



How to Study Kreutzer: A Handbook for the Daily Use of Violin Teachers and Violin Students

Benjamin Cutter

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This is a handbook for the daily use of violin teachers and violin students; and it contains explanations of the left hand difficulties and of their solution, and directions as to the systematic acquirement of the various bowings, both firm and bounding.

That Kreutzer still holds first place in the violin students' library we must all admit, and with all of the Kreutzer literature it is much to be wondered at that we have had to wait so long for a book like Mr. Cutter's. The young student of Kreutzer reads this book through and exclaims upon the clearness with which difficulties that he has never been able to satisfactorily surmount are explained. The teacher of Kreutzer finds here presented in a masterly manner, though briefly, the philosophy of Kreutzer and probably a clearer insight than he has ever had before of its pedagogic value.

Mr. Cutter's book is not a compilation, but on the contrary the reader feels that the author is writing out of his own thoughtful experience, and yet it is very evident that an unusual breadth of musical scholarship that has taken account of the best that has been said on the subject underlies the whole present treatment of the subject. Mr. Cutter takes up the studies one by one and in his comments on the methods to be employed in properly working out the exercises gives just the right suggestive word in the right place; and he even describes the very feelings of the student who performs or attempts to perform the exercise. In fact the more one knows his Kreutzer the more benefit can he derive from Mr. Cutter's comments.

Mr. Cutter has carefully distributed his comments so as to give the proper space to the use of the brains, the "bow" hand and the "stopping" hand of the player. He clearly points out that there is no use in trying to study Kreutzer without devoting much thought to what is to be done and the method of doing it. The remarks on the Five Fundamental Bowings of Study No. 2, is the best brief treatment that we have seen on the subject of bowing.

When Mr. Cutter gets out the new edition of his book which will undoubtedly be quickly called for, we would suggest to him the advisability of his devoting a few paragraphs to the selection of a violin bow which can be made to do what the player desires to do in practicing his Kreutzer. The proper results cannot be obtained with a poor bow and Mr. Cutter does not fail to bring out this fact; but he would greatly aid not only pupils but teachers as well if he would give definite instructions regarding the proper tension of the bow for those exercises in which special attention must be paid to this all important matter. Another very important feature of the book is the presentation of the actual physical feelings of brain, arm and fingers, that accompany the practice of the individual exercises. This gives a reality to the author's comments that all students can appreciate. Every teacher of the violin should not only own a copy of this book but should recommend his pupils to buy it.

—*New England Conservatory Magazine*, Vol. 9 [1902]

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Leonard Palmer:

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Mildred Lyons:

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