

THE RIGHT AND THE WRONG WAY TO PRACTICE



The Correct Position

WITH THE coming of summer weather and school vacations, music lessons are dropped, although a little daily practicing is usually required of children by mothers who feel that the discipline of regular tasks—neither hard nor taxing—is valuable.

So much harm has been done by injudicious practicing—not so much the length of time spent at it, as the way it is done—that it is well for mothers to watch out for the signs of the right or the wrong ways of practicing during the months when they themselves are brought more closely in touch with the small pupils.

Musical is nervous work, even for the child (perhaps most of all for her) who loves it so that practicing is a pleasure. That point should be borne in mind, and the child taught to practice for, say, fifteen minutes at a time, and then to rise and go through some simple stretching exercises—those with a cane are particularly good—before returning to finish her half hour or hour, as the case may be.

The way she sits at the piano is really the most important point to be considered. The piano stool should be raised so that when she sits upon it and rests her hands upon the keys without any effort, her arms, elbows, wrists, are in a straight line.

Stools are most trying articles of furniture for the small body perched upon them. They are usually made of wood, and the child's feet are raised and go through some simple stretching exercises—those with a cane are particularly good—before returning to finish her half hour or hour, as the case may be.

The best piano seat is a chair with a back no higher than those near chairs. The piano stool should be raised so that when she sits upon it and rests her hands upon the keys without any effort, her arms, elbows, wrists, are in a straight line.

Hooking the feet under the legs of the piano even more sharply.

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A Good stretch every fifteen minutes

Common faults which produce bad results

Mrs. Henry Symes' Advice to Correspondents

In your columns you speak of an institution where mechanical music is given. That is something I would like to see. You tell me to "E. M." to reduce abdomen, where you say "lie flat on floor and raise both arms and legs, and hold for ten seconds." I cannot raise myself without help from my elbows. Now, is that right?

It is against my rules to give the names or addresses of specialists to my readers, so I cannot print the name of the doctor who has reduced the abdomen, so that you may know exactly what the directions are. Usually quite impossible that at first trial seems a movement that can be executed with ease after a time of persistent practice.

To Reduce the Abdomen. Lie flat on your back and slowly raise both legs to perpendicular position, then lower them slowly to the floor. This will make your abdomen small and firm. Do not repeat this exercise many times in succession, as too many repetitions might strain the back.

Alternate it with the following, which is also strengthening to the muscles of the abdomen. Lie flat, and, keeping the heels on the floor, rise to a sitting position, with the arms crossed over the chest, or if this is too difficult, begin by resting the arms forward to give the body an impetus. When it becomes easily performed in both of these arm positions, the sitting position, thus counting as a sitting position. This sitting position should always be erect.

Tonic for Bleached Hair. Would you recommend the quinine hair tonic for bleached hair? I used peroxide of hydrogen. Would like something to stop the hair from falling out. I have used the same tonic for bleached hair as for hair of the natural color, but that of the former condition is better as well as soft and healthy as the latter.

Red, Inflamed Nose. I am 15 years old, a youth, and am troubled pretty much by my nose being red and inflamed all the time. There are tiny little pimples it is redder than others. Will you kindly tell me through your paper, if I am very sensitive about it at school, I, E. B.

Perhaps this trouble is caused by indigestion, certainly, the blood does not circulate properly. There is small need, I think, for me to suggest exercise to

into bad habits—to sit easily erect, the shoulders back, and when bending forward is necessary, to bend from the waist, instead of craning the neck forward and developing the awkward round shoulders which so many children have later to overcome.

If the child shows any tendency towards stooping, exercises to correct it should be gone through regularly when the practicing time is up; and the mother should watch the pose at the piano even more sharply.

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The same barn may be turned into the jolliest sort of a gymnasium, in which most of the feats common to gymnastic courses, and many another one unheard of in such quarters, may be practiced.

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Those great beams which run the length of the barn, interrupted by cross-beams at sturdy, give a splendid vantage ground for all sorts of daring leaps and somersault turning, with soft beds of hay to break the force of the fall and to do away with the fear of being hurt.

Those same beams are the very things to suspend the wooden rings from, with which every gymnasium is provided; and a ladder provides equipment enough for endless exercises, from crawling in and out the rungs to walking across it as it stretches from one hay-mow to the other, not in the usual way, on your feet, but by your hands.

Put on gymnasium suits when you go out for a good romp in the barn. Then there's nothing to catch and trip you as you swing, by means of the wooden rings, from one beam to another, or slide down the great piles of hay.

These children loose in the barn in summer—they will discover ways enough to develop and strengthen muscles without over-exercising, supposing that they are doing anything but playing.

You get tired and dirty and disheveled, but strong and lithe and well, gaining most of the good your country outing does from your romping in the sweet-smelling, dusty recesses of the old barn, which, for the time being, you have turned into your gymnasium.

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