

ready we have a few faithful teachers who take music and speech with pronounced success hand in hand. We want the essential virtue to be generally diffused.

PADEREWSKI ON PIANO PLAYING.

We must congratulate our smart contemporary, the *Sun*, in having obtained an article from the eminent pianist on a subject on which his ideas have such authority, and we must be pardoned if we make a few extracts from it:—

Young girls who have learned to strum a little on the pianoforte, being obliged to do something for their own support, turn their attention to music teaching as the easiest means of gaining a livelihood without any reference whatever to their ability or qualifications. They can tell where the notes come on the staff and also on the keyboard, and they can play a few little waltzes, schottisches, and a few trifling compositions called "pieces" to which the composer has given some fancy name, such as a "nocturne," or a "reverie," or a maiden's prayer, or some similar title, which has no real reference whatever to the nature of the work.

Such teachers begin at the wrong end. Their one idea seems to be to teach their pupils "tunes" or "pieces." They teach them the notes on the staff and on the keyboard, and then set about drumming into them some utterly valueless "piece."

To teach or to learn to play the piano or any other instrument we must commence at the beginning. The pupil must first be taught the rudiments of music. When those have been mastered he must next be taught the technique of his instrument, and if that instrument be the piano, or the violin, or the harp, or the violincello, the muscles and joints of the hands, wrists and fingers must be made supple and strong by playing exercises designed to accomplish that end. At the same time, by means of similar exercises, the pupil must also be taught to read music rapidly and correctly.

When this has been accomplished she should render herself familiar with the works of the masters—not by having them drummed into her by her instructor, but by carefully studying them for herself, by seeking diligently and patiently for her composer's meaning, playing each doubtful passage over and over again in every variety of interpretation, and striving most earnestly to satisfy herself which is the most nearly in harmony with the composer's ideas.

The chief aim of every teacher of the pianoforte should be to impart to his pupils a correct technique and to enable them to play any composition at sight with proficiency and correctness, but how much, or, rather, how little of this kind of teaching is practised by many so-called music teachers? Many really competent music teachers have assured me that of all the pupils who come to them from teachers of lesser reputation to be "finished" there is not one in ten who has ever been taught to play all the major and minor scales in all the various keys.

It may seem strange, but when it happens that a teacher of pianoforte playing does understand that profession thoroughly, and

is most anxious to faithfully and conscientiously discharge his entire duty to his pupils, his patrons, as I have been told by many teachers, entertain such peculiar ideas of the divine art of music in general and of the manner in which pianoforte-playing should be imparted to young ladies in particular, that they present powerful obstacles to his doing so. The majority of parents who employ music, or, more properly speaking, pianoforte teachers, for their daughters are entirely ignorant of music themselves.

M. Paderewski then gives an amusing illustration of the way in which a music-teacher is expected to teach his pupil "pieces." He also touches on the necessity of amateurs learning compositions by heart, and concludes with sound advice as to not tiring the pupil. "If the future pianist is pushed with lessons or practice until she becomes mentally weary she will soon acquire a disgust for her work that will infallibly prevent her from ever achieving greatness. Physical weakness from too much practice is just as bad as mental. To over-fatigue the muscles is to spoil their tone, at least for the time being, and some time must elapse before they can regain their former elasticity and vigour."—*The Musical Standard*.

THE MUSIC-STOOL.

A weary old man with a puzzled face
Went wandering up the market place,
And he muttered, "I won't be made a fool!"
And tightly he grasped a music-stool.

He entered a stately furniture store,
And he sat the music-stool down on the floor;
And he said to the clerk, "You may think you're
funny,
But here's this cheat, and I want my money."

"What's the matter, my friend?" asked the gracious clerk;
"Is anything wrong? Can't you make it work?"
Said the ancient customer, "What did you say?
I did not buy it to work, but to play."

It was ticketed plain—why, any fool
Could have read the ticket, a "music stool."
And I bought it yesterday afternoon,
For we're all of us fond of a right good tune.

I took it home careful, as you may see,
And they were all pleased as they could be,
And I thought there was nothing at all to learn,
So I set it up and gave it a turn.

And I tell you, sir, that, upon my word,
A squeak like a mouse's was all we heard!
The missus, she looked a little vexed,
But she says, quite pleasant, "Let me try next."

Well, to cut it short, we all of us tried—
There's six of the children—and some of them
cried;
We worked all the rest of the afternoon,
And I'm blessed if it gave us the ghost of a tune.

And I tell you it's no more a music-stool
Than the old woman's wash bench. I'm perfectly
cool,
But you needn't talk none of your butter and
honey;
Here it is, I say, and I want my money!"

Said the clerk, with much gravity, "Let me explain."
"No, sir! you'll please give me my money again!
I haven't a doubt you can talk like a book,
But I am not so verdant, my friend, as I look!"

MARGARET VANDERGIFT.

NOTES—MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Miss Ellen Beach Yaw is visiting and resting in Paris for three weeks, and incidentally having some pretty dresses made in anticipation of her American tournee, which commences January 1. With her are her sister and Miss Isabelle Bratnobar, of Waterloo, who is studying in England.

The gem of the European trip to the girls was the stay in the small hotel on the mountains at Rodderberg in Germany, opposite the Drachenfels, the most romantic spot on the Rhine, with Siegfried-Dragon legend association for background.

The hotel in which they stopped was built wholly of colored lava, black, brown, red, grey, &c., and the were simply perfection, which no doubt means the perfection of simplicity. The most inspiring view of the Rhine, of the Cologne Cathedral in the distance, and of nestling villages all about made the situation an inspiring one. But the chief value of the place lay in its superior studio qualities.

Miss Yaw, whose slightest word in regard to voice and voice cultivation must be authority, wishes known and realized and understood the great value of vocal practice in the open air. Her first voice production was in the mountains and among the great trees of California. The Swiss mountains are her summer teachers and studios combined. She asserts that there is something about the unique acoustic qualities of mountainous nature that leads to trueness of voice, to justness of vocal pitch. It is a vocal fact that unless tones are perfectly true the air refuses to carry them. There is no carrying power to tones unless they are absolutely just. Old nature is too honest a force to permit the insincerities at which beautiful buildings wink. Especially is this so of pianos and pianissimos. If the least bit "off" they are not heard at all; yet no sound, if true, that may not be distinctly heard at immense distances.

So the girls arranged opera houses in the honest mountains, and tested their tones from peak to peak. They sang their scales and arpeggios, staccatos and obligatos, improvised, imitated birds, and sang sections of operas for the echoes to play with. The experience was highly beneficial. Lungs and limbs and stomachs all increased in strength and their voices were much improved in quantity and quality, naturally.

Miss Yaw's sister, a sweet blond girl, too, it seems has only recently discovered that she has not only voice but a remarkable musical ear. Under her sister's training she has made marked progress in a short time, and who knows what may come of it? She seems to be free from false ambition and sings for song's sake.

We learn that Paderewski has nearly finished his four act opera. The book is built on a modern subject, and the scene is located in the Carpathian Mountains on the border line of Hungary and Galicia. Sir Augustus Harris is to produce the work at Covent Garden. It will be sung in French, but at Budapest it will be given in Hungarian, and at Dresden in German. Abbey & Grau own the American rights.