

The Piano

The piano is now an accompaniment to civilization, and it has grown to be an almost indispensable article in every household where there are pretensions to culture and refinement. It is well-nigh an orchestra in itself, and is indeed the people's instrument.

For good or evil its influence on music as an art cannot be overestimated, and great is the moral responsibility resting on the ever-rapidly increasing army of those professing to teach the piano. Between correct and thorough instruction from the hands of an accomplished and experienced musician, and instruction from a novice, or possibly a charlatan, there is a wide gulf. The possibilities in *right* and *wrong* directions are of the gravest character, and a consideration of these possibilities is of the utmost importance to the one receiving instruction.

Students may chafe under "exercises" and rudimentary instruction generally, and long for brilliant compositions which might afford them opportunities for display; in brief, yearn to read before acquiring the alphabet; but foolish or ignorant indulgence in this respect on the part of incompetent teachers only too surely will ruin natural abilities of the brightest promise.

It is not necessary to deprive the student of the enjoyment which the practice of melodious compositions brings, but these should be taken up judiciously, and require to be selected with great care and judgment.

In the Conservatory the formation of a perfect *technique* is expected of every piano pupil. Too frequently students learn little beyond the mechanical rendering of studies and a few "pieces." The pupils of the TORONTO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC learn, with their piano studies, the principles which govern musical form, and acquire the habit of analysing every piece studied. Only in this way can they become musicians as well as pianists.