

**The Doflein Method**

# The Violinist's Progress

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Volume V

# The higher positions

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ED 4755

# THE DOFLEIN METHOD

## The Violinist's Progress

A course of violin instruction  
combined with musical theory and practice in duet-playing  
by

Erich and Elma Doflein

*Text translated by Philip Marler*

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### *Progressive Pieces for three Violins*

Volume I . . ED 4756   Volume II . . ED 4757   Volume III . . ED 5160



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## P R E F A C E

In the fifth volume of this course the study of position-playing, commenced in Volume III, is continued. The first step towards position-playing was taken in Volume III when the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1/2 positions were mastered. The present volume is intended to offer a detailed study of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> positions; the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> positions are dealt with in basic exercises and examples, and finally a survey of the highest positions is provided.

In former violin schools playing in the higher positions was restricted usually to some *long* and *difficult* studies, which at the same time presented considerable demands on bowing technique and dexterity of the fingers. The new method of this volume is intended, on the other hand, to develop the study of higher positions with the utmost thoroughness by giving the student the opportunity of acquainting himself with the new tasks in hand step by step with the aid of numerous *short* exercises and *easy* pieces. The first examples of each new problem have been chosen in such a way that no new or difficult aspects of bowing crop up at the same time. Care has also been taken to make the use of the positions always appear obvious and sensible, so that the ear may play a decisive part in determining the position of the finger on the string.

Long passages to be played entirely in a high position occur seldom in actual music. It is however necessary for the violinist to know each position thoroughly by itself, in order to impress on his mind an exact acquaintance with the respective fingering, the span between the stops and the particular treatment of tone-production. But also for *shifting* from one position to another a certain knowledge of the position to be reached is essential, so that the way from one position to the other is not merely judged as a certain distance, but rather as leading from one familiar position on the finger-board to another just as familiar one. Only by this can certainty in free application of the various positions be attained. This purpose is served by the numerous exercises and pieces which are to be played in one of the higher positions without leaving it.

The technical exercises in *combination of the positions* are both as complete and as short as possible. In a very small compass they provide everything necessary for developing a thorough technique of position-shifting. If real success is aimed at these concentrated exercises must be practised *section by section with the utmost diligence*. The transpositions demanded of the student into other keys and on to other strings may not be omitted during this practice. The numerous pieces in which various positions are combined are not only intended to offer practice in change of position, but also to indicate to the player under which circumstances the position in question may be applied to good effect. Here, as in the whole of "The Violinist's Progress", it was our intention to combine in many examples the practice of technique, the demands of playing and the appropriate musical application of the new task.

The study and application of the fourth position are often neglected. In our course of study this position (like the second position in Volume III) is thoroughly dealt with. For it is just the sure mastery of these "intermediate positions" which paves the way to a wealth of *various*

*fingerings satisfactory* both from the musical and the technical point of view. The material we provide for the practice of the fifth position is just as ample. Less attention has been paid to the positions beyond the fifth, since this work is intended to provide basic knowledge and not training for virtuosity. The *scales* and *arpeggios* through several octaves have been furnished with two different fingerings in some cases: it is not enough, when performing, to have one single "standard fingering" at one's disposal.

The demands made by this volume must be fulfilled if the student wishes to attain to the technical standard required for any *fairly difficult orchestral part* and for classical and romantic *chamber music*.

Beside the easy exercises and studies there are also more difficult examples for studying all problems which arise from playing in the higher positions. Our method, and especially this volume, will be used by students of *different ages* and of very different technical and musical standards. It will therefore in some cases be necessary to restrict study at first to the easier examples, coming back to the more difficult ones at a later stage of progress.

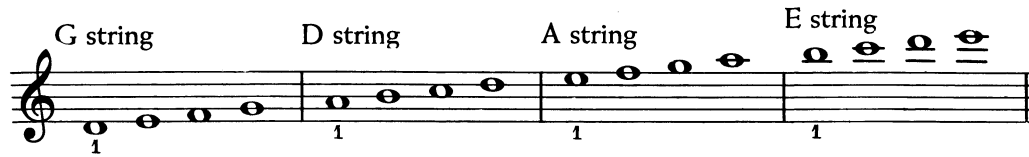
In accordance with the material offered in this volume, less pre-classical music is included and more space is devoted to *classical music* and numerous examples from 19<sup>th</sup> century violin schools (Campagnoli, Ries, Kayser, Alard, Bériot); it was the authors of these schools after all who were the first to pay any detailed attention to the pedagogical treatment of position-playing. In this respect our method also provides some preparation for the playing of *romantic music*.

Since the traditional technique of fingering is not adequate to certain demands of modern music, the fourth part of this volume is dedicated to this special problem. It contains in exercises and studies a selection of those problems of stopping which in modern music differ fundamentally from that of older music: whole-tone scales, chromatic passages, symmetrical sequences of identical intervals, rapid and frequent change of the attitude of the fingers within the position. In such music it is frequently necessary to depart from traditional practice and play in positions not clearly fixed; for instance, one finger may advance to a note beyond the position occupied by the hand, only to be followed subsequently by the latter, thus avoiding a slide (cf. Nos. 151, 154). Or it may be that the fingers must adopt an attitude involving several semitone steps, thus encompassing less than a fourth, in chromatic sequences (cf. Nos. 155, 156). The choice of the same fingering for identical figures in symmetrical sequences facilitates playing considerably: it however often involves regarding the notes enharmonically to achieve the right fingering. For this *free application of the positions* a certainty in the positions which were practised in the preceding chapters is absolutely necessary. On the other hand this independence in the application of the positions gained by the new technique of fingering may be regarded as an enrichment in the manner of playing older music. The exercises in this chapter in the form of extracts are also intended as practice for the ear and should therefore also be transposed.

Erich and Elma Doflein

# PART I: The fourth position


## A: The first finger stops the perfect fifth above the open string

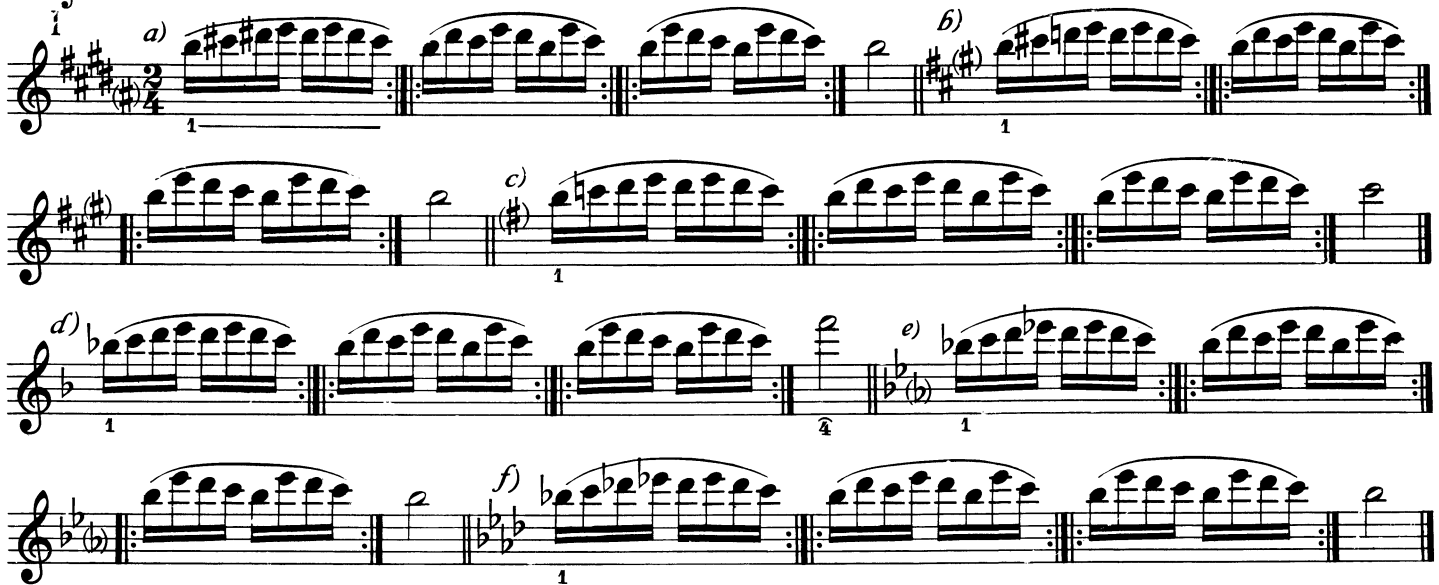


## CHAPTER 1: Studies in the 4<sup>th</sup> position

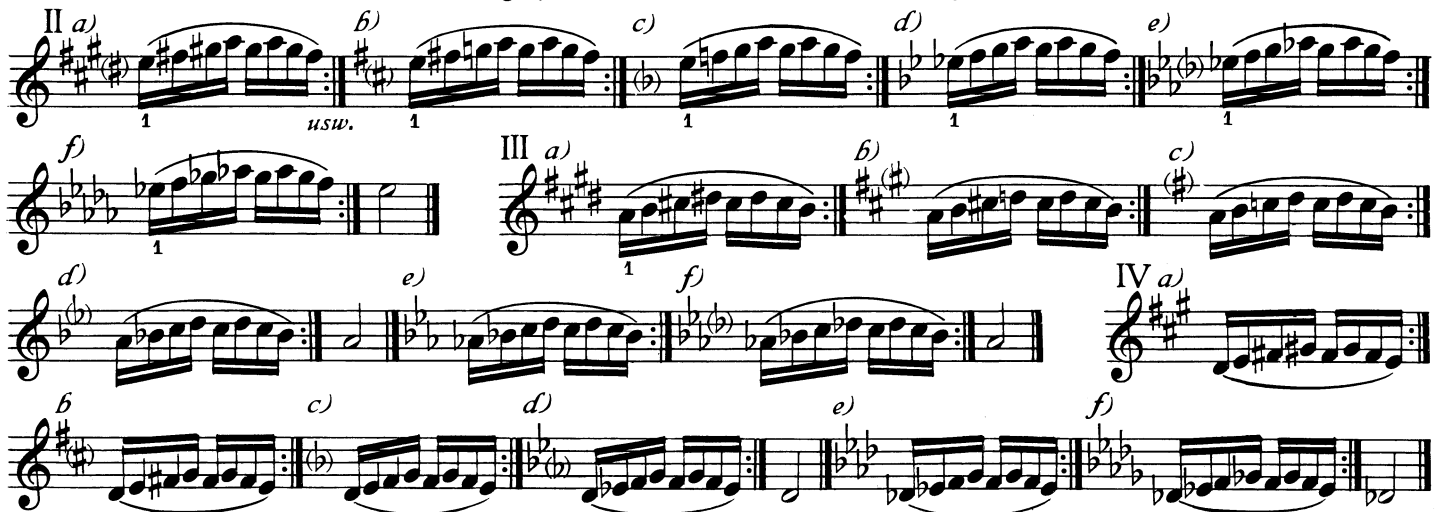
1 How is the 4<sup>th</sup> position found in keys which contain the perfect fifth above the open string?



2 Four note exercises. These exercises are at first only to be practised in those keys (attitudes) in which the first finger stops the perfect fifth above the open string. The positions of the fingers for the flat keys indicated are then to be practised together with work on studies 33 to 36. The appropriate exercises should furthermore be played in attitudes corresponding to the keys of the practice-pieces as a preliminary exercise to the latter. Within the exercises the key is to be recognised by the signature; some sections however belong to several keys, such as , which can occur in D major, B minor and A major. The key required should be found on all strings.



The same exercise on the other strings (*in each case all three bars of the above four note exercises are to be played*)



The exercises for finding the 4<sup>th</sup> position can be altered or replaced with an eye to the key to be played; e.g.:

for E major and E minor

for A major and A minor

### 3 The scale of E major

### 4 Bohemian dance

### 5 The scale of A major

### 6 Preludio

Allegro  $\vee$

Michel Corrette (1738)

### 7 The scale of D major

### 8 Study (to be practised slowly at first)

Allegro

H. Ries (Violin School 1867)

\*) The key signature in brackets is not of significance until a more advanced stage of study



Two staves of musical notation for exercise 9. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff contains a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a fingering '4 1' above a note.

9 The scale of D minor

Two staves of musical notation for exercise 10. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 6/8. The first staff has a melodic line with a fingering '1' below the first note. The second staff has a bass line with a dynamic marking 'p' (piano) at the beginning.

10 Siciliano

Two staves of musical notation for exercise 11. The key signature has no sharps or flats. The time signature is 12/8. The first staff has a melodic line with a fingering '1' below the first note. The second staff has a bass line with a dynamic marking 'mf' (mezzo-forte) at the beginning.

11 Exercise in A minor

Two staves of musical notation for exercise 12. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 3/4. The first staff has a melodic line with a fingering '4' above the first note. The second staff has a bass line with a dynamic marking 'mf' (mezzo-forte) at the beginning.

12 Harmonic study in the 4<sup>th</sup> position

E.D.

Two staves of musical notation for exercise 12. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 3/4. The first staff has a melodic line with a fingering '4' above the first note. The second staff has a bass line with a dynamic marking 'mf' (mezzo-forte) at the beginning. The piece concludes with a dynamic marking 'pp' (pianissimo) and a 'con sord.' (con sordina) instruction.

13 Scale exercise in E minor

14 Practice piece  
Moderato

H.E. Kayser (Violin School 1867)

15 Extension of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> fingers

\*) 4 indicates that the 4<sup>th</sup> finger is to be extended upwards without change of position;  
 1 indicates that the first finger is drawn back a semitone without changing the position of the hand.

16 The scale of C major

17 Study

Allegretto

H.E. Kayser