

The Leopold Auer Graded Course of Violin Playing¹

Book Eight

Virtuoso Grade

I. Octave Playing

1 SIMPLE OCTAVES

Octave playing constitutes one of the most brilliant and serviceable technical assets of the advanced soloist. The so-called *Simple Octave* (first and fourth fingers) has been in use from the very beginning of violin playing one might say, and while used more sparingly in works by the master players of the classic period, the violin compositions of practically all the great virtuosos of the past century (such as Paganini, Lipinski, Laub, Spohr, Molique, Bazzini, Ernst, Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, Sarasate, Joachim, Sauret etc.) contain innumerable passages and parts in which octave playing has been utilized with astonishing and expert skill.

However, the case of *Fingered Octaves*, played with alternate employment of two pairs of fingers (first and third—second and fourth) is a different one. Their use was practically ignored by virtuosos of the older generation and to my knowledge H. W. Ernst (in his transcription of Schubert's "Erl King") and August Wilhelmj (in his own Cadenza to Paganini's D major Concerto) were probably among the first to exploit them in public. Since then "Fingered Octaves" have been taken up with increased favor, and in fact have come to be recognized as the one great contribution of modern times for advancing and developing existing technical skill to a still greater extent; another point in their favor is, that they are of inestimable value and benefit for gymnastic treatment of the fingers, impossible to obtain through any other form of practise. *

* See *Book Seven* of this Graded Course for exercising material in scale form: Training of the First and Fourth Fingers for Scales in Octaves, Tenths and Chromatic Progressions (pages 58 and 59), Scales in Simple and Fingered Octaves in Diatonic Progression (pages 60 to 66.)

Variation 3 from CAPRICE No. 24 by N. Paganini



Octave Passage from THE WITCHES' DANCE (Le Streghe) by N. Paganini

Minore
II & III



II & III



For additional octave material from the works of Paganini see pages 46, 47 and 49.