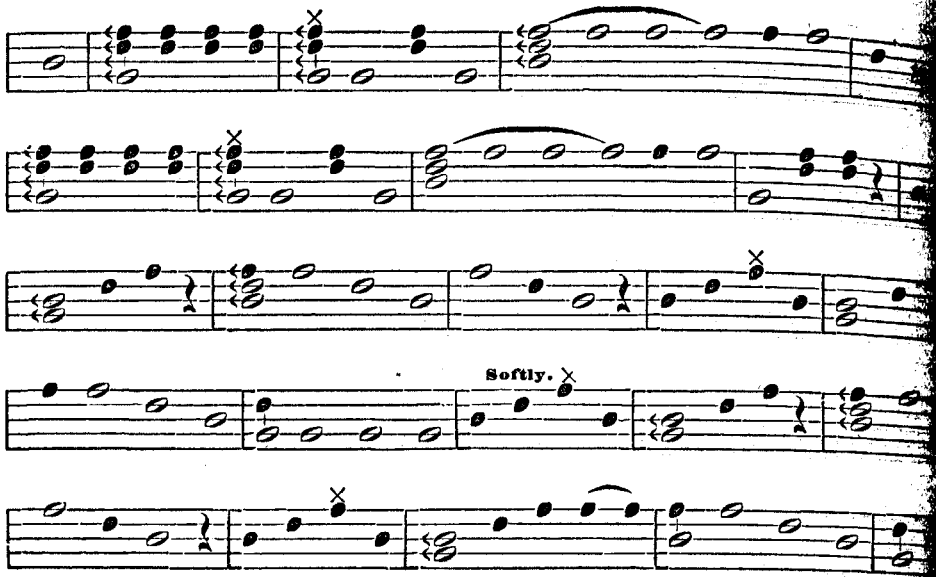


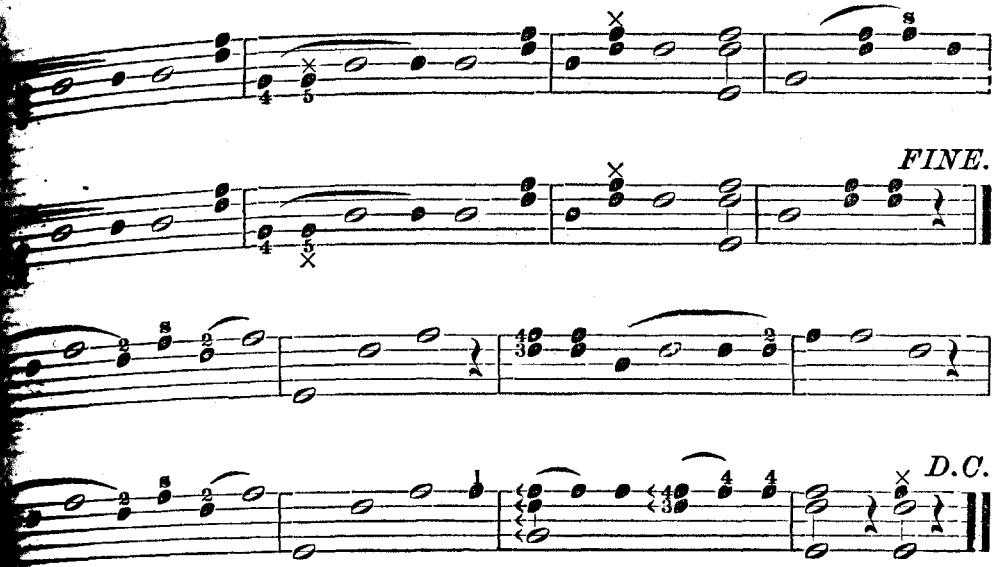
CLIFTON JIG.



CLOG HORNPIPE.

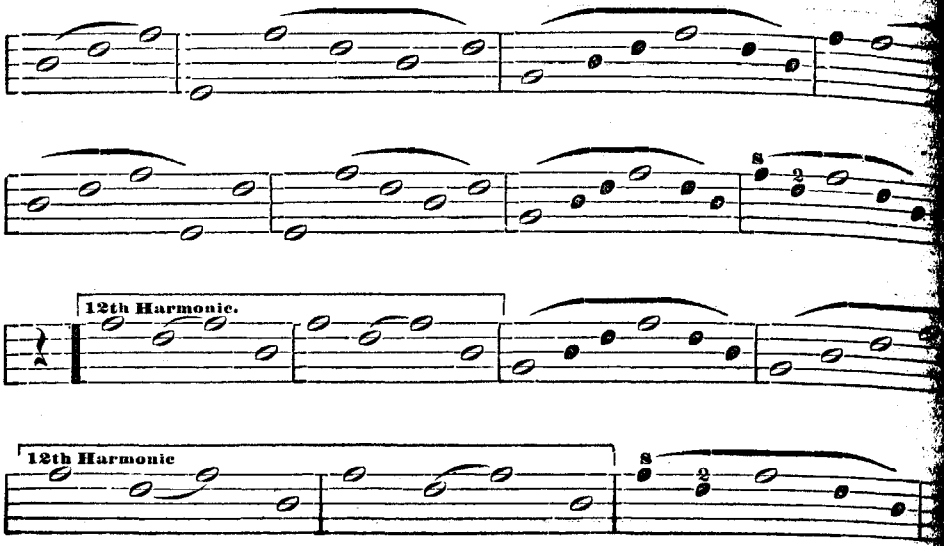



Softly.

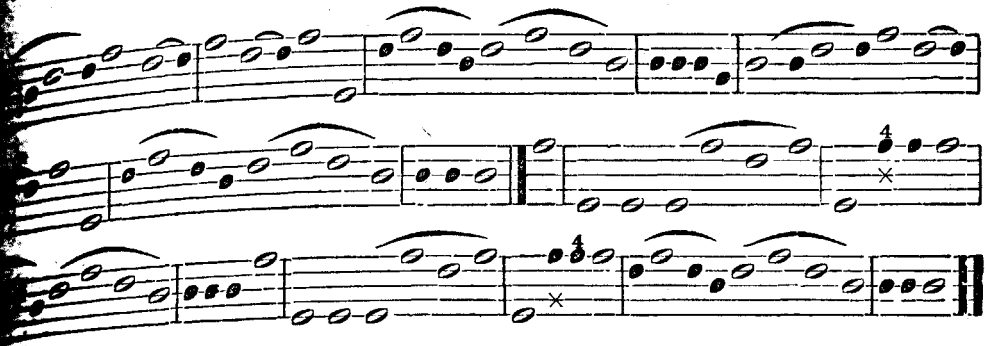

FINE.
D.C.

PRETTY WALTZ.

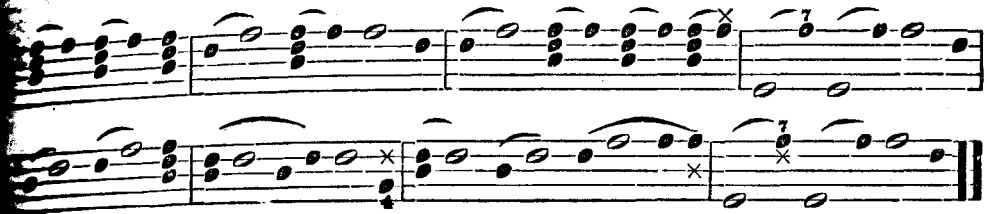
Tune 4th one note higher.



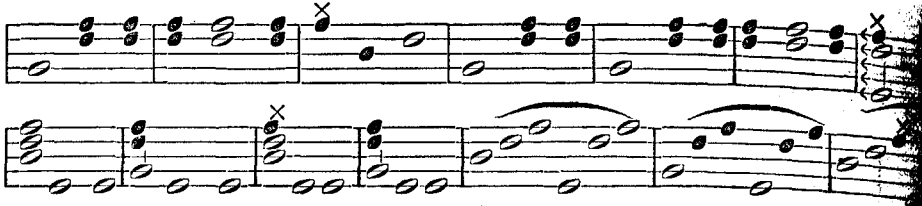
AN IRISH DANCE TUNE.



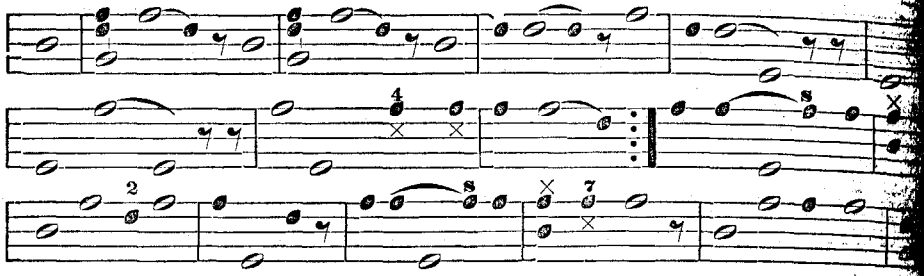
FANCHON MAY-POLE DANCE.



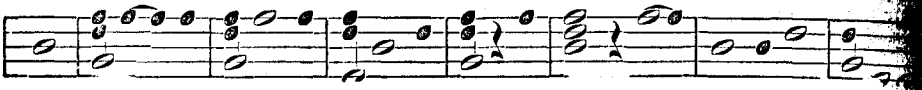
CENTENIAL WALTZ.

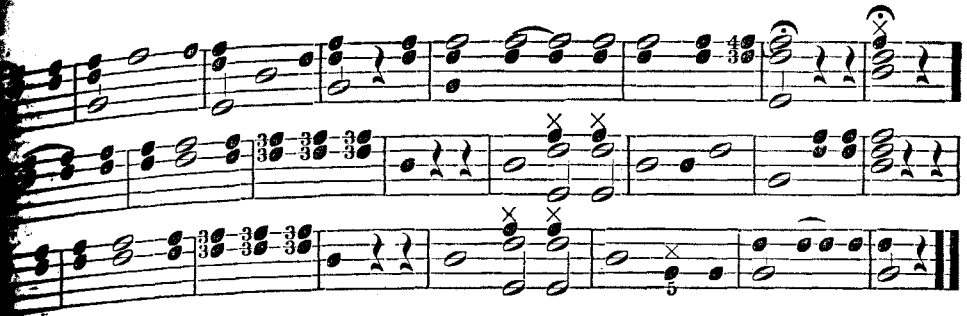


LILLY GALOP.

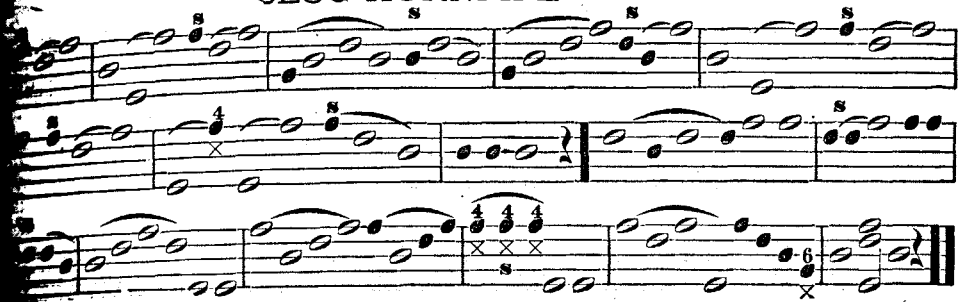


CARTNELL WALTZ.

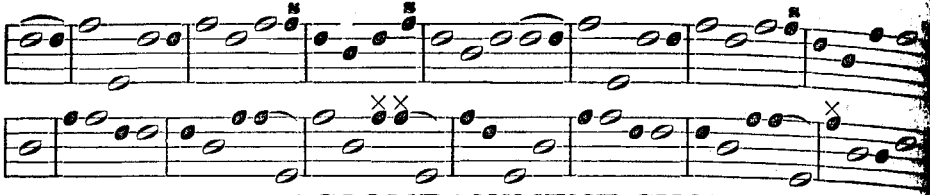




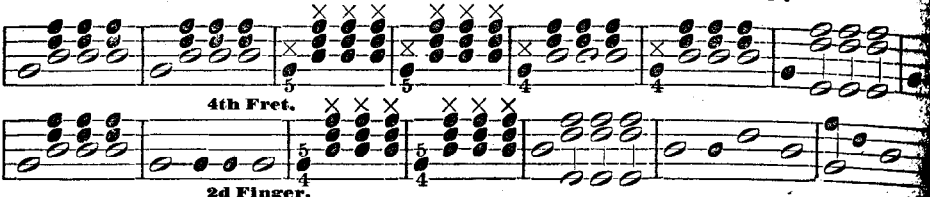
CLOG HORNPIPE.



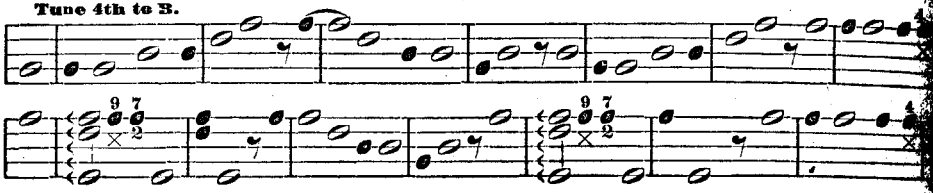
GALOP.

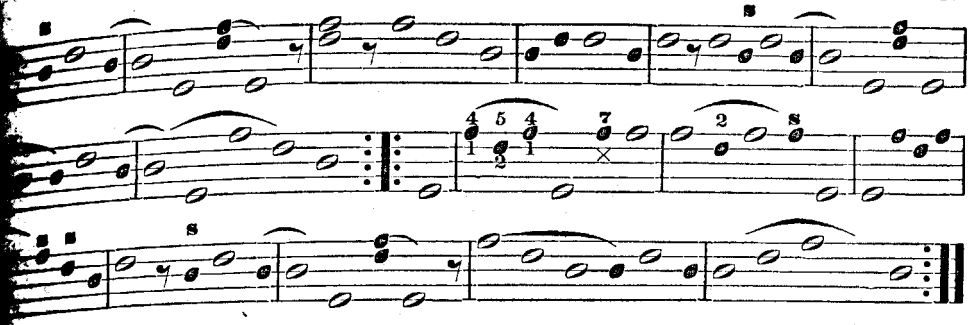


ACCOMPANIMENT CHORDS.

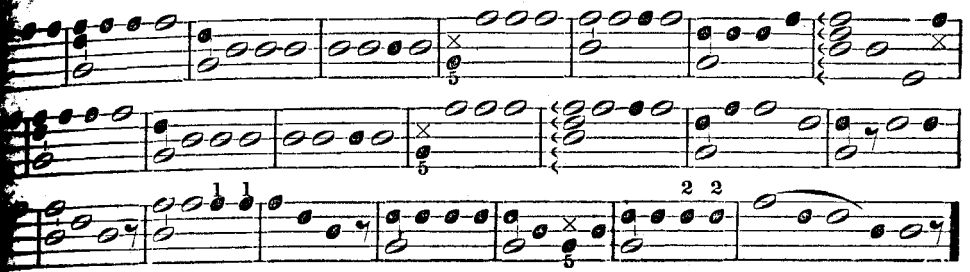


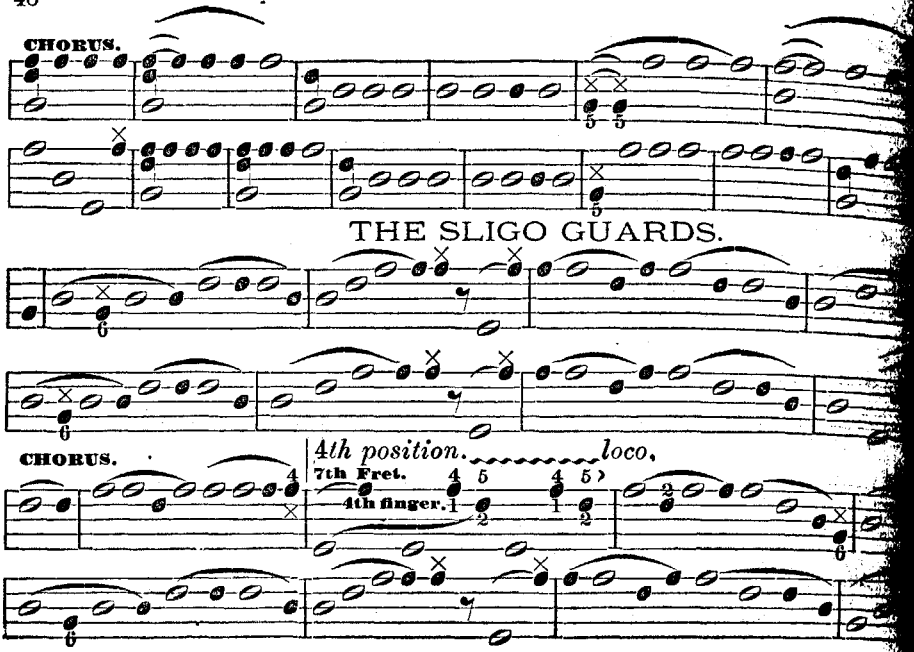
THE ESSENCE OF OLD VIRGINNY.

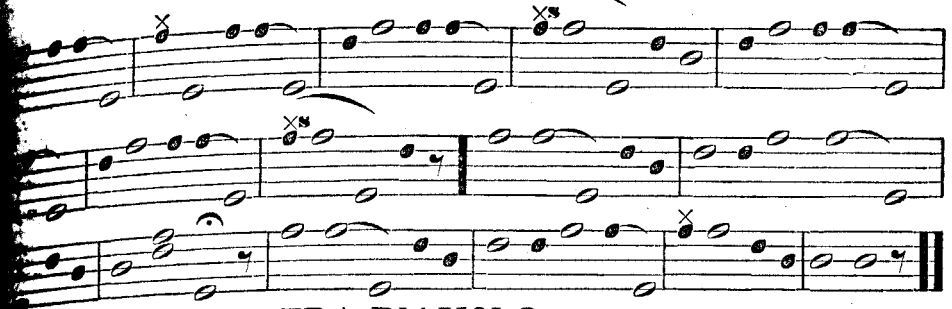




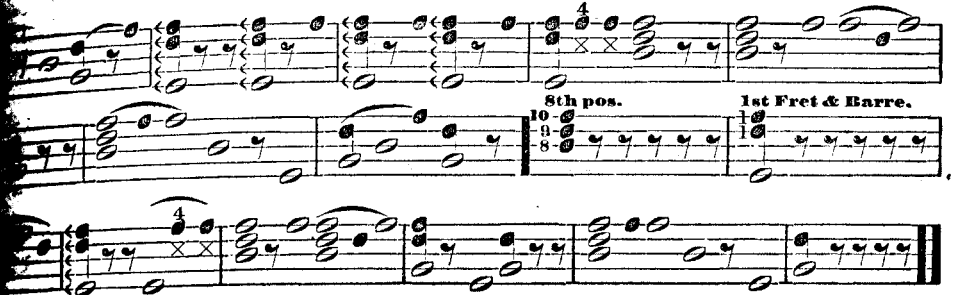
Mc GOWAN'S WEDDING.



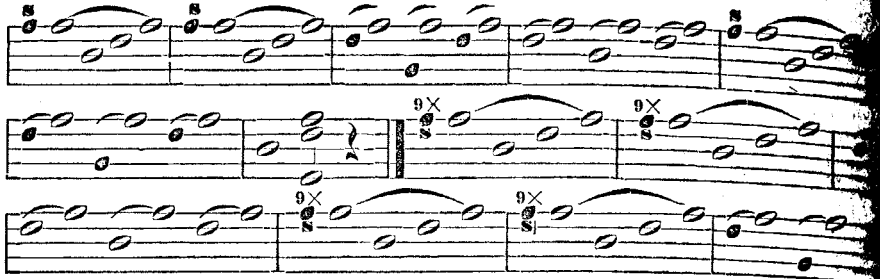

CHORUS.
THE SLIGO GUARDS.
CHORUS.
4th position.
loco.
7th Fret.
4th finger.



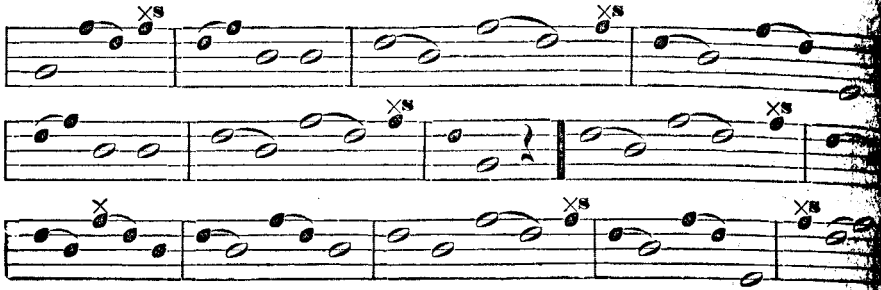
FRA DIAVOLO.



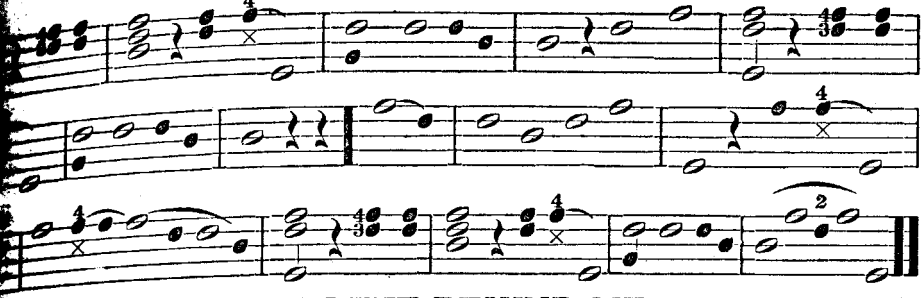
SNAP WALTZ.



CHERRY WALTZ.

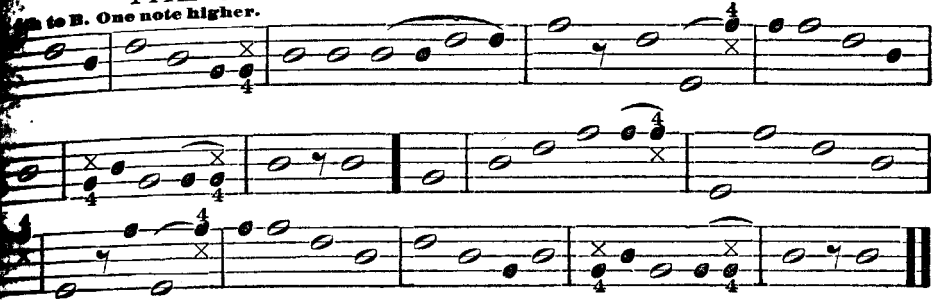


BLUE BELLS OF SCOTLAND.

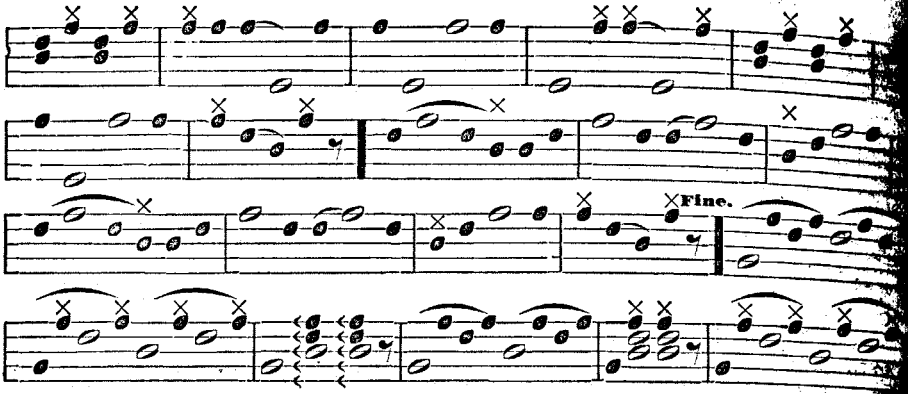


THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME.

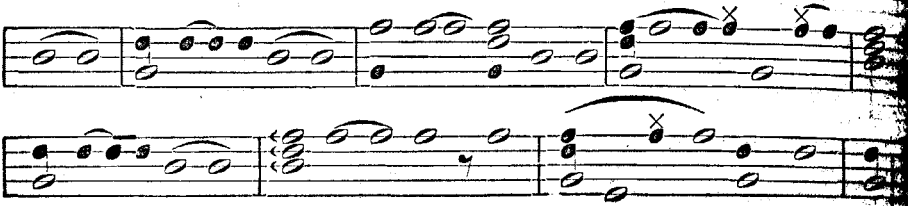
to B. One note higher.

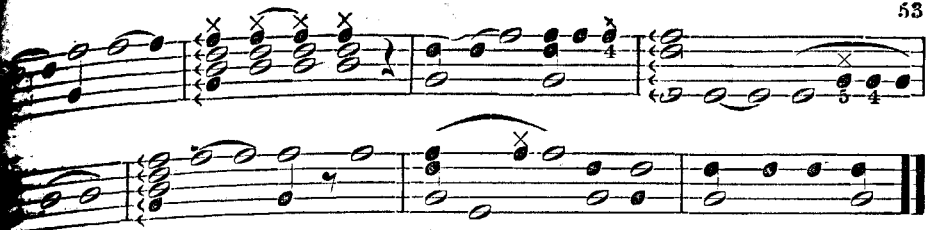


SPRING POLKA.

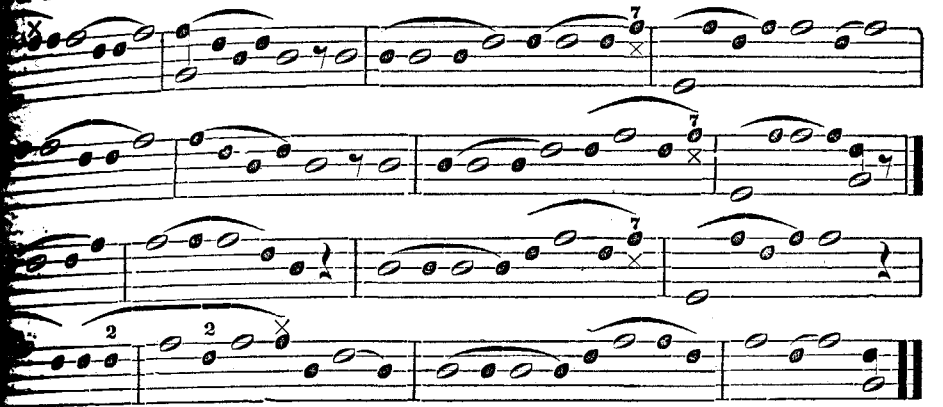


MARCH.

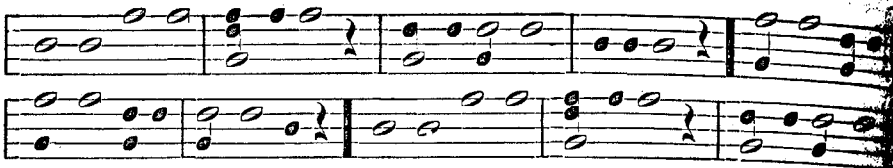




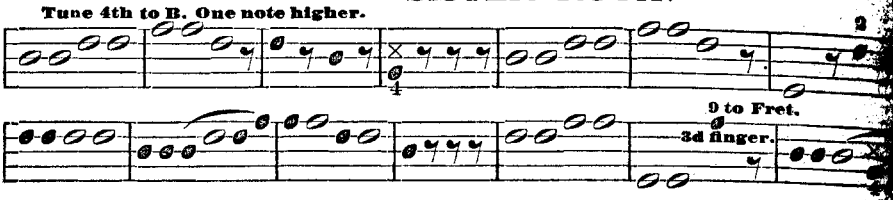
Never Miss The Water Till The Well Runs Dry.



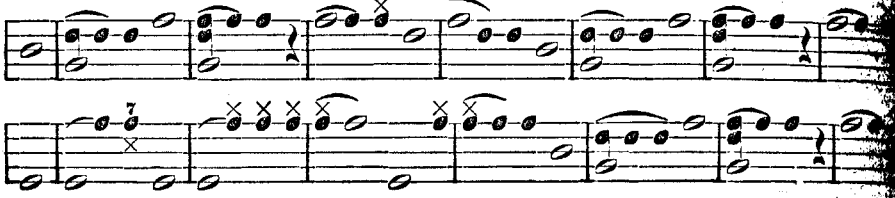
A. B. C.

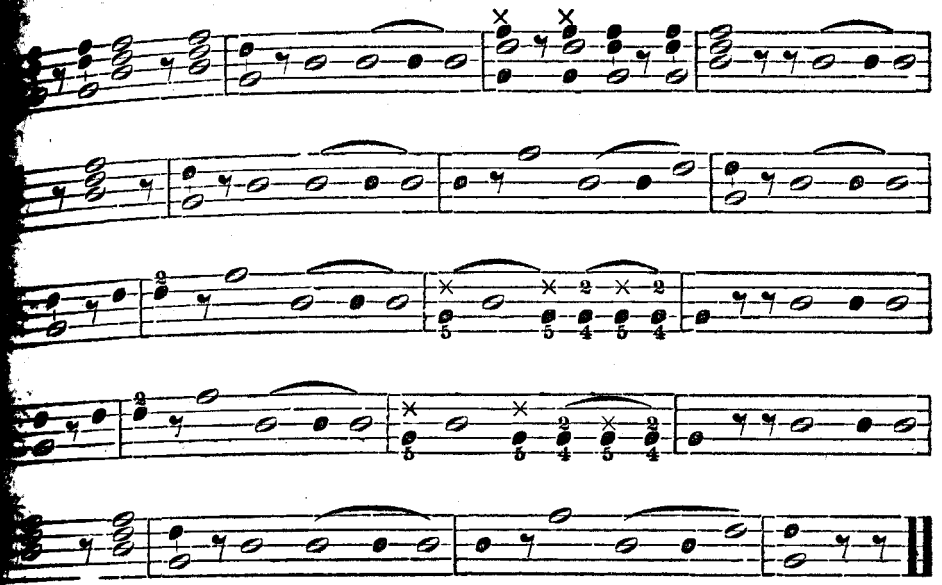


SISTER RUTH.



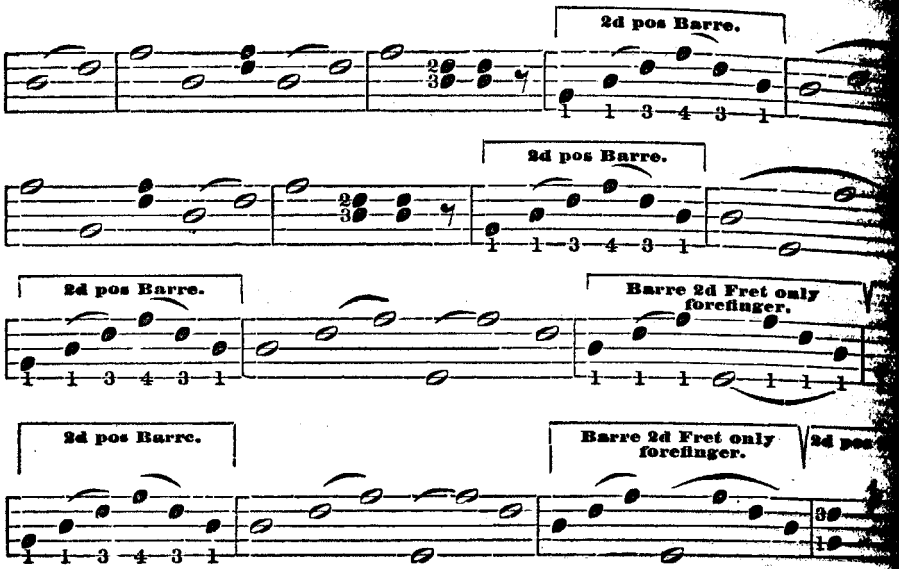
MARYLAND.

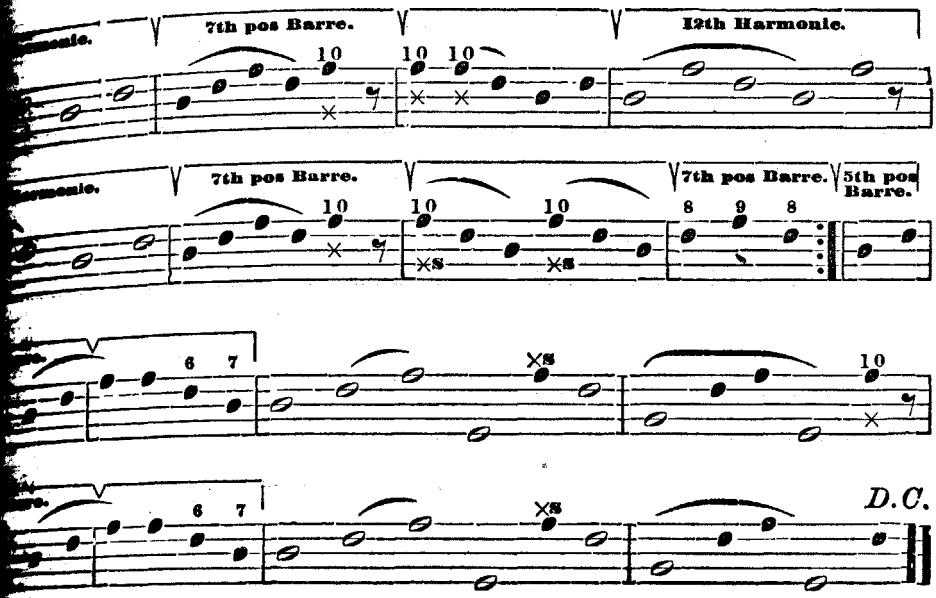




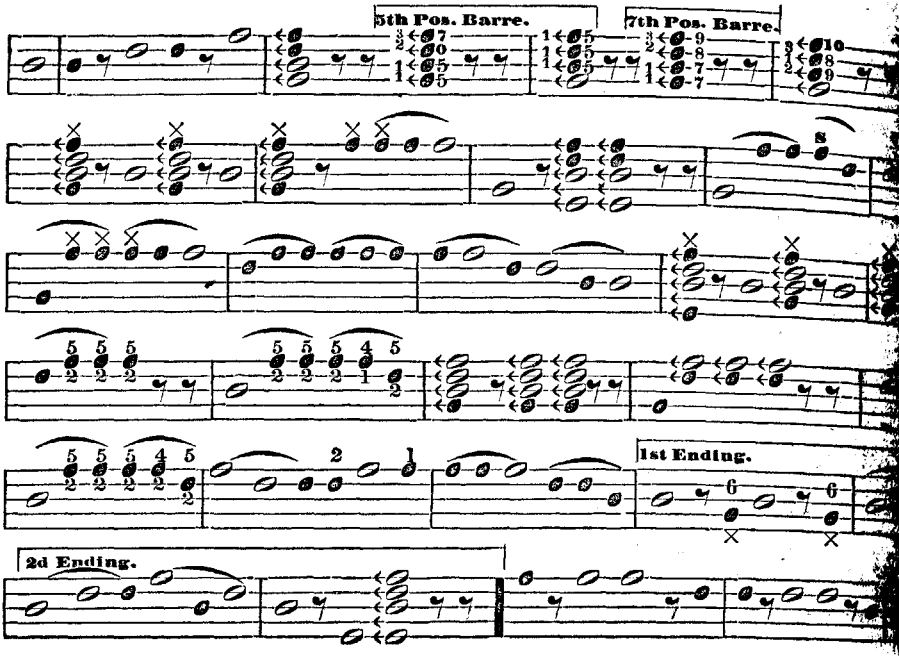
FAVORITE POLKA.

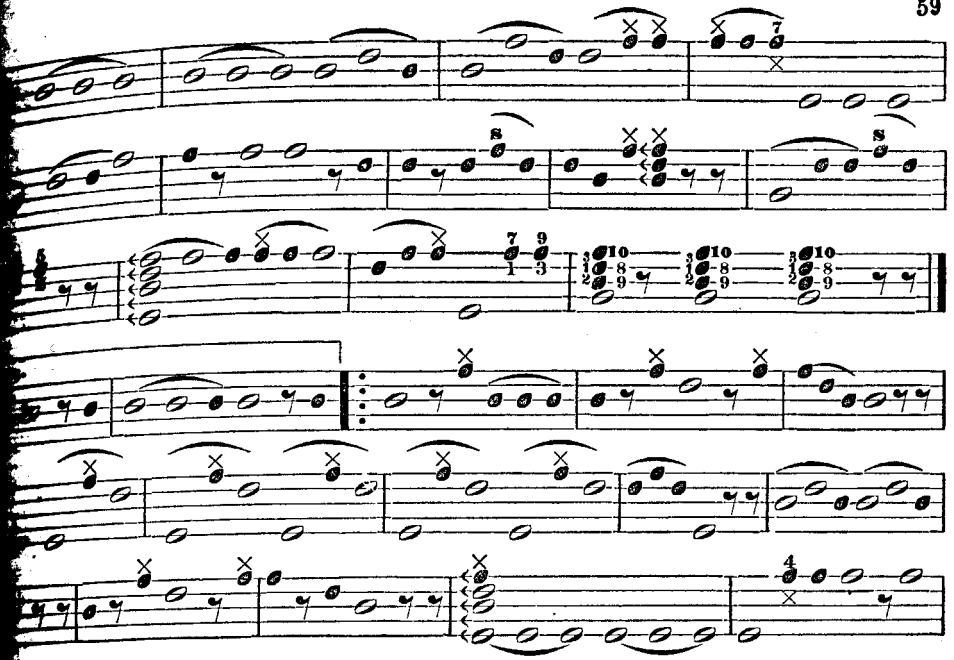
Arranged for a Solo.

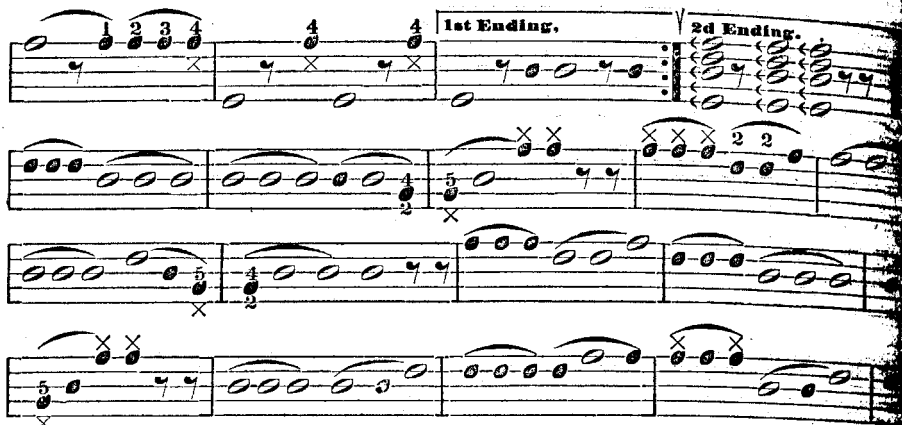



7th pos Barre.
12th Harmonic.
7th pos Barre.
7th pos Barre.
5th pos Barre.
D.C.

22nd REGIMENT MARCH.

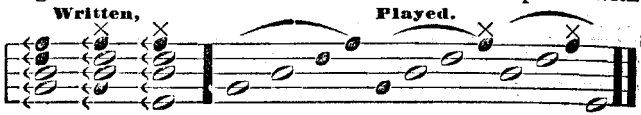






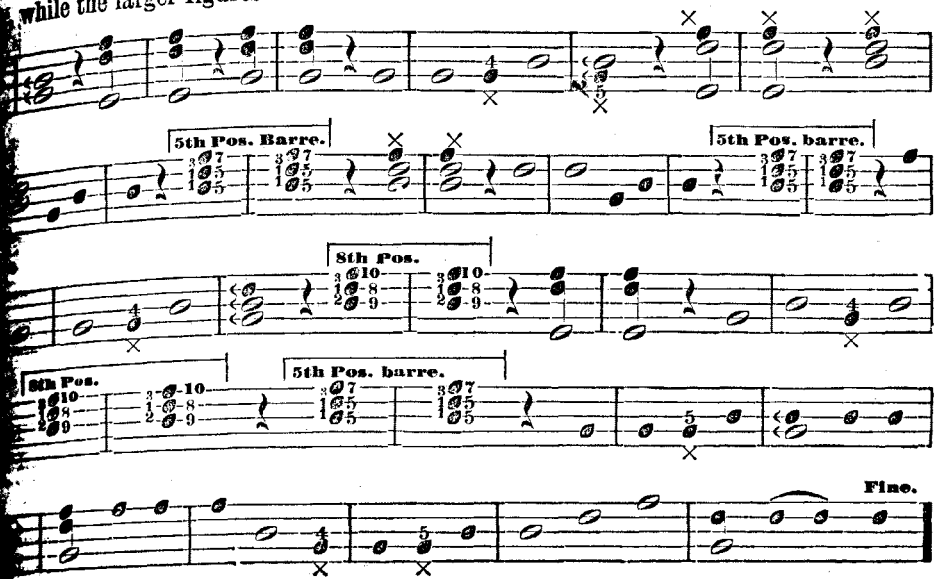
NOTE. This piece is arranged to be played Banjo style, (stroke) with a thimb
counts of eight notes to each measure. An eighth rest, thus, 𝄾 is equal to one cou
All measures not having sufficient notes to make six counts are completed with re

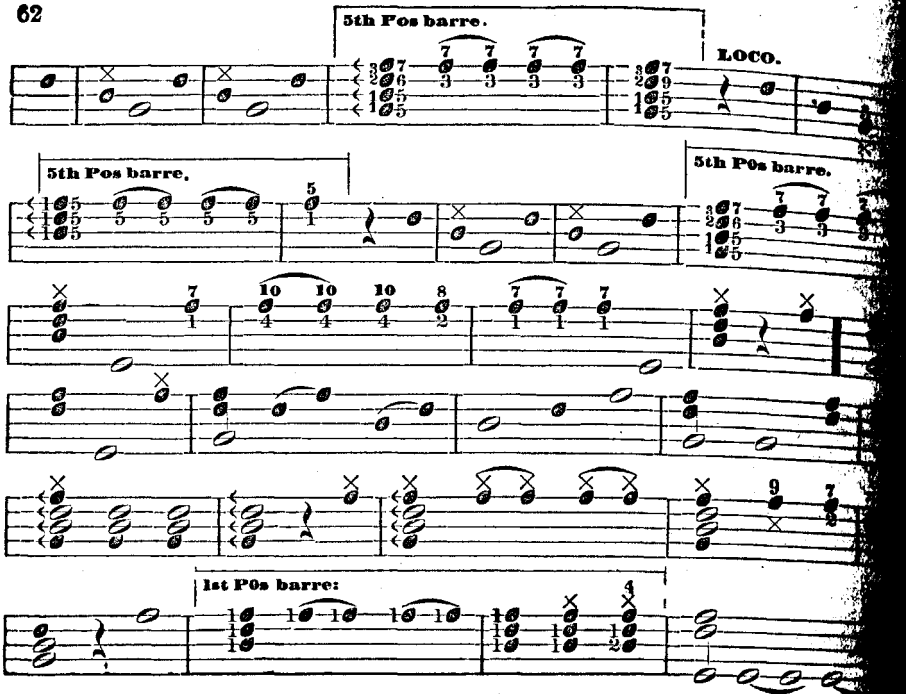
All chords having a wave line before them, thus,



BLUE DANUBE WALTZ.

Where there are two kinds of figures attached to a chord, the small ones indicate while the larger figures indicate the fret.

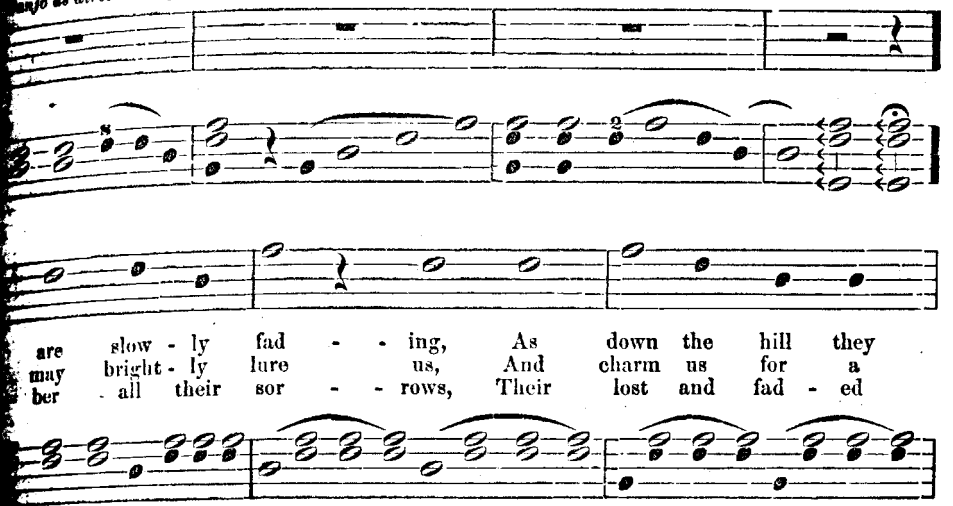


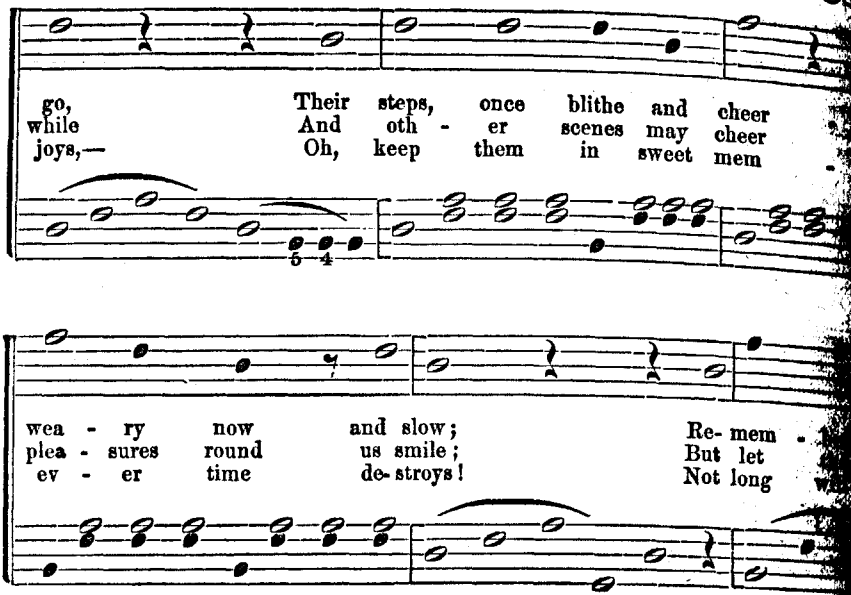

5th Pos barre.
LOCO.
5th Pos barre.
5th Pos barre.
1st Pos barre:

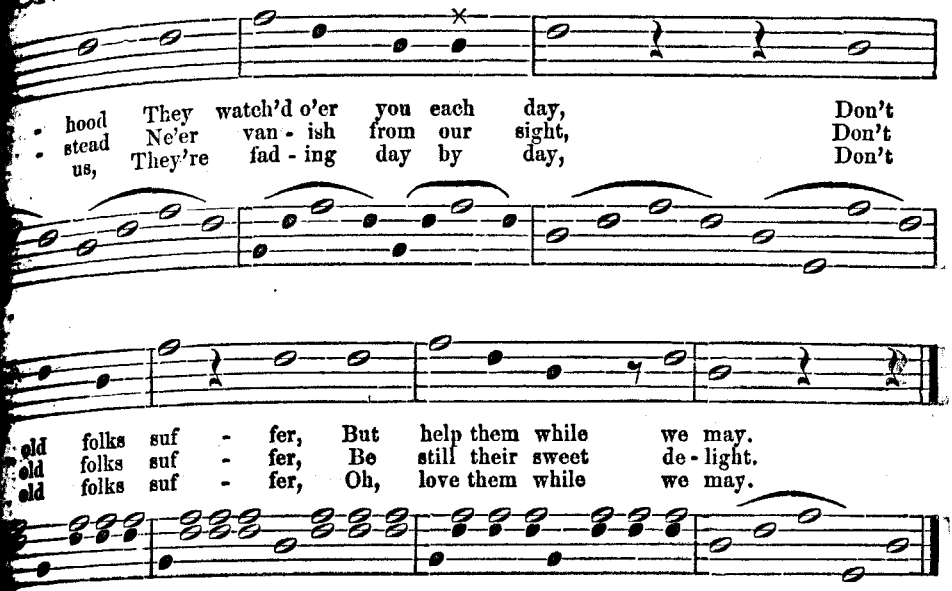
'T LET THE OLD FOLKS SUFFER. (In the Key of E Major.) 68

(Ar. for the Banjo by GEO. C. DOBSON, by "Simplified Method.")

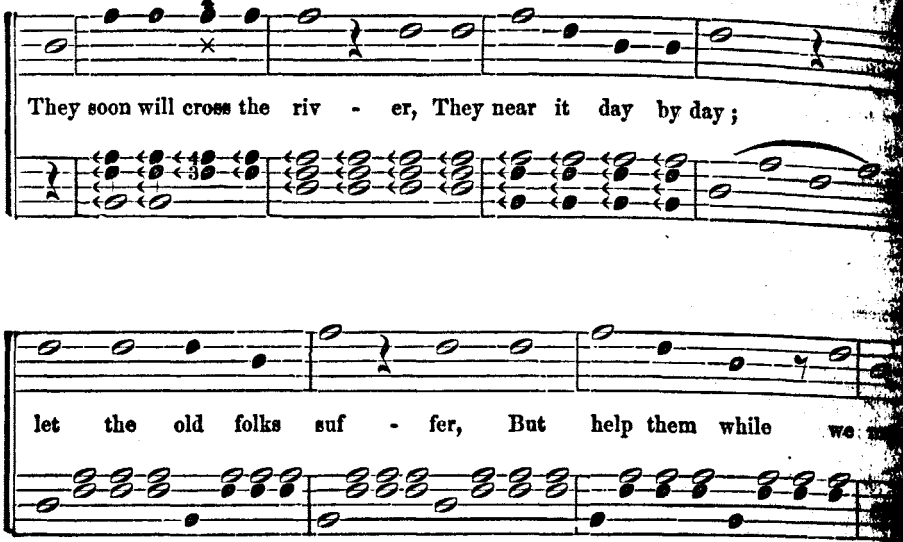
Banjo as directed on page 4.




go, Their steps, once blithe and cheer
while And oth - er scenes may cheer
joys,— Oh, keep them in sweet mem
5 4
wea - ry now and slow;
plea - sures round us smile;
ev - er time de-stroys!
Re- mem -
But let
Not long


hood They watch'd o'er you each day, Don't
stead Ne'er van - ish from our sight, Don't
us, They're fad - ing day by day, Don't
old folks suf - fer, But help them while we may.
old folks suf - fer, Be still their sweet de - light.
old folks suf - fer, Oh, love them while we may.

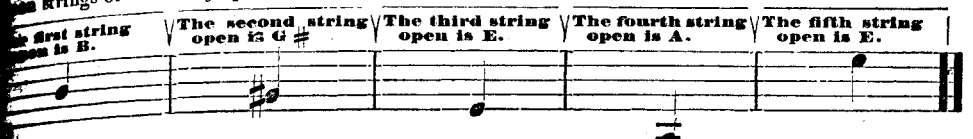
CHORUS.


They soon will cross the riv - er, They near it day by day;
let the old folks suf - fer, But help them while we

ROUGH SCHOOL FOR THE BANJO

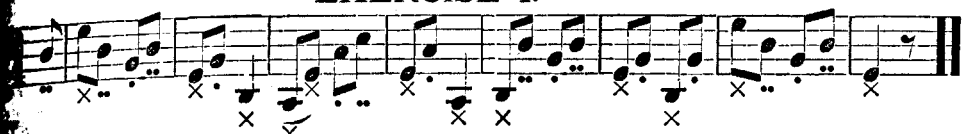
e Simplified Method for the Banjo is so easily acquired, I deem it advisable to add a Second Part, a series of exercises together with instruction in the usual mode of Notation. For those desiring to higher stages in the art, this portion of the work is designed.

strings of the Banjo produce the following tones, when properly tuned:—



owing exercise on the open and closed strings is generally performed to test if tuned correctly;—

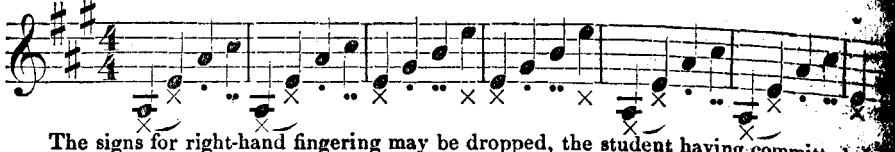
EXERCISE 1.



l names of the above tones, also the strings upon which they are produced, together with t and left hand fingering should be committed to memory before learning the scale. Exercises will enable the pupil to finger correctly.

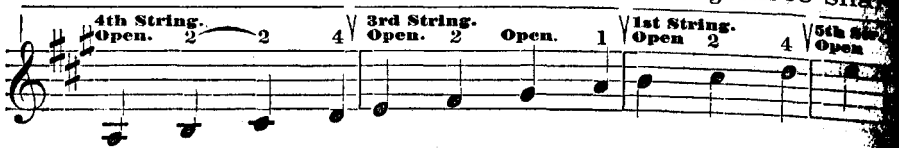
A cross, thus ×, is the sign for all notes made with the thumb; one dot, thus ., is th
made with the first finger; while two dots, thus .. , is the sign for all notes made with t

EXERCISE 2.

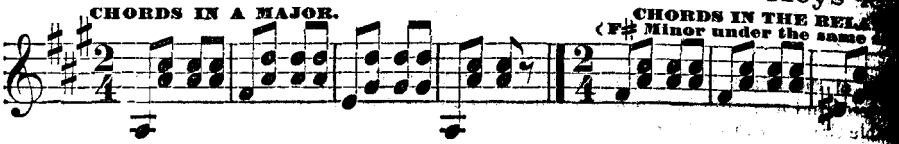


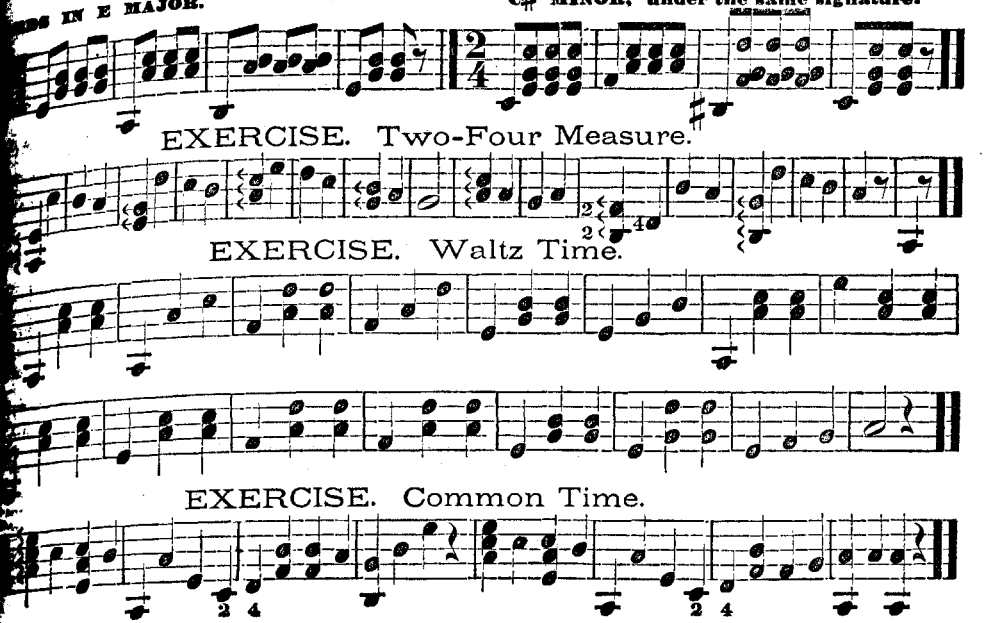
The signs for right-hand fingering may be dropped, the student having committed t

THE SCALE IN A MAJOR (having three sha

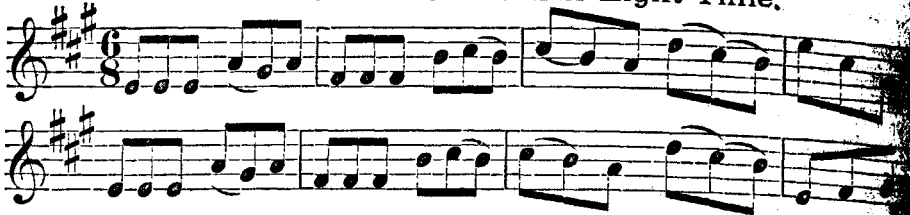


The most available Chords in the most suitable Keys

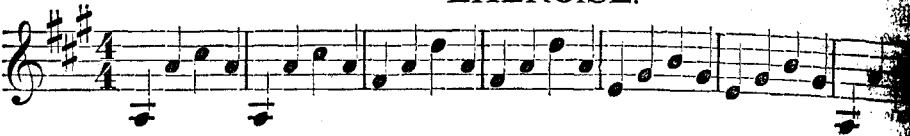



S IN E MAJOR.
C♯ MINOR, under the same signature.
EXERCISE. Two-Four Measure.
EXERCISE. Waltz Time.
EXERCISE. Common Time.

EXERCISE. Six-Eight Time.

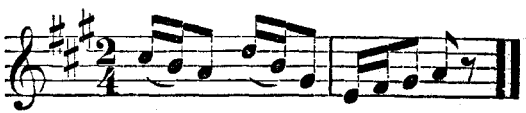


EXERCISE.



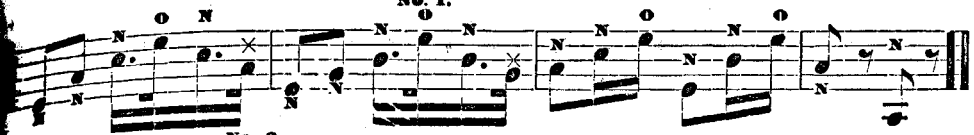
In the last measure of the above Exercise, the line from A to A is called a tie; that is, is counted, but the first A only is played. When this tie occurs from one note to another degree of the staff, it has a different meaning in Banjo music; the first note is struck with the other made by pulling the finger of the left off, which makes the required note.

EXAMPLE.

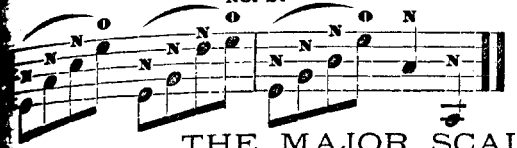


STROKE EXERCISE.

No. 1.

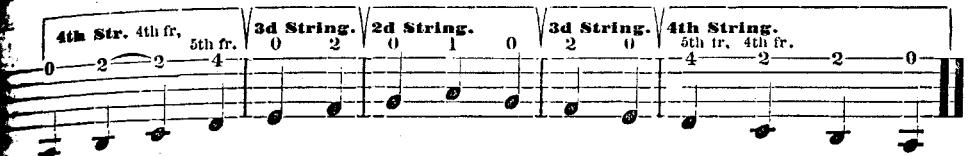


No. 2.

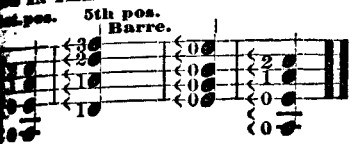


The curved line in Example Two implies that the nail of the forefinger is to glide over one note after the other at the same stroke.

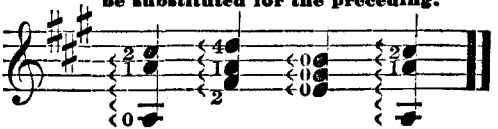
THE MAJOR SCALE IN A.



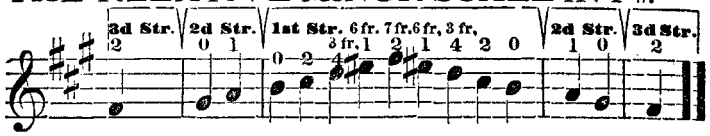
IN THE MAJOR SCALE OF A.



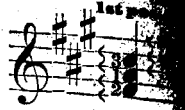
Chords in the Major Scale of A, which may be substituted for the preceding.



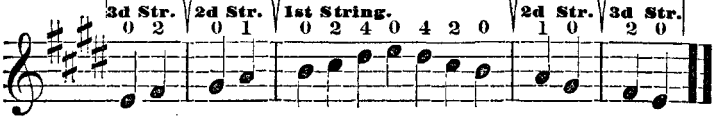
THE RELATIVE MINOR SCALE IN F♯.



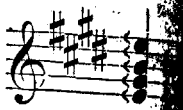
CHORDS IN THE M



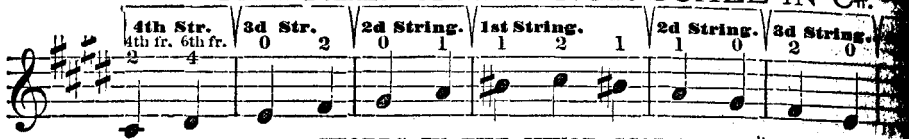
THE MAJOR SCALE IN E.



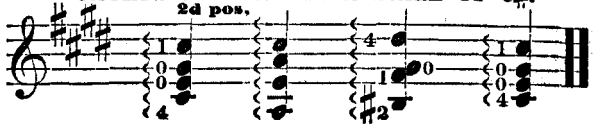
CHORDS IN THE MA



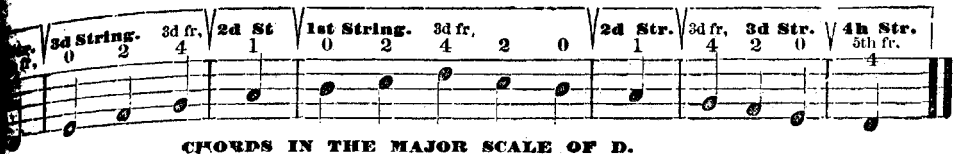
THE RELATIVE MINOR SCALE IN C♯.



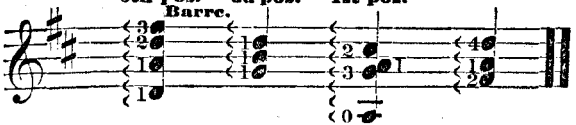
CHORDS IN THE MINOR SCALE OF C♯.



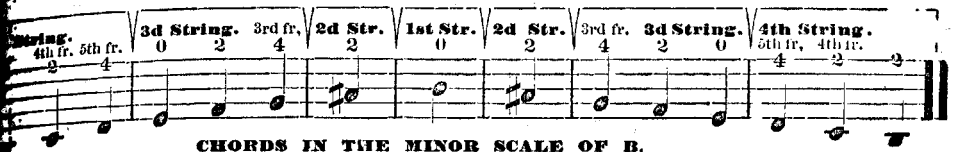
THE MAJOR SCALE IN D.



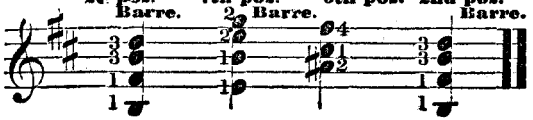
CHORDS IN THE MAJOR SCALE OF D.



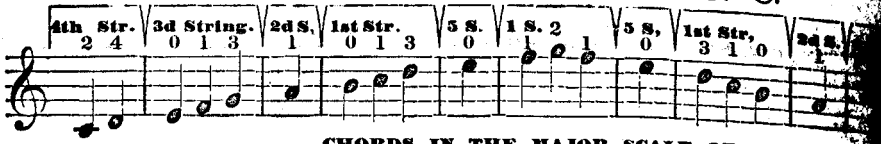
THE RELATIVE MINOR SCALE IN B.



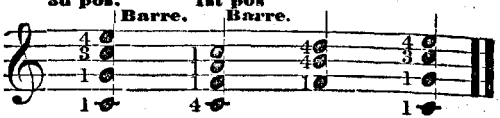
CHORDS IN THE MINOR SCALE OF B.



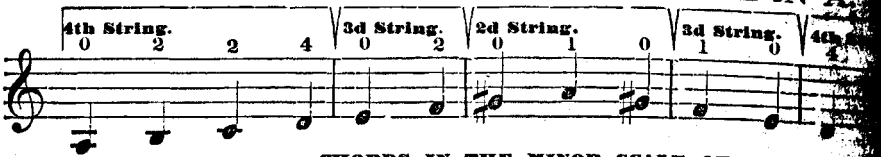
THE MAJOR SCALE IN C.



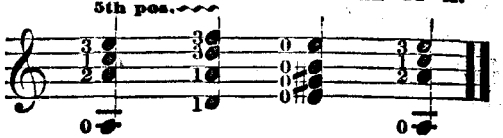
CHORDS IN THE MAJOR SCALE OF C.



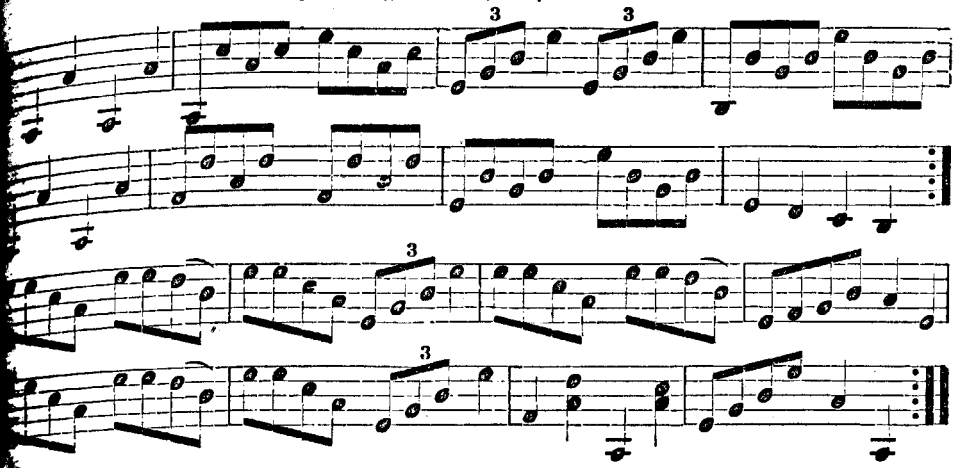
THE RELATIVE MINOR SCALE IN A.



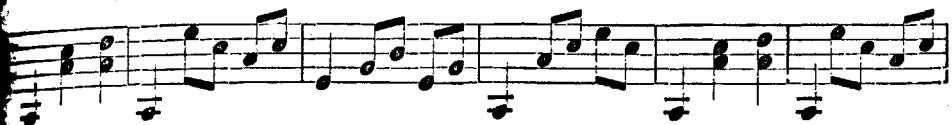
CHORDS IN THE MINOR SCALE OF A.



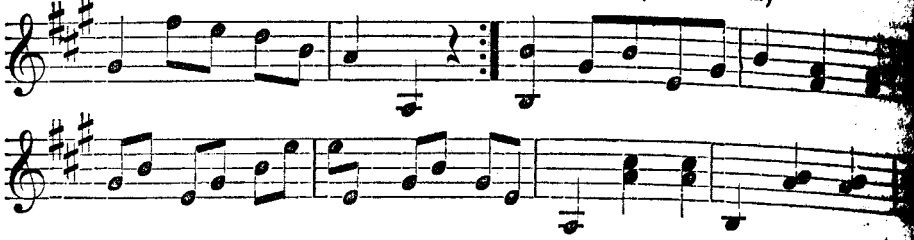
OLD TIME JIG.



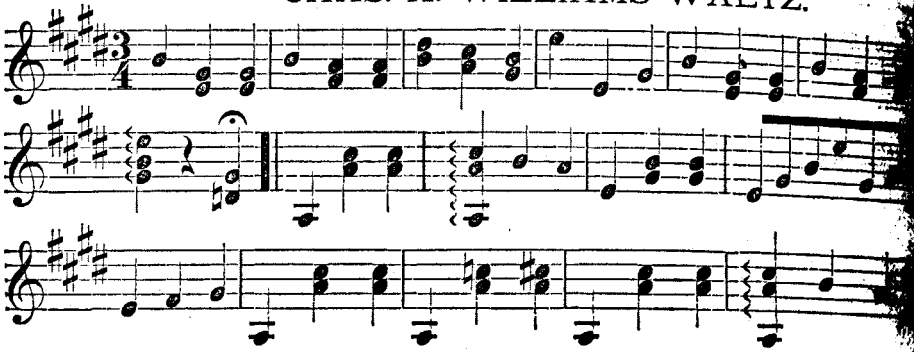
VIOLET WALTZ.

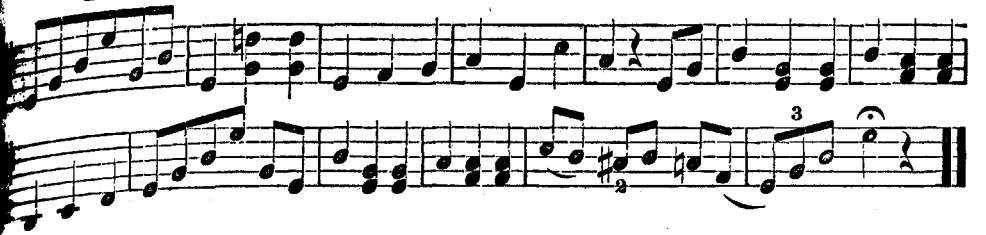


VIOLET WALTZ. (Concluded.)

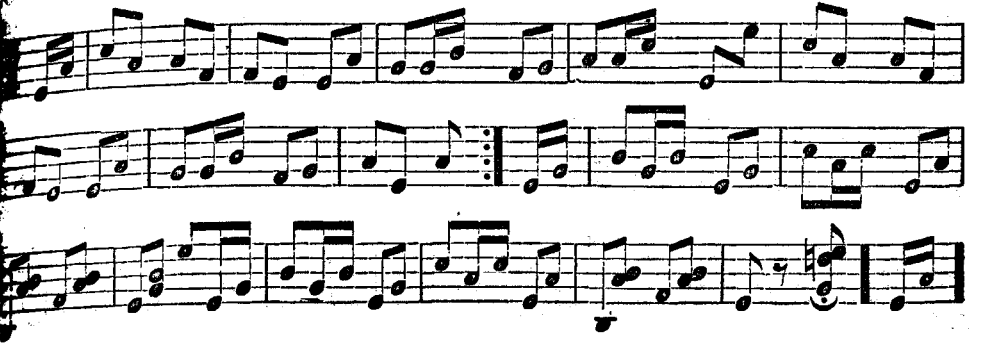


CHAS. A. WILLIAMS WALTZ.

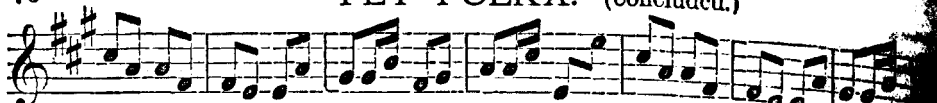




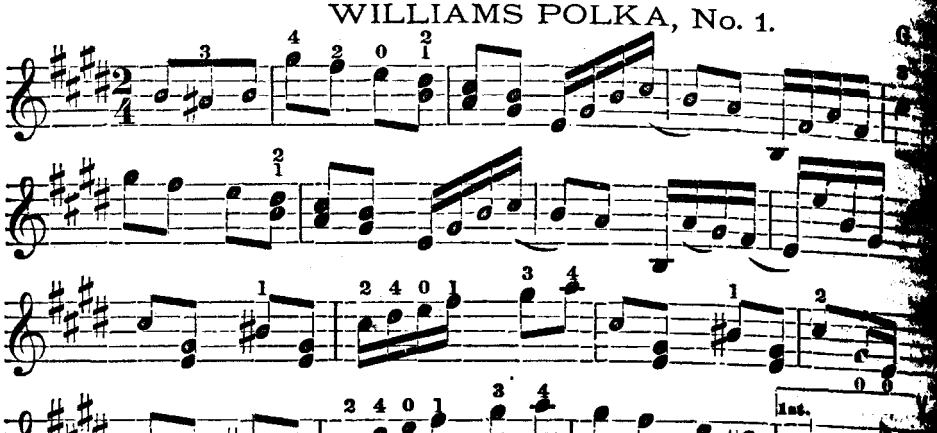
FLY POLKA.

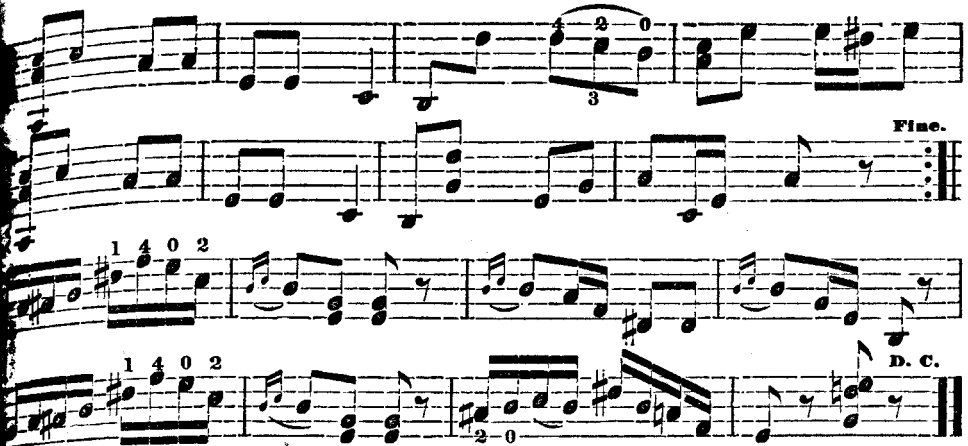


FLY POLKA. (Concluded.)



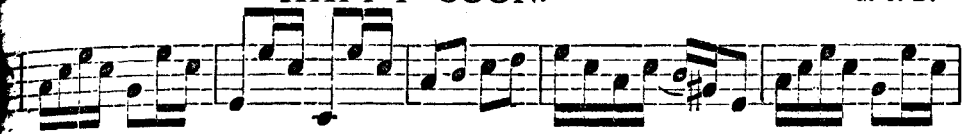
WILLIAMS POLKA, No. 1.





HAPPY COON.

G. C. D.



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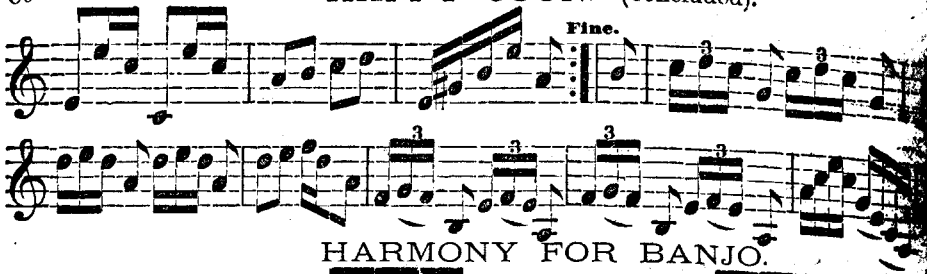
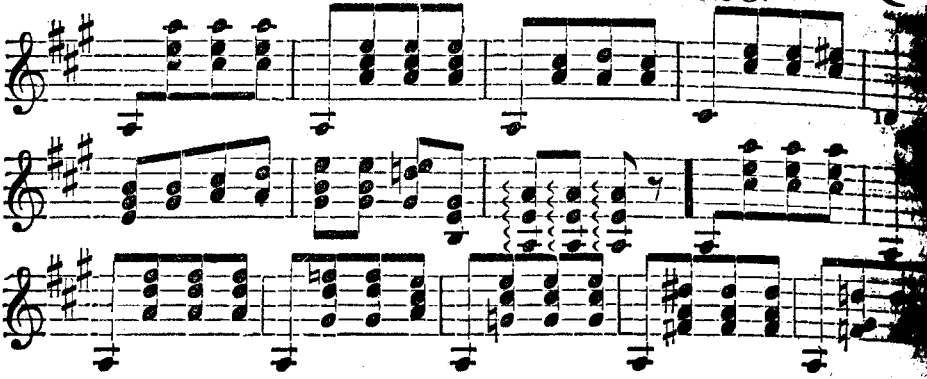
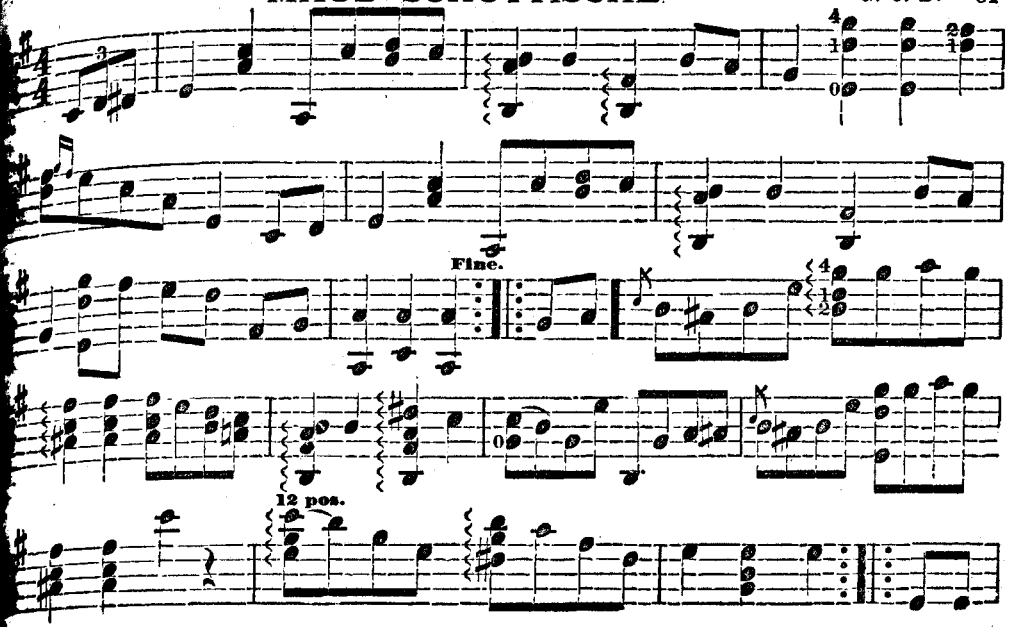
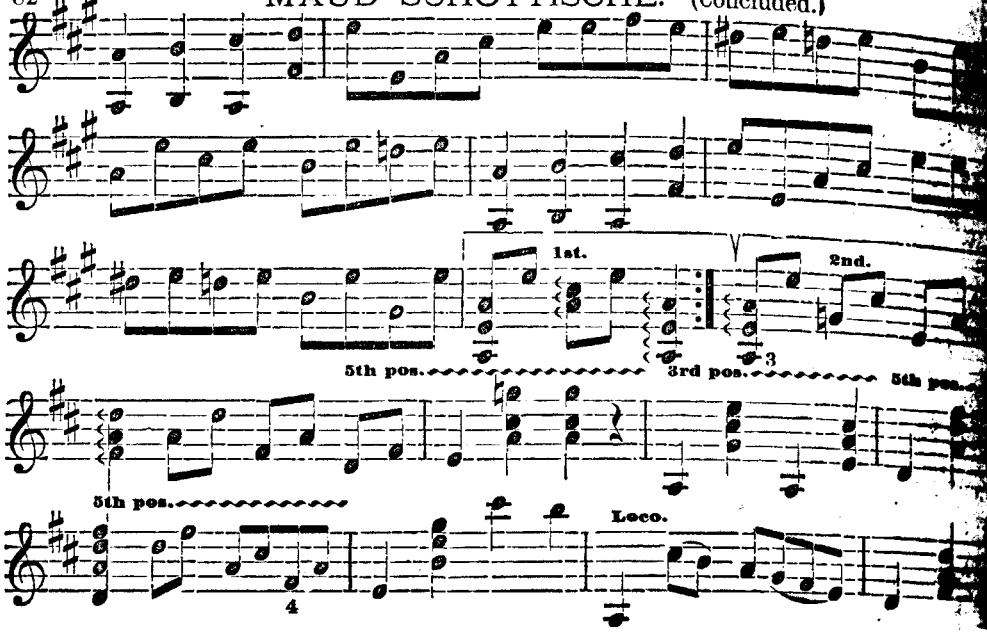


HARMONY FOR BANJO.

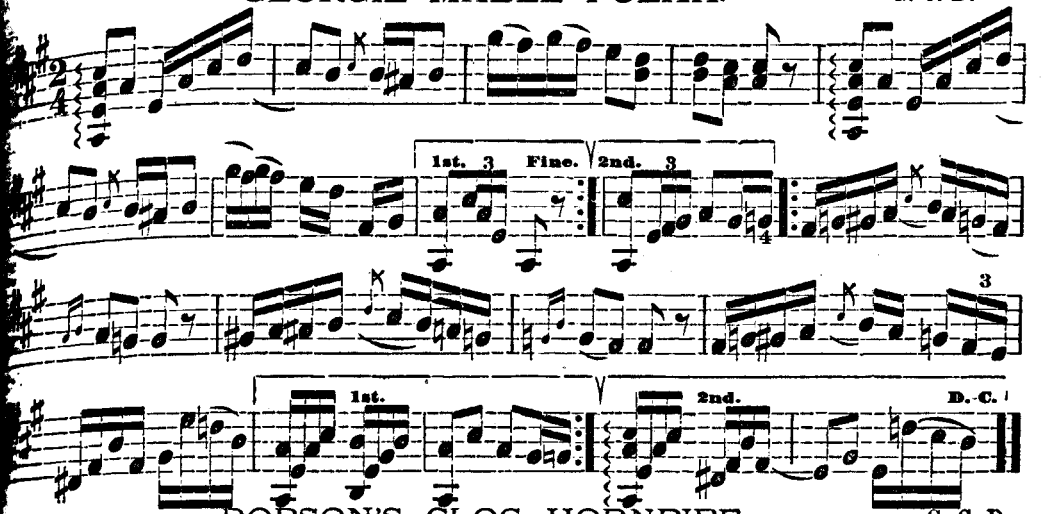



Fine.
12 pos.

MAUD SCHOTTISCHE. (Concluded.)

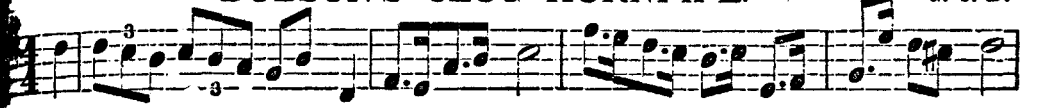


GEORGIE MABLE POLKA.



DOBSON'S CLOG HORNPIPE.

G. C. D.



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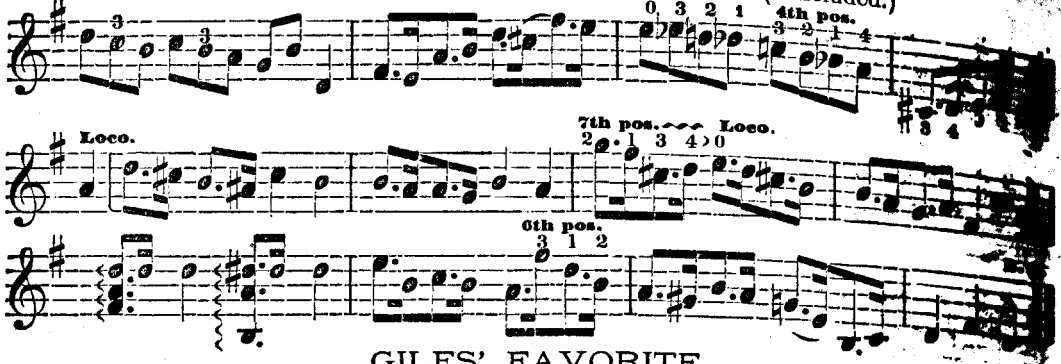
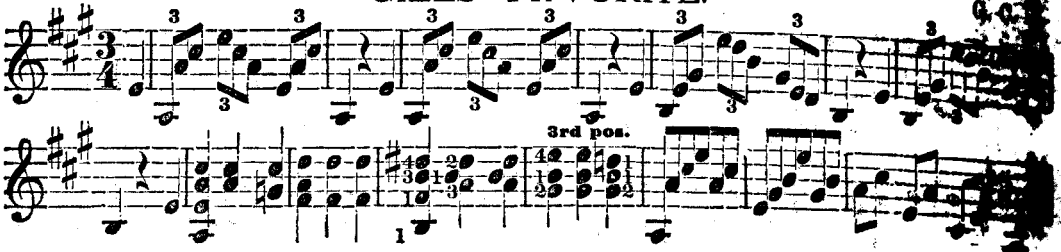


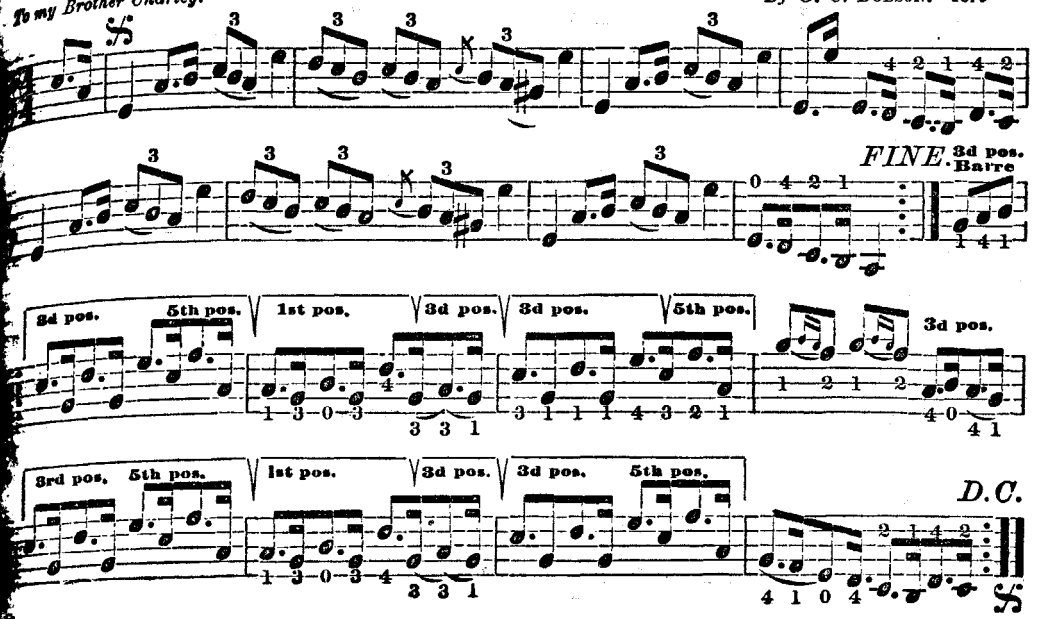
GILES' FAVORITE.



COON'S DELIGHT.

To my Brother Charley.

By G. C. Dobson. 1878



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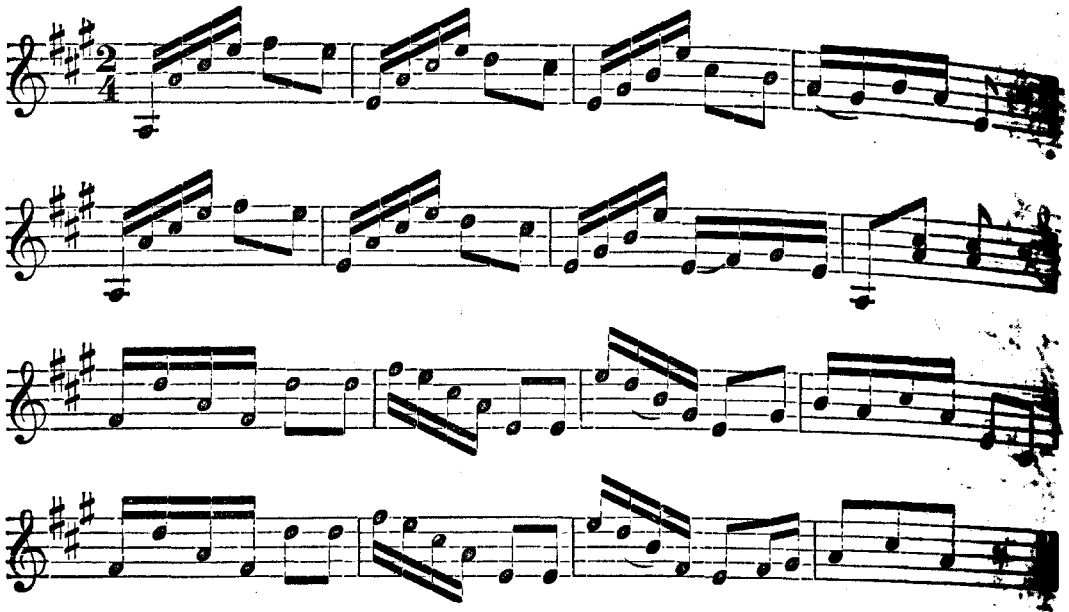
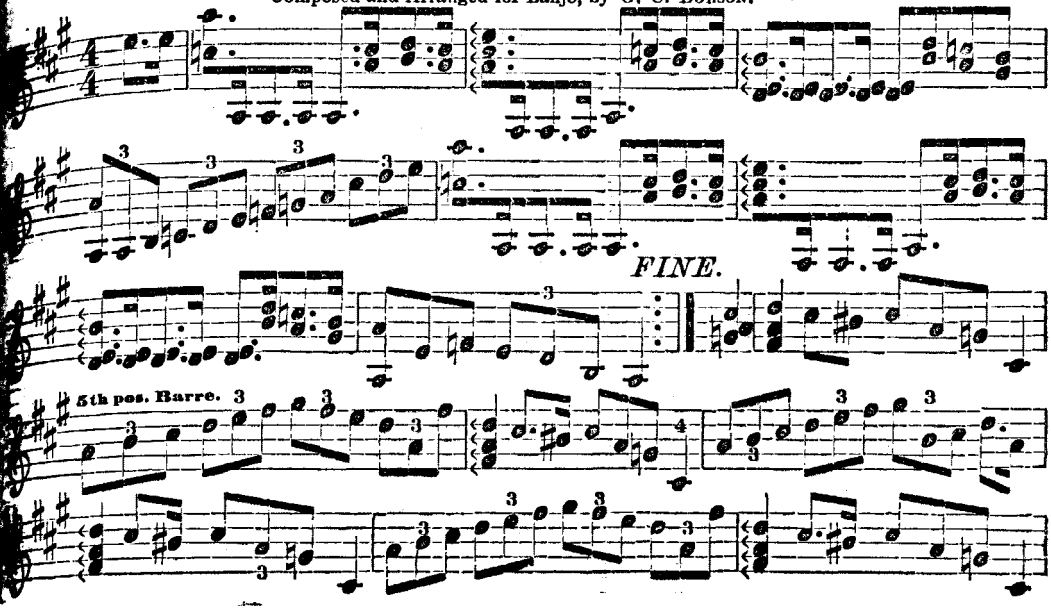
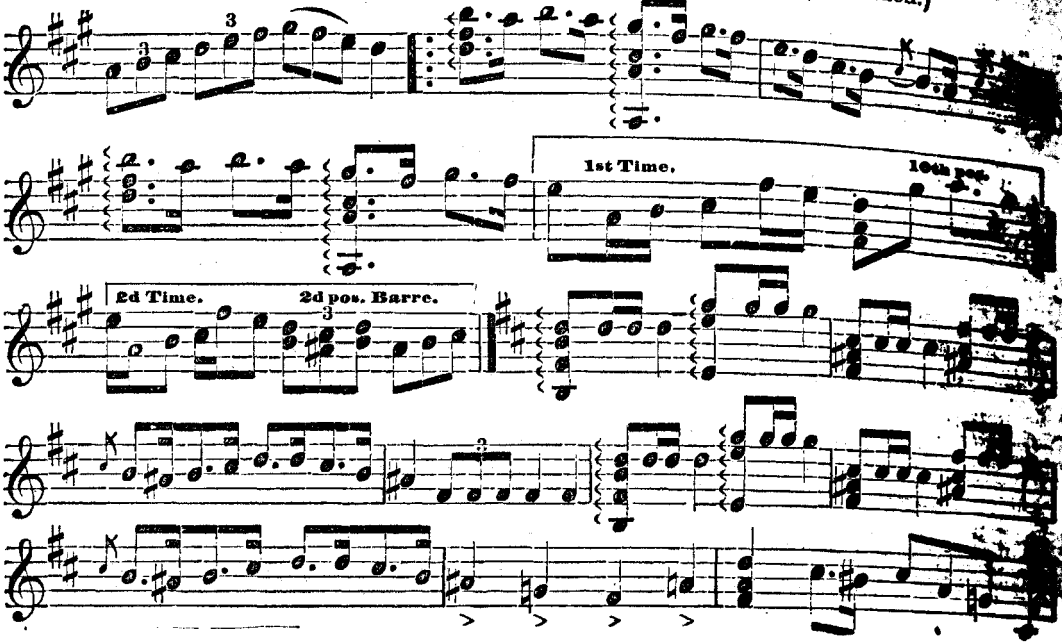


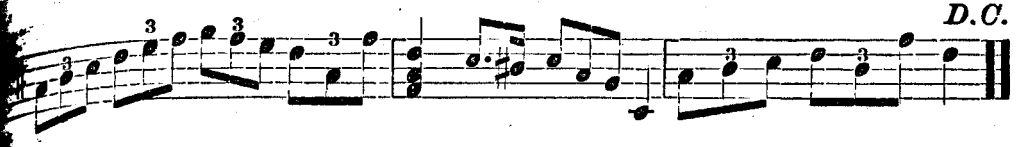
THE FREDERIC GRAND MARCH.

Composed and Arranged for Banjo, by G. C. Dobson. (TO FRED ORGAN,)



THE FREDERIC GRAND MARCH. (Continued.)





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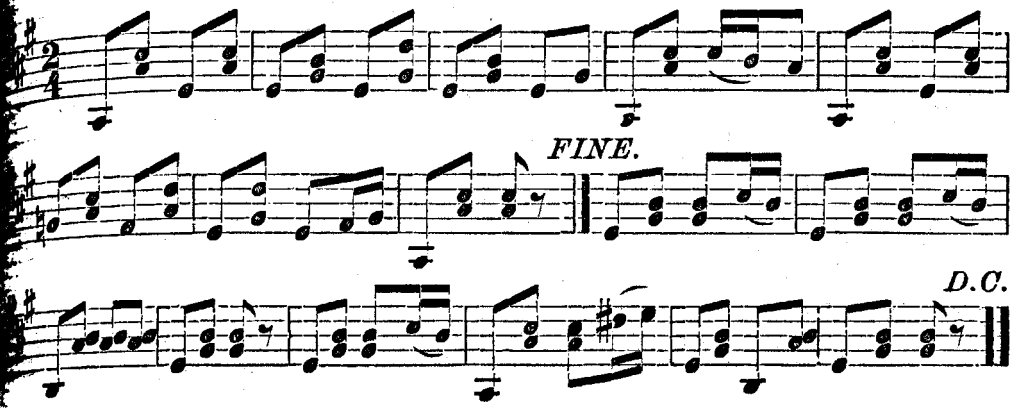
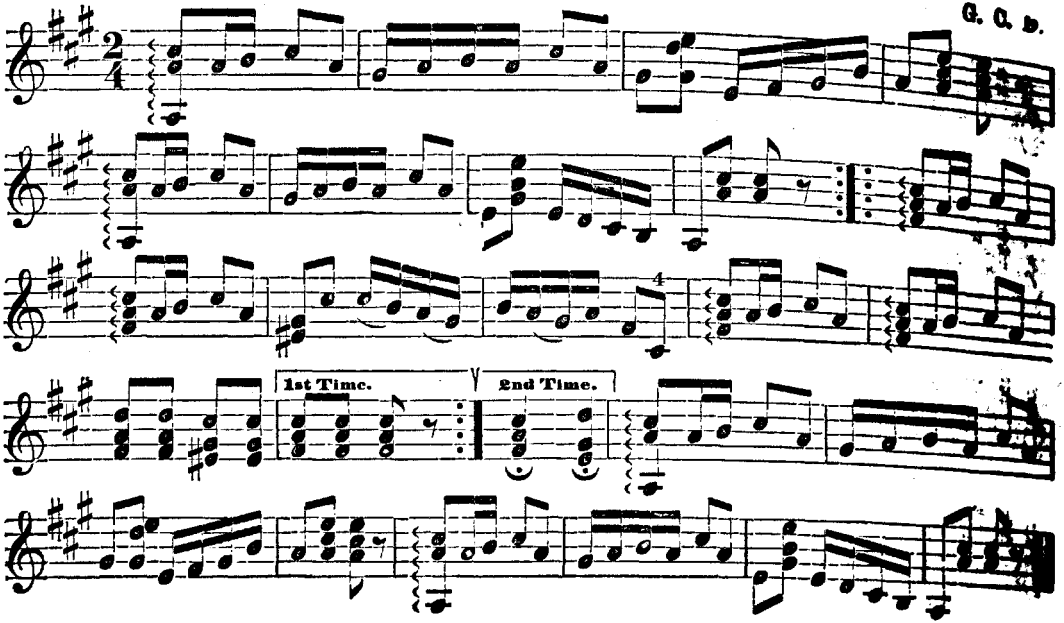
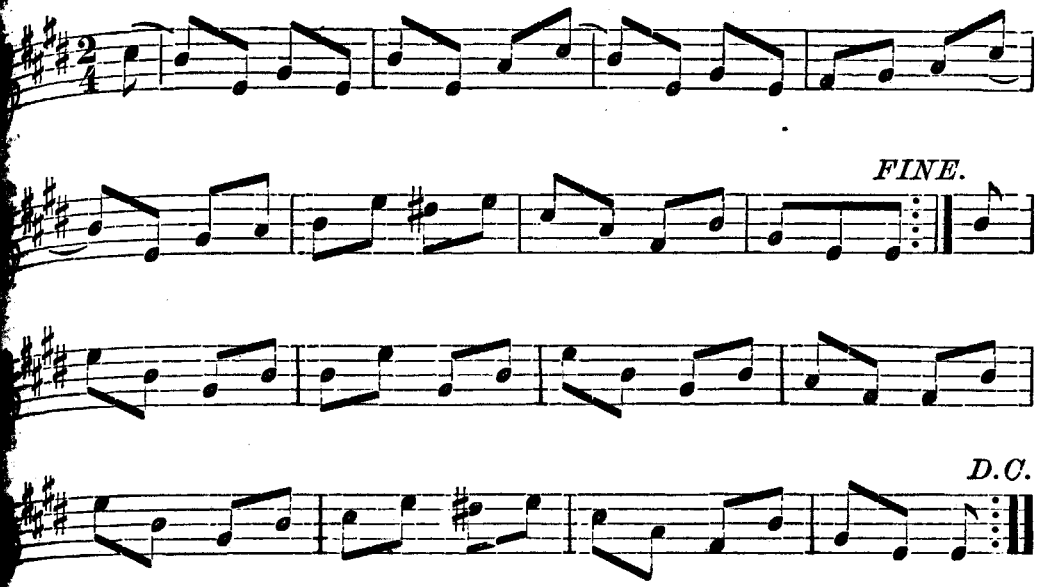


GEORGIE POLKA.

G. C. D.



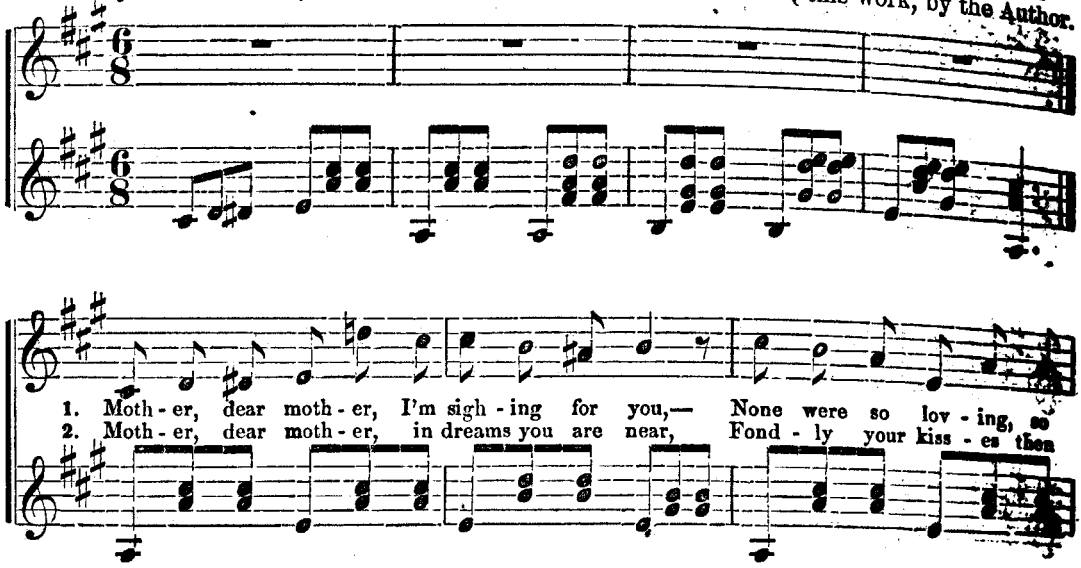

FINE.
D.C.

Words by GEO. COOPER.
Music by VIOLETTA.

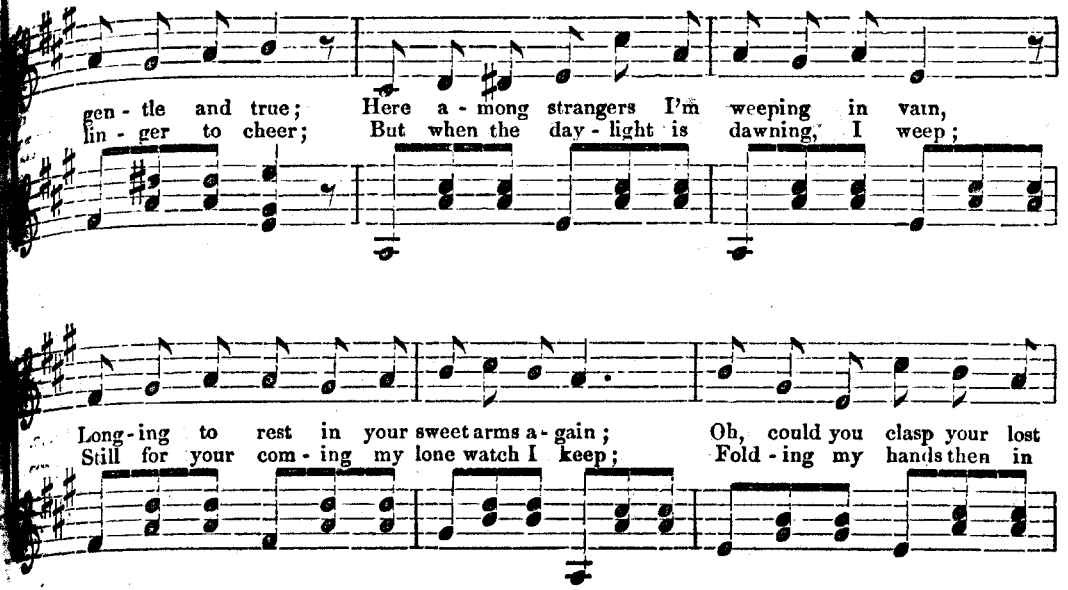
POOR LITTLE LOST ONE.

SONG AND CHORUS.

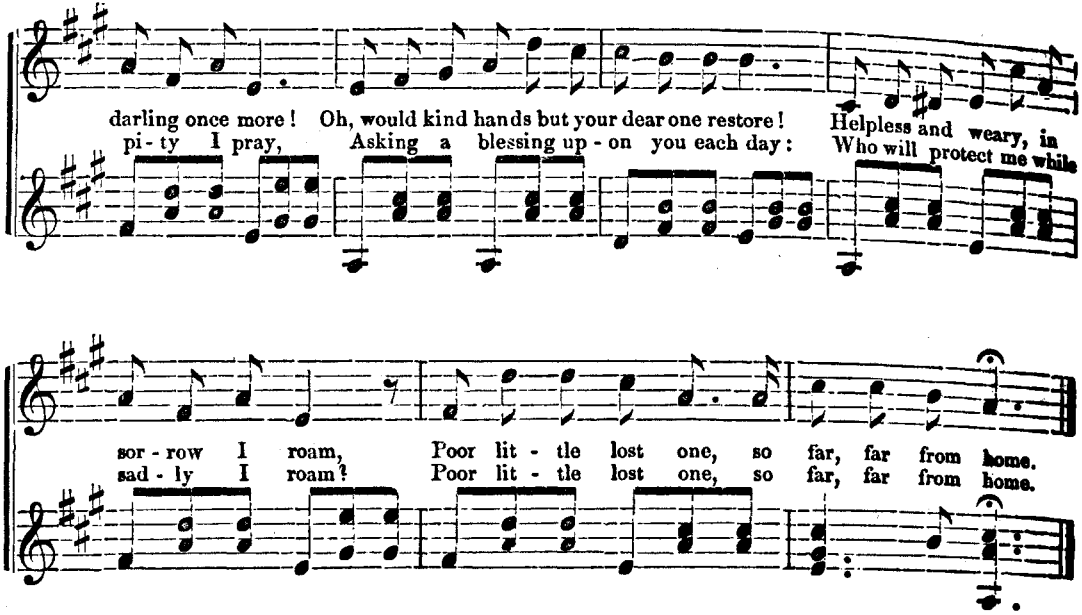
Arranged for Banjo for this work, by the Author.

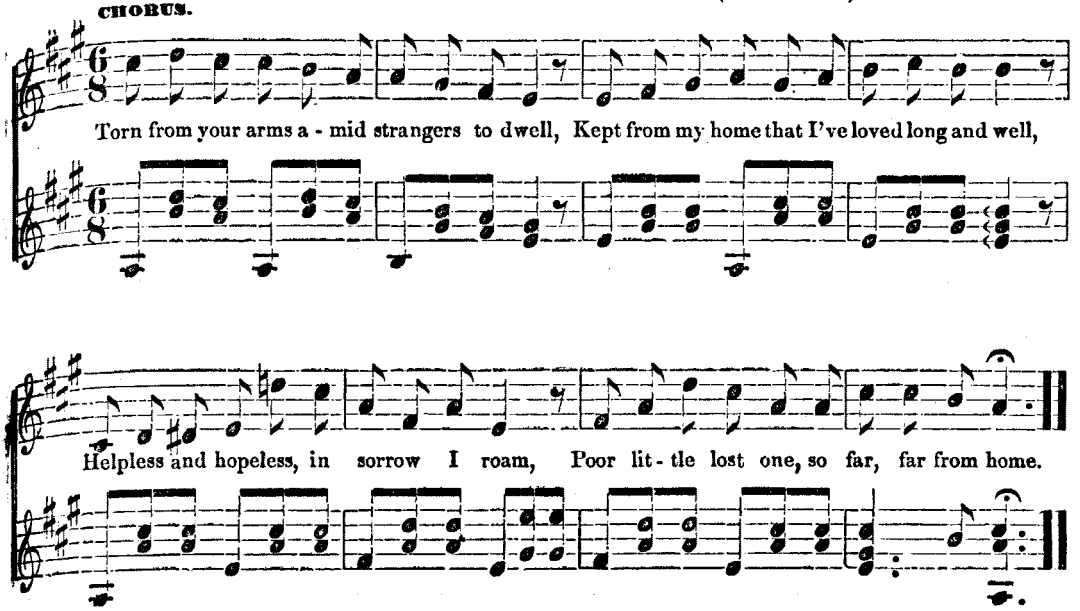


POOR LITTLE LOST ONE. (Continued.)

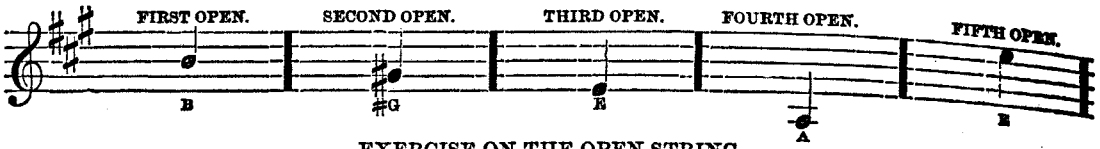


POOR LITTLE LOST ONE. (Continued.)

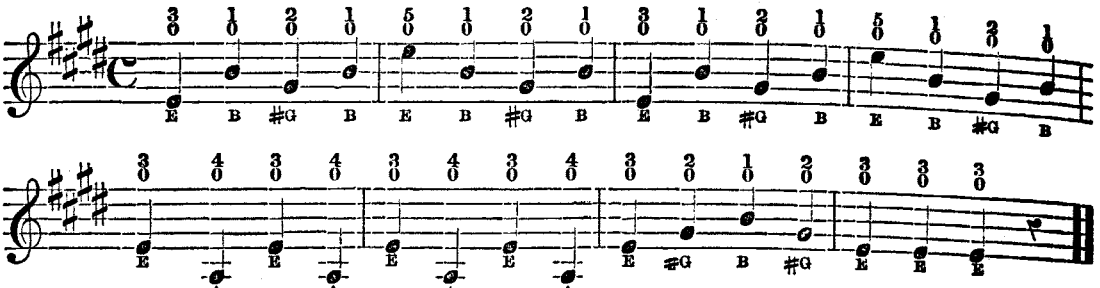



CHORUS.
Torn from your arms a - mid strangers to dwell, Kept from my home that I've loved long and well,
Helpless and hopeless, in sorrow I roam, Poor lit - tle lost one, so far, far from home.

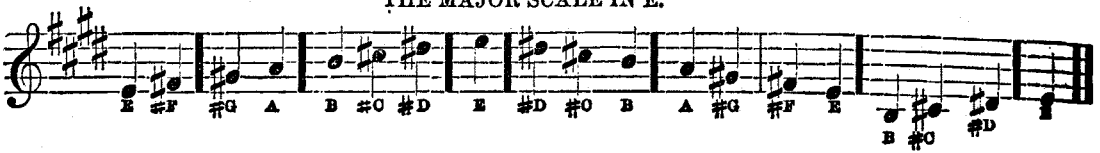
THE STRINGS OF THE BANJO.



EXERCISE ON THE OPEN STRING.

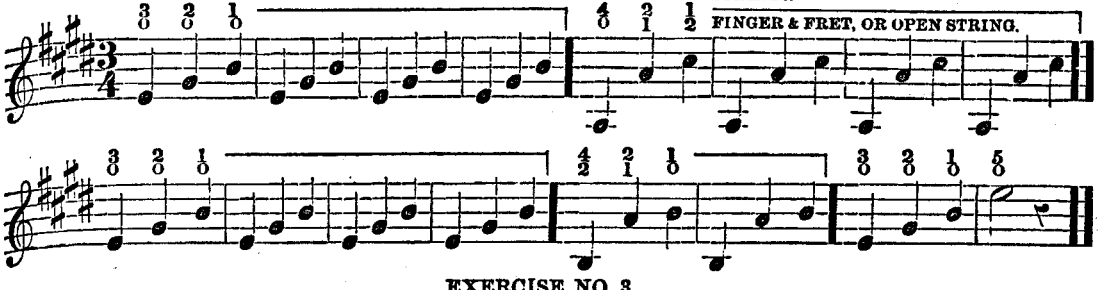


THE MAJOR SCALE IN E.



EXERCISE NO. 1.

EXERCISE NO. 2.



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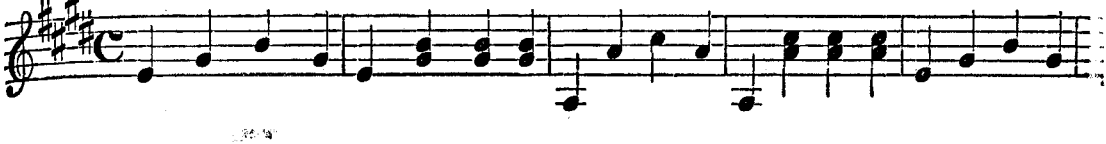

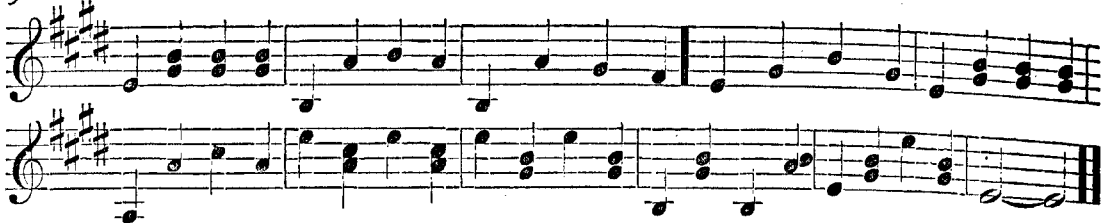

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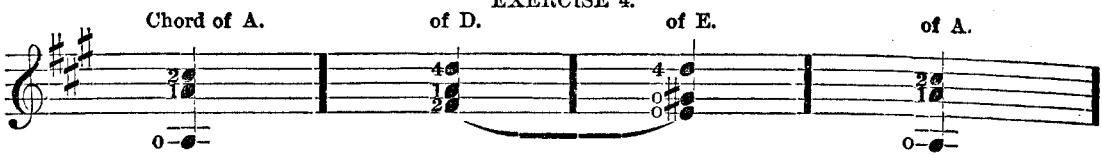

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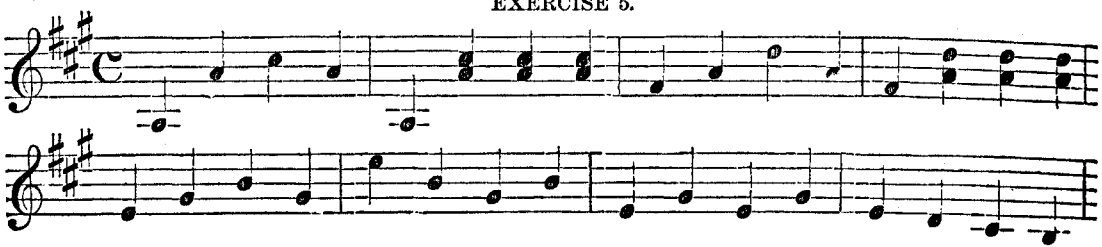

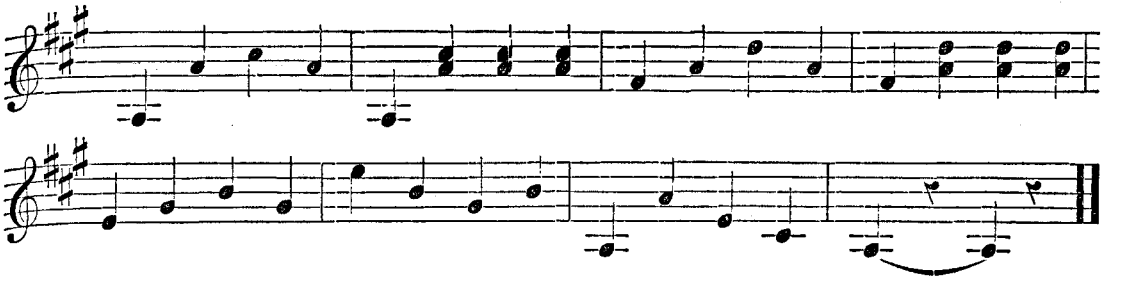

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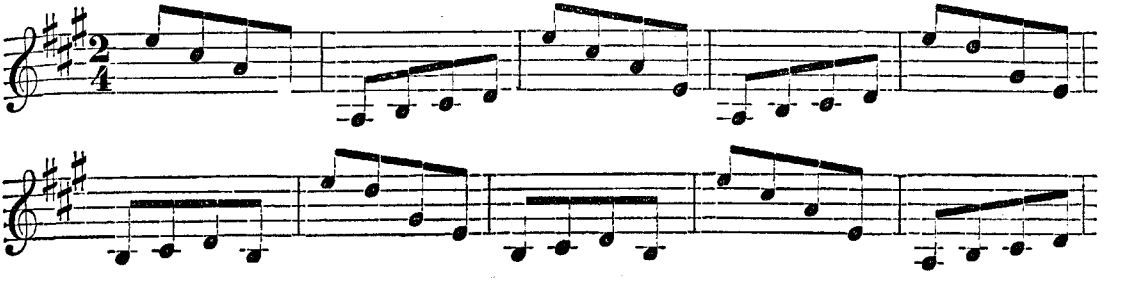
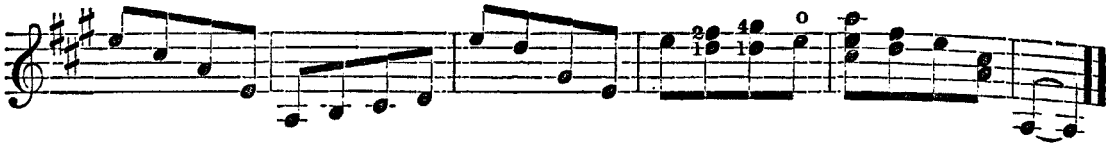
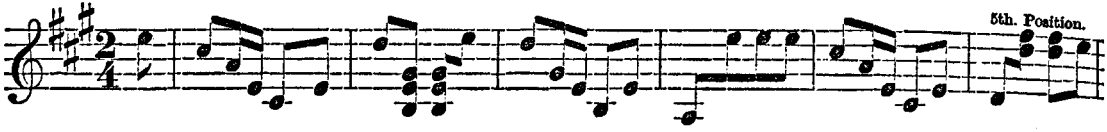
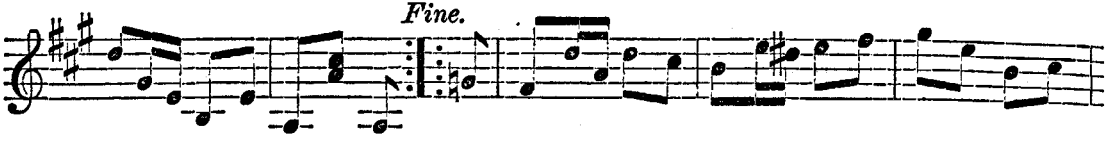


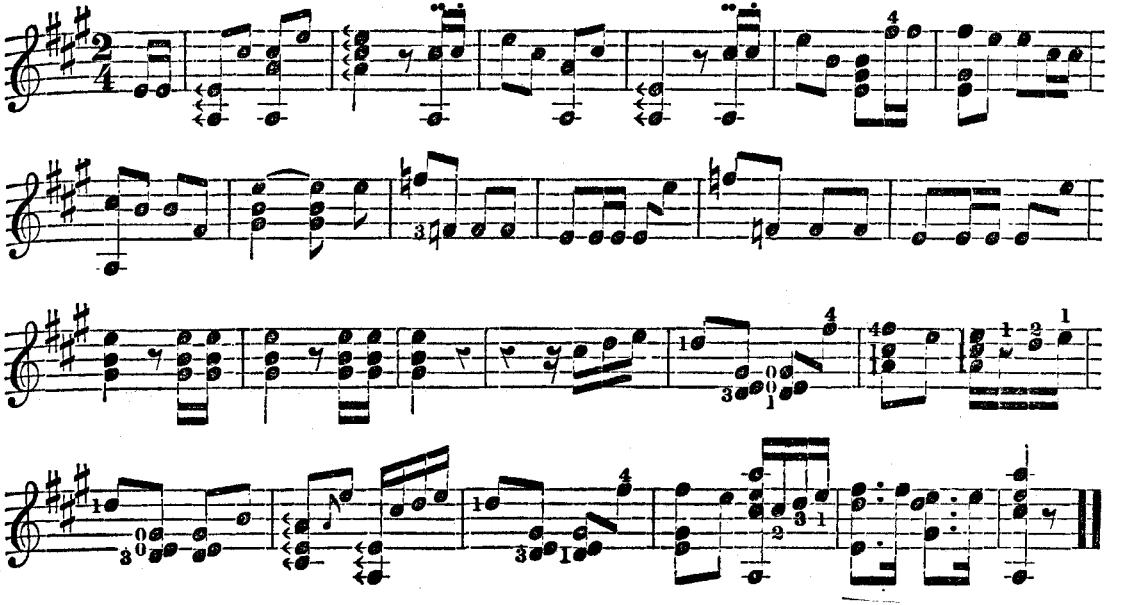


IDEAL POLKA.

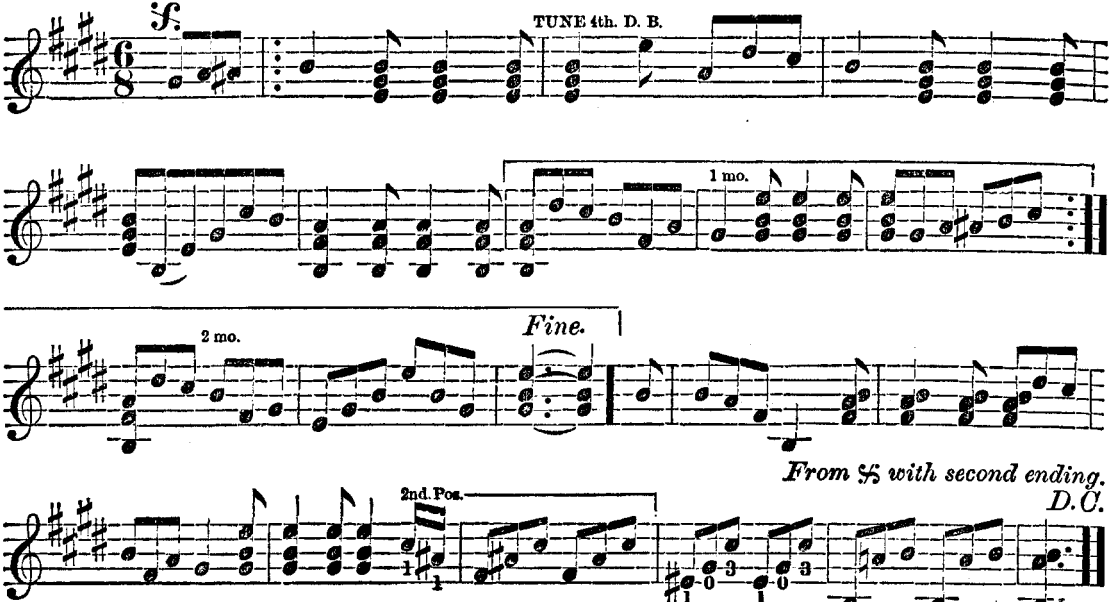




THE MARRIAGE BELLS. (OLIVETTE.)

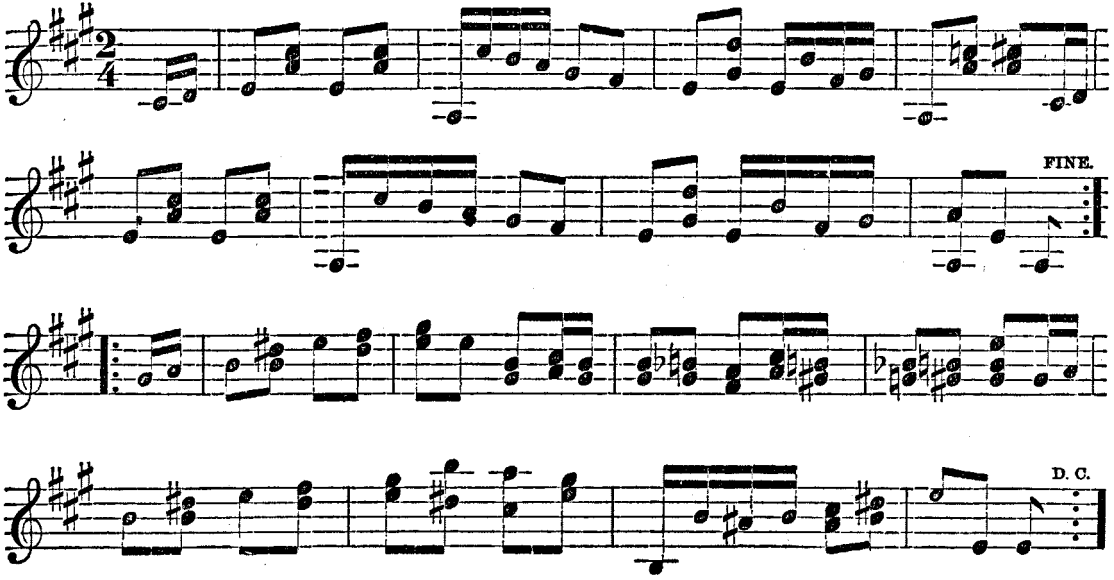


NEW TRICK SOLO.



BESSIE SCHOTTISCHE.

G. C. D.



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