

HOME STUDY COURSE

IN

VIBRACUSSION

(THE ART OF PLAYING PERCUSSION—
VIBRATED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS)

Enrollment No. 12817

In any correspondence with the School always refer to the above enrollment number

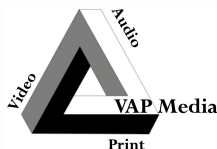
Student _____

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NATIONAL SCHOOL OF VIBRACUSSION

CHICAGO



Vibracussion Course of Instruction

FOR ALL Mallet Played Instruments

INTRODUCTORY

Such has been the wonderful progress made in the development of Orchestra Bells (Glockenspiel), Xylophones, Marimbas, etc., in the past forty years, these instruments have attained a position of eminence in the musical world which is summoning the attention of composers and arrangers of note. It is, therefore, altogether fitting and proper that a serious attempt be made to provide a suitable course of instruction for persons desirous of becoming proficient on instruments of this type, and with that as a motive this series of Lessons in Vibracussion (the art of playing Percussion-Vibrated Musical Instruments) has been carefully prepared.

It is proposed to show the pupil in a succession of clear and understandable phrases the comparative simplicity of these various instruments and the ease with which they may be learned.

It is true, of course, that there is no "royal road to learning," and this more or less familiar expression applies in the present instance, but there is nothing which need prevent any person possessing even the slightest natural musical ability from learning to play Xylophone, Marimba or similar instruments if the lessons in this course are but carefully followed and a reasonable amount of practicing done.

At the very start it might be well to state that the ultimate ability and proficiency of any player, on any musical instrument of whatever nature, is dependable, in a very large measure, on the musical quality of the instrument itself. By this is meant that the superior results obtainable with a really good instrument make it a sensible investment which will be a constant source of satisfaction and an incentive to practice.

While to some who have had some musical training the earlier parts of this course may seem to contain unnecessary details at times, we strongly urge that the student go carefully over each lesson as the instruction contained therein will be found helpful even though appar-

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ently elementary in nature. The lessons are arranged in natural sequence and the desired results can only be obtained by studying each one in its regular consecutive order.

REGARDING INSTRUMENTS

One of the first questions that naturally arises is "What size and type of instrument ought I to have?" In Orchestra Bells we strongly recommend a two and one-half octave set as being best suited for all around work. This will be found to be the correct size for band and orchestra use.

ORCHESTRA BELLS OF VARIOUS SIZES

For what is known as "jobbing" work, it is essential that comparatively light weight bells be used, and for this purpose we recommend a set with $\frac{7}{8}$ inch roundtop or one inch flat top bars, they being equal in volume, although the former are lighter in weight.

LARGER SIZES

Where the playing is to be more or less permanent in one place, such as theatre work, for instance, the use of a one inch roundtop or a one and a quarter inch flat top set is advised. For large musical organizations one and a quarter inch roundtop or one and a half inch flat top bells are very practical.

PARSIFAL BELLS

For use with bands or orchestras of immense proportions there is nothing better than Parsifal Bells, mounted in case or on floor racks. We recommend the latter as being somewhat preferable on account of greater resonator efficiency and the fact that a carrying case or trunk can be obtained if it is necessary to move them from place to place.

TYPE OF CASE

Where bells are permanently mounted in case, either the covered type or the plain, uncovered oak case will serve very nicely, although we strongly recommend the latter as being the more efficient of the two, for the reason that it adds to the tone of the bells (on the order of a sounding board) instead of muffling it as the covered case does. The plain case will also give longer and better service, due to the fact that there is no scuffing or peeling as with the covered type.

SONG BELLS

Where it is desired to keep the bell parts subdued and of a deeper, richer color, we suggest the use of a two and one-half octave set of Song Bells, which are equipped with resonators and mounted on floor rack. The tone of these bells is one octave lower, bar for bar, than regular Orchestra Bells. For transportation purposes a hand carrying case is always readily obtainable.

XYLOPHONES

The step from Orchestra Bells to Xylophone is a natural and easy one. While bells are a very necessary adjunct to any drummer's outfit, it is with a good Xylophone that the drummer can increase his earnings substantially.

KINDS OF WOOD

Xylophone bars are made from various woods, such as Maple, Rosewood, Nagaed, Klyposerus, etc. Maple is used in cheap toy instruments and has little value from a musical standpoint. Rosewood has been discarded except in making very mediocre instruments, as it soon wears out.

THE BEST XYLOPHONE WOOD

Nagaed is the most popular wood used in the manufacture of Xylophones today, with Klyposerus running a close second. The latter is the hardest wood known that has musical quality.

SIZE OF XYLOPHONE

A Xylophone really requires more range than a set of bells and for that reason we do not recommend anything smaller than a three octave size, and preferably, of course, an instrument with resonators.

XYLOPHONE WITHOUT RESONATORS

A small three octave Xylophone with frames and sounding board will answer the purpose where it is used to play only a strain here or there, but for solo playing or for serious work the extra cost of an instrument with resonators is money well spent.

SMALL XYLOPHONE WITH RESONATORS

For dance work, etc., where the instruments must be moved from job to job a great deal, a three octave Xylophone with light weight resonators and with Nagaed bars one and a quarter inch wide by three-fourths of an inch thick is an ideal combination.

UNIVERSAL SIZE

A more or less permanent location makes feasible the use of a larger instrument. In a case of this kind a three and one-half octave (F to C) Xylophone with resonators and with either Nagaed or Klyposerus bars one and five-eighths of an inch wide is our recommendation as being best suited for practically ninety per cent of the band and orchestral playing for which an instrument of this kind is used.

EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE XYLOPHONES

In extremely rare cases, a four or even a four and a half octave Xylophone and with bars two or two and a quarter inches wide may be found desirable for stage purposes or for extra heavy solo work.

MARIMBAS

After canvassing the situation thoroughly, we can unhesitatingly assert that a good three octave Marimba running from F to F, and with bars one and five-eighths inch wide is an ideal size for drummers' use. A Marimba of this calibre will be found well suited for playing from Cello, or 2nd Violin parts, as explained in Lesson 12. For those desiring additional register, a three and a half octave instrument extending on up to C is very satisfactory.

FOR MARIMBA BANDS, ETC.

For stage use or for two or more players, a Marimba-Xylophone with bars two inches wide (larger in extreme low notes) and of a four or even five octave range, is perfectly feasible, the former running from C to C and the five octave size extending from F to F. These large instruments are the ones used by the Marimba Bands which are creating such a sensation throughout the country.

Either in Marimbas or Marimba-Xylophones, it is well to see that the instrument you select is equipped with tuneable resonators which can be adjusted to overcome the effects of changing weather conditions.

TUBAPHONES AND METAL BAMBOOS

For general use where instruments of this type are wanted two and one-half octaves is usually found to be of sufficient register. The tone of the Metal Bamboos is one full octave lower in register than the Tubaphone.

CATHEDRAL CHIMES

For the trap-drummer, Cathedral Chimes one inch in diameter are the most practical size. In an octave and a half set the tubes vary from two and one-half feet to about five feet in length. This size permits of their being played from a sitting position.

FOR BANDS AND LARGE ORCHESTRAS

Chimes one and one-quarter or one and one-half inch in diameter and proportionately longer, naturally possess more volume than the one inch size. This makes them more suitable for use with larger musical organizations. When using larger sizes it is necessary for the operator to stand while playing them.

NUMBER OF CHIMES TO A SET

In all sizes one and one-half octaves, consisting of eighteen chromatic tones, is the correct number of Chimes for a complete set suitable for playing the entire chime part in any composition written. For casual chime effects, however, from one to four tones mounted on a bracket will be found very effective, although, of course, not permitting the playing of regular chime solos which are restricted to the complete chromatic sets.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If there is any further information desired regarding instruments, equipment, etc., a letter addressed to the National School of Vibracussion, Ravenswood and Berteau Aves., Chicago, explaining your case fully, will receive an immediate reply, providing stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

HOME STUDY COURSE

— IN —

VIBRACUSSION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION
FUNDAMENTALS IN MUSIC

AND

LESSON No. 1

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CHICAGO

Lesson No. 1

One of the fundamental aims of this course of instruction is to correct, if possible, the altogether erroneous impression existing in many quarters that the Xylophone, Orchestra Bells and other similar instruments are more or less shrouded in a haze of mystery and are very difficult to learn to play. As a matter of fact, they are very simple to understand and can be learned in a great deal less time than any other kind of accredited musical instrument.

COMPARISON OF XYLOPHONE WITH PIANO KEYBOARD

To bear out this statement, let us first compare a Xylophone or set of Bells with the keyboard of a piano. Although the bars of a Xylophone are *wider* than the piano keys, with the result that the octaves are *longer*, the *relative positions* of the bars and keys are *exactly* the same. Starting at any "C" on the piano and ascending, we find that we have two black keys between the first three white ones, then a space (in the black row) and then three more black keys between their respective white ones.

And so on it goes, all the way up the keyboard, the same repetition of the same relative positions of the white and the black keys, for each succeeding octave.

Look at your bells or your Xylophone. See that unbroken row of bars? Same order exactly as the unbroken row of white keys on the piano. And then the other row of bars; the uninitiated might say, "Why, they have left out a bar every little ways." Of course, but the piano builder did the same thing with the row of black keys on the piano. So if you will just look upon the unbroken row of Xylophone or Bell bars as the white keys and the other row as the black keys of the instrument anyone who has any knowledge of the piano at all will be able to help you out on any point you cannot understand.

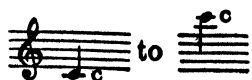
In a later lesson we will explain the reason for "leaving out" those bars in the further row.

Of course with the piano the key is struck or pressed with the finger whereas the bell or xylophone bar must be struck with a mallet. Otherwise the principle is identical.

You have, however, more liberty or leeway with a xylophone than with a piano as in playing a certain written note on the latter it is supposed to be played in one particular place only, and no other, but with the xylophone it may be played an octave higher or an octave lower at the discretion of the performer. For instance, a strain can be played through as written and then an octave higher or lower on the repeat, if the instrument has sufficient compass or register (number of bars each way).

REGISTER OF INSTRUMENTS

Should you possess only a two octave set of bells whose register extends from



it will be necessary for you to play up an octave any passage

running below



For example: Written



etc. would be

played (with a two octave set)



But with the average $2\frac{1}{2}$ octave set of bells (30 bars) we have a playing register as follows:



while with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ octave (F to C) xylophone of 44 bars we have, so far as reading is concerned, a register which covers from one note below the low G shown above, to a full octave above the top C, as follows:



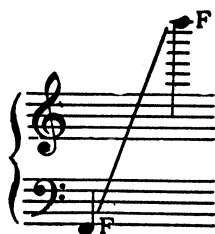
The ACTUAL register of a three and one-half octave F to C Xylophone, however, is the same as a two and a half octave G to C set of Orchestra Bells with an added octave and an eighth below.

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As stated before, the performer on the Bells or Xylophone (or similar instruments) can read his parts and play them in the particular octave or register that he desires or which produces the best effect, as each octave looks the same except in the length of the bars.

The register of a two and a half octave set of Song Bells, Metal Bamboos or Tubaphone can be considered as having the same register as the regular Orchestra Bells so far as reading bell parts for them is concerned, but the first two are in reality one octave lower in tone, the Bamboos also running two additional half tones lower, or in other words down to F.

The register of a five octave Marimba-Xylophone (F to F) is as follows:



The register or compass of a three octave F to F Steel or Nagaed Marimbaphone or a Marimba of the same size may be considered, so far as reading is concerned, to be as follows:



MALLETS

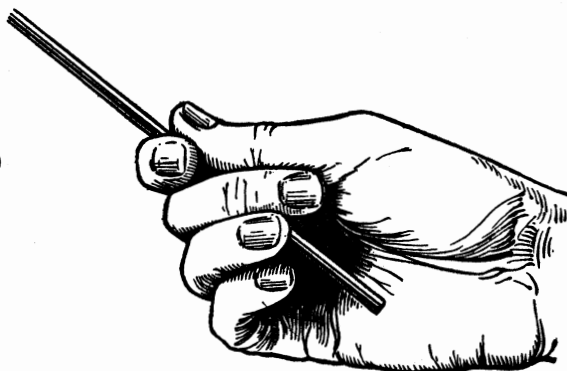
Now that we have cleared up the matter of the register of the instruments, let us next consider the subject of mallets.

For practice purposes a soft rubber mallet is best, while for actual playing on any of the different instruments there is usually a large assortment from which to select. Whether a brass or hard rubber mallet is to be used for playing bells is a matter of personal taste, as is also the length of handle. We consider ten inches to be the correct length for all but four hammer work. For the latter purpose 12 inch handles work very nicely.

MALLETS—HOW TO HOLD

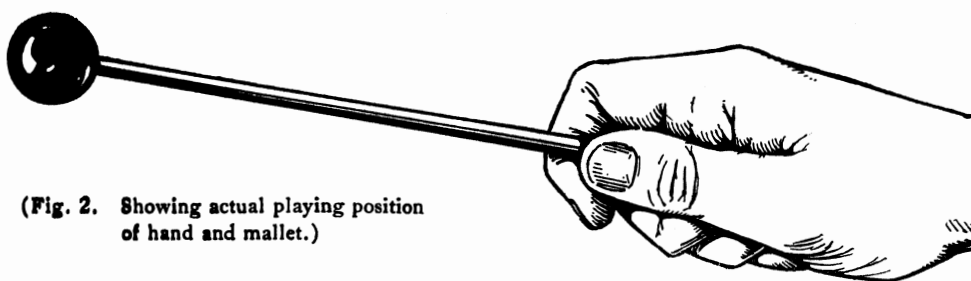
The proper way to hold a mallet is to rest it in the crook of the first joint of the first finger and second joint of the second finger and then hold it there with the thumb. It should not be gripped too tight nor held too rigidly. The end of the handle should not extend much past the center of the palm. (See Figure 1.)

(Fig. 1)



The third and little fingers do not grip the stick, although there is a tendency for some players to do this where an extremely long handled mallet is used. As a matter of fact, the second finger even does not grip the handle to any great extent, it being used more as a sort of a guard to help control the end of the stick which vibrates between it and the palm of the hand with more or less freedom.

The actual grip is centered almost entirely in the first finger and thumb, and the mallet is held the same way in each hand.



(Fig. 2. Showing actual playing position of hand and mallet.)

To put it another way, Xylophone or Bell mallets (not exceeding ten inches in length), are held in each hand practically the same way that the snare drum stick is held in the RIGHT hand except that the handle of the mallet, not being as long as the drum stick, does not extend much past the center of the palm.

COVERING UP THE LETTERS

After learning the letters of the different notes in this way COVER up the letters on the bars by laying a strip of paper or cloth over them. Then let some one hold the chart or diagram and call out at random the different notes of the chromatic scale in irregular order, something like this: "A sharp,"—"G,"—"D sharp," "A flat," etc., having them call the F sharp bar one time as F sharp and again as G flat, etc., and see if you are able to strike the note called in each instance. Strike each note called in every octave, not simply in the one place. For instance, there are four C's on the $3\frac{1}{2}$ octave Xylophone as shown in the Chart on page 3 in Lesson II. When C is called, strike the lowest one, then the one an octave higher, then the next and the next, etc. The student will thus become acquainted with all parts of the instrument. This is great practice, and if followed diligently will bring you to the point, in a very short time, where you will forget that there are any letters stamped on the bars, and the quicker you DO forget that they are there just that much sooner will you be able to devote your entire attention to reading the printed notes in the various exercises in these lessons.

THE SCALE

It might be well to again mention at this time that the scale is made up of seven natural notes and five half-tones or series of sharps and flats.

Starting at C and going up we have C, D, E, F, G, A and B, the next note C as well as the following notes simply being repetitions an octave (eight notes) higher. It is on account of this fact that while we have only eight natural notes and five accidentals in one chromatic octave (the top note being a repetition of the bottom note an octave higher) we are able to secure instruments of many times this number of tones by simply adding on additional octaves of higher or lower register.

THE SCALES—HOW TO PLAY

With these fundamentals learned we will next devote our attention to the proper way to play scales, exercises, etc., which ultimately lead up to actual playing of regular music.

To begin with, having only two mallets, in comparison with the pianist who uses ten playing mediums (eight fingers and two thumbs), we must use them in the most advantageous way. As the *first* note in each bar of music is *accented* and as most people are *right handed*, it naturally follows that the *right hand* is more suited for playing an *accented* note, and we are therefore going to use the *right mallet*, as far as possible, as the one to strike the *first* note in each measure.

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Example: A straight diatonic scale of one octave starting on the beat should be commenced with the Right stick, thus:



Whereas the same notes written this way:



would be started with the Left stick so as to bring the *Right mallet* on to the *first note* in the measure, as shown.

Of course there are many times when the rule of having the Right stick strike ON THE BEAT is not practicable on account of the "lay" of the notes, for example:



Were you to attempt to play this exercise with the opposite "fingering" or order of "sticking" (i. e., starting with the Right instead of the Left) you would have a bad case of "cross-hammering."

DEVELOPING THE LEFT HAND

For this reason it is very necessary that the left hand be developed so that it is as efficient as the right. This may take some time as there will be a tendency from the start to let the right do most of the work. You must AVOID this inclination, however, as you cannot possibly hope to become proficient unless you educate both hands to work with equal agility. If you find that the left hand is a great deal less efficient than the right you can develop and strengthen it a great deal by playing any of the exercises contained in these lessons, or any other practice studies, with the LEFT HAND ALONE, disregarding the hammering as marked. Of course you will have to play some of them more slowly than they are intended but the idea in letting the left hand work alone is to eliminate the natural weakness of this member and bring it up to the degree of efficiency attained by the right hand.

INTERVALS IN THE SCALE

As mentioned in the "Fundamentals of Music" included with Lesson 1, in the natural scale of C we have a half step interval between the third and fourth notes and between the seventh and eighth, all other intervals being whole steps, thus:



This is the explanation of the reason for the bars apparently "left out" in the further row on the xylophone as mentioned in Lesson 1. The bars that ARE in the "sharp flat" row act as half step intervals between the bars of the first row. For instance, from C to D is a whole step but C# divides this whole step into two half-steps, thus: C to C# is a half step and C# to D is a half step which added together make the whole step between C and D. And so on up the scale. But when we come to E and F there is only a half step between them and also between B and C so naturally there is no need for "sharp-flat" bars at those points.

SCALES IN OTHER KEYS

In order to preserve the necessary half steps between notes numbers 3 and 4 and between numbers 7 and 8 when building the scale on any other note than C it is necessary to bring our half tones or further row of bars into play.

For instance, starting on G we find that our intervals in going up the scale are correct until we get up to numbers 6 and 7 between which there ought to be a full step. As a matter of fact there is only a half step, so we correct this by playing F sharp instead of F natural. This is the entire principle involved in all of the scales of the different keys, that is, to play the necessary sharps or flats to keep half-step intervals between 3 and 4 and between 7 and 8, all other intervals being whole steps.

PLAYING IN DIFFERENT KEYS

In the next lesson we will take up exercises in the twelve Major Scales. Before proceeding with these exercises, however, we want the student to learn exactly what is meant by "signature" and what its effect is. The signature (sharp or flat or group of them) placed at the beginning of each exercise must be **MOST CAREFULLY OBSERVED**. Otherwise you lose absolutely the value of the exercises and they will do you more harm than good.

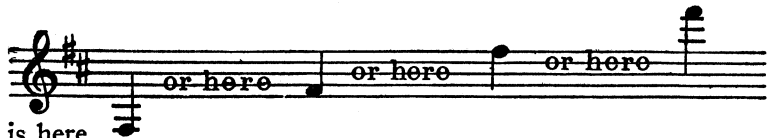
By saying you must observe the signature we mean that you must sharp or flat each note in the scale that the signature directs you to. For instance, in the Scale in the Key of E flat, you will notice the signature is three flats, one flat being placed on the B line, one on the E space and one on the A space. This means that **WHEREVER** you find these three notes in a selection written in this key, **YOU MUST PLAY THEM FLAT**, that is B flat, E flat and A flat.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND IN PLAYING IN DIFFERENT KEYS


All that there is to playing in the various keys is to keep in mind the notes that are to be played flat or sharp, as indicated by the signature, and we *emphasize again* that when playing in *any key* you must *flat* or *sharp* the notes that the signature tells you to WHEREVER you find them whether they are in the staff or above it or below it. For instance, take the key of D (two sharps) thus:



One sharp is placed on the F line and one on the C space.



This means that whether the F is here

it is sharped in each instance and not merely in the one place  because the

sharp in the signature happens to be in that particular position on the staff. Similarly, of course, the other sharp (on the C space) means that C is sharped wherever you find it in the piece, UNTIL THE SIGNATURE IS CHANGED.

THE ACCIDENTAL

An accidental (sharp #, flat b or natural ♮), placed before a note only holds good for that one measure, unless the note affected by the accidental is tied over to the same tone in the next measure thus:



In Lesson 4 we will take up the twelve Major Scales.

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DOUBLE NOTES WITH EACH HAMMER

There are times when it is advisable to play two strokes on one note with one hammer, for instance:



If you will play these two Examples through first with the hammering as marked and then use alternate Right and Left strokes you will discover that the former will be much easier.

In order to perfect himself in this style of hammering (which is somewhat similar to the "daddy"—"mammy" stroke used in practicing the drum roll) we would suggest that the student practice it a great deal something on this order: Where an exercise or a passage is written in eighth notes, thus:



Play it through as written and then divide each eighth note into two sixteenths, as follows:



Or in the case of Waltz time if you find a passage something like this:



Play it first as written and then as follows:



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The student will find this very difficult at first as the Xylophone bar will not cause the hammer to rebound like a drum head will a snare drum-stick. It will be discovered that the strokes will have to be primary and secondary blows, the wrist acting like a stiff spring between strokes.

PRACTICE PIECE

Dixie

The musical score for "Dixie" is written on four staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The notes are represented by letters (C, D, E, F, G, A, Bb) placed below the staff lines. Above the notes, rhythmic notation is provided, including numbers (1, 2), dots (.), and ampersands (&). The first staff contains the following notes: C, A, F, F, F, G, A, Bb, C, C, C, A, D, D, D, C, D, C, D, E, F, G, A, F, C. The second staff contains: F, C, A, C, C, Bb, G, A, F, C, A, F, C, F, A, G, F, D, F, D, G, D. The third staff contains: G, C, F, A, G, F, D, E, F, D, C, A, F, A, A, G, A, F, A, G, Bb. The fourth staff contains: A, C, A, F, G, F, A, F, A, G, Bb, A, C, A, F, G, F. The score includes repeat marks and first/second endings.

Observe the repeat marks carefully, playing the first ending the first time and then skipping it and playing the second ending the second time.

Follow a straight alternation of Rights and Lefts in playing "Dixie" except on the quarter and dotted quarter notes, which should be played with the roll.

While the letters of the notes are written in underneath, it is now time that the student be able to read without their aid.

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REVIEW OF LESSON NO. 9

Questions which the student should be able to answer and, at the same time, thoroughly understand the points contained therein.

1. *Do you understand the general order of hammering of 6/8 time? Do you see just why there are so many variations? (The 1st Violin parts of Marches in 6/8 time will prove to be excellent to work on in developing technic in this style of rhythm).*
2. *Do you know why one measure of waltz (3/4) time (containing quarter notes only) is commenced with one mallet and the next measure with the opposite?*
3. *Can you play correctly the various combinations of quarter and eighth notes appearing on page 2 of this lesson? (The top line of notes, in each instance, is the formula, the lower line being the exercise to be played).*
4. *Have you carefully studied the examples of varied hammering as given on page 3?*
5. *Can you play the practical exercise in waltz time as given on page 3? Have you memorized it? Can you play it in other keys?*
6. *Have you access to orchestra music so that you can use the 1st Violin parts of waltzes for practice purposes? (If not, purchase a few waltz orchestrations for this purpose).*
7. *Have you given a large amount of practice to the "double stroke" style of hammering as given on page 4?*
8. *Do you understand its application to numbers in 2/4 time containing one or more measures of eighth notes, or to measures of waltz time containing only quarter notes?*
9. *Have you given careful attention to the instructions as to just how to execute this double stroke?*

Be Fair with Yourself—Are you sure that you have thoroughly learned all the preceding lessons? If not, go back over them again.

Lesson No. 10

SOLO IN DUET FORM

Occasionally the player will find parts written in duet form, something like the following two measures from a number in "Woodland":



Parts like these will be difficult to read at sight and the best way is to memorize them. Until that is done, however, simply play the top line of notes, when playing at sight.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that in playing both lines the Right mallet takes the upper and the Left the lower.

MELODY AND HARMONY PLAYING

Solos in two part form similar to the above two measures can be readily adapted from the treble clef staff (right hand part) of popular piano music. By carefully observing the written notes the correct harmony will be maintained and the result will be especially pleasing.

THE GLISSANDO

At this time it would be well to instruct the pupil regarding the use of the "Glissando." This is comparatively easy and yet is an embellishment to the ordinary form of playing that adds greatly to the attractiveness of the rendition of a number.

The Glissando is playable either up or down, but is usually the former. When playing up the Left hammer is drawn rapidly over the bars towards the Right, and when it reaches it the Right strikes the note to which the Glissando is an embellishment. For example:



Here we have an illustration in which the Left hammer is drawn from C below the staff up an octave and a half to F. This must be done very rapidly with the Left stick and the Right must be ready to deliver the blow on F (the top note) the instant the Left reaches it. If there is a wait of even the smallest fraction of a second between the Glissando proper (with the Left) and the stroke at the end of it with the Right stick the effect is entirely lost.

PRACTICAL USE OF THE GLISSANDO

Very often you can introduce a Glissando with excellent effect even where it isn't written, in order to emphasize some particular note. For instance, at the end of a 2/4 number written something like this:



You could play it like this with very good results:



LENGTH OF GLISSANDO

The Glissando is of no specified length. It depends to some extent upon the length of time you have in which to play it. For instance, in the Example given above there would be sufficient time in which to sweep almost the entire length of the instrument instead of only the octave and a half as suggested, but in the following illustration the player would not have any more time than just enough to play the Glissando as written.



PRACTICING THE GLISSANDO

While the Glissando is easy of execution it must not be inferred that it does not need to be practiced. You cannot hope to make it sound well unless you give it a large amount of practice.

THE DOWN STROKE GLISSANDO

The down stroke Glissando is the opposite of the upstroke, the Glissando proper or sweep stroke being made with the Right mallet and the finishing single note stroke with the Left, thus:



ARPEGGIOS

The following hammer exercises, known as Arpeggios, are for the purpose of developing technic and ability to strike the exact notes you reach for when playing more or less rapidly. Practice slowly at first, gradually working up speed. *Memorize each one*, making sure the effect of the signature is carefully observed.

No 1.
Key of C

No. 2.
Key of G

No. 3.
Key of D

No. 4.
Key of A

No. 5.
Key of E

No. 6.
Key of B

No. 7.
Key of F#

No. 8.
Key of F(4)

NOTE: Don't confuse Numbers 2 and 13, 3 and 12, 4 and 11, 5 and 10, 6 and 9, and 7 and 8. While the notes on the staff look the same, the signatures make a difference of one-half step between each pair.

No. 9.
Key of B \flat

No. 10.
Key of E \flat

No. 11.
Key of A \flat

No. 12.
Key of D \flat

No. 13.
Key of G \flat

The foregoing thirteen Hammer Exercises are arpeggios as you will observe, made up of the Tonic Chords in the thirteen keys. By the Tonic Chord we mean Numbers 1 (key-note), 3, 5 and 8 of any scale.

If the instrument which the student is using is of small register, like, for instance, a two octave set of bells, it will be necessary to play an octave higher or an octave lower some of the extreme low or high notes in the above arpeggios.

OVERLAPPING ARPEGGIOS

We will next show the student a varied form of the above Arpeggio Exercises which we will call "Overlapping Arpeggios." Don't proceed with them, however, until you are able to play perfectly the plain Arpeggios as given above.

The following Overlapping Arpeggio Exercise is written in C, but it should be memorized and played in all keys, using as guides the preceding Arpeggio Exercises.

Exercise A.

You will notice that the last four sixteenth notes of the second measure are but a repetition of the first four notes of the first measure, ONLY AN OCTAVE HIGHER. In playing this exercise do not stop when you have played the two measures as written but go on in the same way to the top of the instrument, that is, to the highest C, E or G, as these are the three notes which are used throughout this particular Exercise. If the top bar of your Xylophone is C, then that would be the last note you would play in this particular Exercise. If the top bar is F, then E would be the last note, etc.

Exercise B:



After learning both Exercises in this key, practice them in each of the other twelve keys as mentioned before. This is most valuable practice and should not be slighted.

Turkey in the Straw

Turkey in the Straw

R L R RLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRL
a a 1 a a 2 a a 1 a a 2 & a t & 2 a & a 1 & 2 a a 1 & a 2 a a

D C B \flat B \flat C B \flat F D E \flat F G F D F B \flat C D D D C B \flat C D C C D C B \flat B \flat C B \flat D E \flat

R L R L R RL R L R L R L R L R L R L R L roll
1 a & a 2 & a 1 & 2 a & a 1 & 2 1 a & a 2 & 1 a & a 2

F G F D F B \flat C D F F D B \flat C D B \flat B \flat D F D F F D F D F

L R L R R L R L R RL L R L R L R L R L R L R
1 a & a 2 & 1 a & a 2 & a 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & a 1 & 2 a & a 1 & 2

E \flat G E \flat G G E \flat G E \flat G G A B \flat B \flat F F D D C B \flat C D F F D B \flat C D B \flat B \flat

Lesson Ten--Page Five

REVIEW OF LESSON NO. 10

Questions which the student should be able to answer and, at the same time, thoroughly understand the points contained therein.

1. *Have you given careful attention to the manner of playing two part form music? Have you adopted the suggestion of playing from the right hand part of piano numbers? (Not all piano music can be used this way, of course, but a rapid inspection will readily show whether or not a number is suited for this purpose.)*

2. *Have you practiced the Glissando sufficiently so that you are able to execute it to a nicety?*

3. *Do you know what determines the length of the Glissando?*

4. *Are you able to play the down stroke Glissando with precision?*

5. *Have you memorized the Arpeggios appearing in this lesson? (It is very, very necessary that you do.)*

6. *After practicing the Arpeggios in the order given can you play them in the following order? Nos. 1, 12, 3, 10, 5, 8, 7, 13, 2, 11, 4, 9, 6, 1. (No. 13 is played the same as No. 7, but an octave lower). If the instrument you have is of sufficient register play numbers 13, 2, 11, 4, 9, 6, also No. 1 (second time) an octave higher than written. You will find that each successive arpeggio is a half-step higher than the preceding one, except, of course, numbers 7 and 13, which will be identical.*

7. *Having learned the Arpeggios so you can play them readily from memory and using them as a basis can you play the "Overlapping Arpeggio" Exercise in all keys? (This is most valuable practice for developing technic.)*

8. *Do you understand that in playing the "Overlapping Arpeggio" (Exercise A) the idea is to continue ascending as far as the register of the instrument permits? Can you do this WITHOUT HESITATION?*

9. *Are you able to play Exercise B readily? (This is the descending form of the "Overlapping Arpeggio"). Can you play it in all keys?*

Be Fair with yourself—Be thorough as you proceed.

HOME STUDY COURSE

—IN—

VIBRACUSSION

LESSON No. 11

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CHICAGO

Lesson No. 11

EXERCISES IN MINOR THIRDS

The following Exercise is very similar in a way to Exercise A in Lesson 10, but is really only playable in three keys as we will show. It is made up of a series of Minor Thirds (notes a step and a half apart). Starting on C, we have:

Exercise No. 1.



Starting on Db, one-half step higher, and keeping our intervals the same (Minor Thirds) we have:

Exercise No. 2.



Again starting one-half step higher (on D), using the same intervals, we have:

Exercise No. 3.



Now if we begin another similar exercise a half step still higher (Eb) the result is exactly the same as though we started the first exercise (in this lesson) on the last half of the first measure, or, in other words, on the fifth sixteenth note:



Hence we have this Exercise in only three keys, C, Db and D, as starting on any other note we simply find ourselves right back in one of the three illustrated Exercises.

HOME STUDY COURSE

—IN—

VIBRACUSSION

SPECIAL LESSON

—ON—

FOUR Mallet PLAYING

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CHICAGO

SPECIAL LESSON ON FOUR MALLET PLAYING

HOW TO HOLD THE MALLET

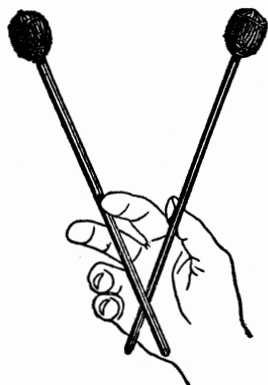


Fig. 1
(the right way)

In four-mallet playing the first thing to learn, naturally, is the correct way to hold the mallets. While there are a number of different ways used the following is generally considered as being the best method in that through its use it is possible to spread the mallets and also bring them close together (after a little practice) with very little effort.

Figure 1 shows the correct way of placing the two mallets across the Right hand before the hand is closed over them. **The mallet handle which crosses over the thumb should be next to the palm of the hand, the other handle crossing it**

as shown. Figure 1-A shows the **WRONG** way of crossing the mallet handles in the hand. (The wrong mallet is on top.)

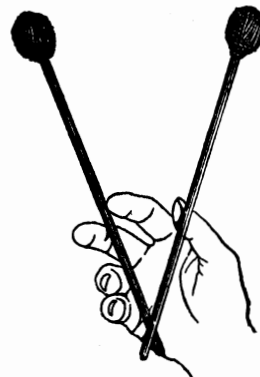


Fig. 1-A
(the wrong way)

Figure 2 shows the fingers and thumb in correct position to hold the mallets properly. The third and fourth fingers are closed over the mallet handles right where they cross. The second finger helps to control one of the mallets while the first or index finger and the thumb are used to spread the mallets as shown in Figure 3. Figure 4 shows the mallets brought close together.

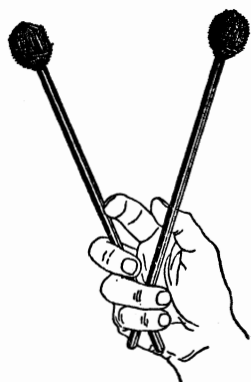


Fig. 2

HELD SAME IN EACH HAND

The mallets are held (relatively) the same way in each hand but just for the moment we will give our entire attention to the Right hand.

Practice placing the two mallets in the Right hand in their proper positions, closing the fingers over them as shown in Figure 2. Repeat this several times until you can get it right each time without referring to the instructions. Then slowly spread the mallets as in Fig. 3, after which bring them together as in Fig. 4.



Fig. 3

At first holding two mallets in each hand will seem very awkward but you will be surprised to find how quickly the hand will accustom itself to holding and manipulating them.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Now turn the hand over and strike low E and G on the Marimba or Xylophone as shown in Figure 5. Next separate the mallets and strike D and A# (Bb) as shown in Figure 6.

While it is a fact that the best tone is secured by striking the bars squarely in the center, it is, nevertheless, true that a good tone can also be secured by striking them on the extreme ends and this latter is very necessary in four mallet playing in order to simplify the work.

Again strike D and A# (Bb) and then in quick succession strike D and A, D and G, D and F, D and G, D and A, and back to D and A# again. Repeat this many times until you have become accustomed to bringing the mallets together and spreading them again.

You will note that throughout this exercise the left hand mallet (of the two in the Right hand) strikes D each time.

Now refer to Figure 7. Strike D# (Eb) and A, then strike F and A, then back to Eb and A, keeping the left hand mallet (of the two) alternately striking Eb and F but the right hand one playing A each time.

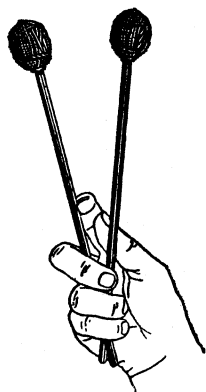


Fig. 4

These two exercises, in connection with Figure 6 and Figure 7, will teach the pupil control over the mallets in separating them and bringing them together.

THE LEFT HAND

We will now start work with the Left hand. Hold Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4 before a mirror (which reverses the illustrations) and then proceed with the Left hand just as you did with the Right.

Now try several exercises with the Left hand similar to those illustrated in Figures 5, 6 and 7 for the Right hand. Many other similar exercises will suggest themselves and the pupil should continue with each hand until his control over the mallets is complete.

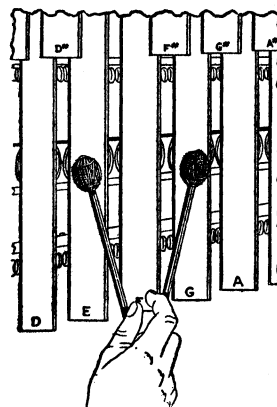


Fig. 5

BOTH HANDS

Next try playing four notes at one time, for example C, E, G and C—F, A, C and F and G, B, D and G. In playing these chords in which no accidentals occur both hands assume about the same position as shown in Figure 5.

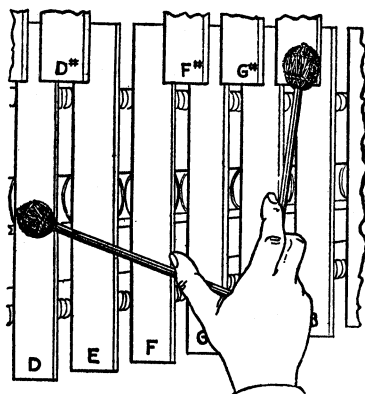


Fig. 6

When accidentals are encountered in the various chords played with four mallets it will frequently be found necessary to turn the body (usually to the left) so as to change the positions of the mallets **on account of the fact that the bars to be struck are not all in one row.** Figure 8 illustrates the proper positions of the mallets when playing C, D# (Eb), G# (Ab) and C.

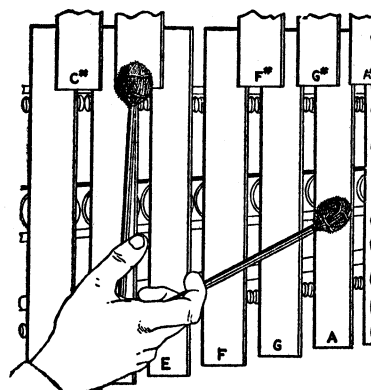


Fig. 7

Along this same line let us take a Dominant Seventh chord and study a few of its inversions and variations.



Figure 14

Regardless of the different forms they take the various chords indicated in Figure 14 are primarily Dominant Sevenths. We say "primarily" because of the fact that another note (not included in the Seventh chord) can be added to any one of the above groups and change it so that it is *not* a Dominant Seventh chord or, to be exact, is more than a Seventh.

THE DOMINANT NINTH

For example, let us take the Dominant Seventh chord G, B, D, F and add "A"—thus:



Figure 15

This is called a Dominant (Major) Ninth. The student may wonder why this was not included as a sixth member of the chord family mentioned in the first paragraph under the heading "Chords Used in Modern Dance Music." For this reason: When the orchestra plays a Dominant Ninth chord the relative Dominant Seventh played at the same time on any instrument (or group of instruments) harmonizes perfectly. In other words, the complete Dominant Seventh Chord is the basis of the Dominant Ninth. *The addition of the one note to make the Ninth does not alter any of the notes comprising the Seventh.*

So in order to simplify matters and keep our family of fundamental chords as small as possible we will simply consider the Ninth as an offshoot or modification of the Seventh.

While there are twelve different Dominant (Major) Ninth chords (the same as with the Dominant Seventh) only three, as a rule, are used in any one key. For example, in the key of "C" we frequently find the following three used:



Figure 16

PASSING NOTES

Occasionally certain notes will be found in the melody that are foreign to the accompanying chord. These are simply "passing notes" and should not be allowed to confuse the player as to the correct harmony.

OTHER CHORDS

Below we show a few other chords that are occasionally found in popular music. While some of these chords are only rarely used in popular music and the rest only occasionally it is well to know them. It is a good plan to extend the register of each in arpeggio form as mentioned on page 10 (except the two Ninths—the Minor mentioned here and the Major, page 11) and practice them in this way. Also rewrite each one in each of the twelve keys (this is easily done by simply writing the notes of each succeeding chord one-half tone higher) and practice in arpeggio form as before. Then play all over again, this time in “double stops” on exactly the same order as is shown in connection with the “C” Major chord (Figure 12).

Dominant 7th with Augmented 5th Usual Inversion

Dominant 7th with 6th substituted for 5th Usual Inversion

Dominant 7th with Diminished 5th Usual Inversion

Minor 7th

Leading Tone 7th
Same intervals as four upper notes of Dominant 9th

Major 7th
Don't confuse this chord with the Dominant 7th which is the basis of the Dominant (Major) Ninth

Augmented Triad with Major 7th Minor Triad with Major 7th Diminished Triad with Major 7th Minor 9th

Figure 17

Note: To prevent the possibility of confusion let us mention the fact that the expressions “with Augmented 5th,” “with 6th substituted for 5th,” “with Diminished 5th” and “with Major 7th” as used above refer to musical intervals only. For example, the term “with Augmented 5th” as used underneath the first chord shown above simply means that D#, which forms, with the G below it, an *interval* of an Augmented 5th, is used in place of D, the note *regularly* used in the G-7th chord (and which, with the G below it—the root of the chord—forms a *perfect* 5th.) While most fundamental chords are identified by definite names, such as Major, Minor, Dominant 7th, etc., others which are but modifications of these fundamental chords can only be described by expressions as used above.

RAG BEATS

With the foregoing as a basis on which to proceed we will now take up the actual "beats" which are used in connection with the various chords as outlined. We will illustrate the two most important ones first.

For the purpose of easy reference we will designate them by number.



Figure 18

The student will be surprised, no doubt, to note how extremely simple these beats are, also the similarity of the two. As a matter of fact the only difference between them is the order of "hammering," "Both, Right, Left" being the sequence in the No. 1 beat and "Both, Left, Right" in the No. 2.

Let us try the No. 1 beat and keep it up for a full minute, starting *very slowly*.

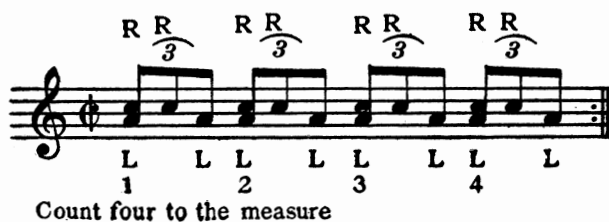


Figure 19

Increase speed gradually. When you make a mistake stop and start all over again.

You will note that the beat is here used in connection with triplets. The reason for this is plain. As the beat consists of three strokes it is but natural that it first be applied to notes which are grouped in series of threes.

This beat is frequently used in Fox Trot time as a *triplet*.

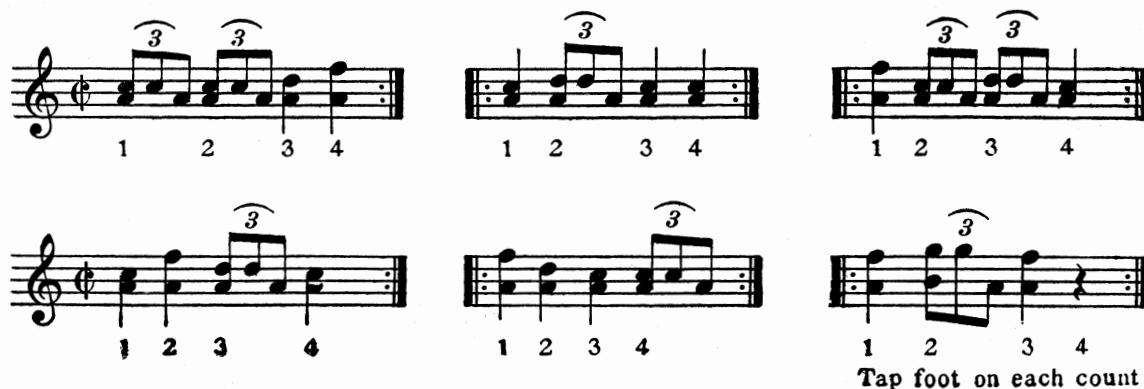


Figure 20

WHEN NO XYLOPHONE PART

Where there is no Xylophone part available use the Piano, 2nd Violin, C Melody Saxophone Duet or 1st Violin part. When using a 1st Violin part that hasn't the harmony written in underneath the melody (in duet form) it is a good idea to write in the harmony notes. Many players have a natural "ear" for harmony and after hearing a piece played through once or twice are able to play the correct harmony even though it is not indicated, but a printed part (or one with the harmony written in) is much safer to use until the number has been at least partially learned.

The Flute part sometimes contains a variation on the melody that gives a very good effect when played on the Xylophone but a great many Flute parts leave much to be desired in this respect, however. The Oboe part (if there is one included in the orchestration) can also be used although it is well to write in harmony notes to make sure of good results when using it.

PIANO PART HAS FULLEST HARMONY

The Piano part, of course, contains the fullest harmony but the objection to its use by many is that it is too hard to read unless one is a pianist or is accustomed to Piano music. It goes without saying that there are a great many more notes in the Piano score than can be played by one person on the Xylophone and it is the presence of these extra notes that makes the part a little hard to read to the person who is not used to it. A little study of any Piano part, however, will disclose the harmony although some of the notes that determine the chord will be found in the left hand part which is in the bass clef. Until you are accustomed to playing from Piano parts it is a good plan to write these bass clef notes an octave higher and put them in the upper staff (in the treble clef, of course).

USING 2nd VIOLIN PART

If the player has thoroughly familiarized himself with all of the various chords he will find it a comparatively easy matter to use 2nd Violin parts* for playing harmony accompaniment as while seldom more than two notes of the chord are indicated it is a simple matter to recognize the complete chord from them. Here, again, the natural "ear" for harmony is a great help; in fact, at times, is almost necessary on account of the fact that 2nd Violin parts are usually written in "after beat" form and it sometimes happens that the harmony is different on the counts (or beats) of the measure (where rests are written) from that occurring on the "after beats." A little practice will enable the player to recognize these changes. If necessary write in the harmony where the rests occur.

C MELODY SAXOPHONE PART

C Melody Saxophone or 1st Violin parts in duet form indicate the harmony and the complete chords can usually be recognized without much difficulty.

BANJO PART

With a little practice the Banjo part can be used for accompaniment purposes although it will be found a little difficult to read at first on account of the way the chords are "spread out."

*Some of the 2nd Violin parts now being supplied with dance orchestrations have the measures completely filled in instead of being written in after beat style. For this reason and also because of the fact that it is the easiest part to read we recommend the use of the 2nd Violin part over any other for playing accompaniment, when there is no Xylophone part.

Figure 43

(I)

RR RR L (3) (3) etc.

L LL LL

(II)

RR RR R RR RR R RR RR R RR RR R

L LL LL L LL L L LL L LL L LL L

Figure 44

SIMPLE MELODIES EASY TO "RAG"

Page Twenty-nine—

MANY OTHER STYLES OF RAGTIME PLAYING

Many players use other styles of rag beats which are not included in this lesson and the fact that they are not here included is no indication that they are not practical but the ones which are illustrated herein are what we consider to be the most practical for all around use because they are rhythmical and are comparatively easy to learn. They can be elaborated upon at the discretion of the player, of course.

FOUR Mallet ACCOMPANIMENT

Chords played with four mallets (see National School of Vibracussion Special Lesson on four mallet playing) using simply four notes to the measure (Banjo style), or in combination with Rag beats Nos. 1 and 3, produce a very good effect on certain numbers where the harmony changes are not too frequent or rapid.

Awkward positions of the mallets can easily be avoided by simply inverting the chords where necessary.

ONE STEPS

The same general style can be used in playing One Steps, except, of course, on account of the faster tempo fewer rag-beats (generally speaking) should be introduced, at least until such time as the player has advanced considerably in "rag" technic.

WALTZES

Obviously, rag beats can seldom be used in Waltz time. The same general rule, however, should be followed so far as the harmony is concerned and whether the player fills up succeeding measures (when playing a purely accompaniment part) with a roll on the harmony notes, or plays quarter or eighth notes or applies a combination of all three is for him to decide.

CONCLUSION

We have endeavored to show how the new style of Xylophone playing in dance orchestra is accomplished but please bear in mind that nothing will take the place of practice AND LOTS OF IT. The more thoroughly you have developed your *legitimate* technic through the practice of various exercises consisting of scales, arpeggios, "double stops," etc., just that much better foundation will you have on which to build your "*rag*" or "*jazz*" technic.