

Girl of 11 Makes Great Progress Learning Piano By Free Lessons in Her Own Home

tells in simple fashion why she applied for a second course of Lessons and gave up her teacher.

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Every year about 30,000 people all over the country learn to play by note their favorite instrument with the aid of the Free Music Lessons given by the famous U. S. School of Music which has been established since 1898 as a home study school. Each day brings letters which tell of the pleasure given the writers through knowing how to play, and describing the difficulty or ease with which they learned. The one printed below says how an 11-year-old child took a course of free lessons, after which she went to a teacher, but now wants another course of lessons from the U. S. School of Music. Her only expenses will be for Music and postage, while the lessons are sent every week, according to her need. This is what she says:

U. S. School of Music. Pleasant Lake, N. D.
Dear Sir: Dec. 18, 1911

In 1908 I took a course of Music from you and was very much pleased with the outcome. After I had finished your first term I took one from a teacher, but find I progressed just as fast from you.

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(Signed) VERNIE SHIVELY

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fully evaded him that he was not certain whether she had done so intentionally or not. As he saddled Sandy after noonday lunch at the ranch he was resolved to bring the matter to an issue and trust to luck for a way.

Fate seemed to be against him. It was growing late in the afternoon and he had gotten scarcely more than a passing glimpse of Marjorie for her brothers had monopolized him. They were showing him the new horses, eager for his advice in the plans they were making for farming with a little ranching on the side. "Which do you think make the best all-round work horses, Clydes or Percherons?" one of them was asking when Nelson saw Marjorie leave the shack door in the direction of the spring with a pail on her arm. "In just a minute," Nelson answered, "I'll tell you when I come back." A few long strides brought him up beside Marjorie. "That looks like a big pail for a girl to carry," he said.

"Yes," she said, "the boys usually bring the water from the spring but I saw that they were very much interested in the horses and did not like to interrupt them."

"Won't I do for one of the boys?" he asked.

"Perfectly," she said, "it doesn't look as though carrying a pail of water would trouble you much." She stopped and handed him the pail as though she were going back to the shack.

"Oh, you'll have to go with me to show me the way. I have never been to the spring."

She looked at the well beaten path and then laughed as she looked up into his face and said: "It's a straight trail, you can't miss it."

"But the last time I tried to follow a straight trail I got lost, you know, and stuck in the muskeg too. What would become of your bucket of water if I got lost that way again?"

"I suppose I oughtn't to let you get lost," she said and they started up the path toward the spring together.

"Whew, it's the largest spring I ever saw," said Nelson when they reached it, "and right at the head of the muskeg."

"Yes," she said, "it makes the muskeg. If the coulee bottom had more grade there would be a spring stream instead, but as it is nearly level, the water instead of running away in a stream spreads out over the flat and makes the muskeg. Riders could avoid crossing it by riding around the spring but it is a mile and a half from the trail; up and back make three miles. They would rather cross than lose the time. People out here are just as anxious to avoid losing time as are those who live in cities. There are so many things they want to do in getting started. Ever since the leaves put on their autumn colors I have wanted to get some of the prettiest branches for decorating the house but I have not dared to ask the boys to help me get them. They are so busy getting ready to winter the stock. The coulee bank is so steep and the bushes are so thick that a girl couldn't climb there on account of her skirts. I think Dick's clothes would about fit me. I would have put on a suit and climbed after the branches which caught my fancy if I hadn't been afraid some one would come along."

"Let's get them now, I can climb up there like a squirrel."

"But they are on the opposite side of the coulee from the house and mother will be waiting for the water. Isn't it odd that trees and bushes never grow anywhere in this country except on coulee banks facing north?"

"I have an idea that that is because if trees or bushes start on the open prairie or on south slopes the early warm spells start the sap. Then cold spells come later and freeze them while the sap is running, while those early warm spells do not affect the growth on the north slopes enough to start the sap, and then the north slopes do not dry out in the hot summer months as the south slopes and level land do."

"Well, you see we built on the south slope because it is warmer and the light lasts longer in the short winter days. That makes it impossible to carry the water to mother and get the tree branches at the same time, so I suppose we'll have to go back with the water."

"I can fix that all right. I'll go back with the water and you start down the north side of the muskeg and pick out the branches you want. I put these knee high boots on in order to lead Sandy across the muskeg without getting my feet wet. I'll cross right at the house and

climb after the branches you point out."

"That will be splendid; we'll do that."

When Nelson returned across the muskeg it proved more difficult than they expected to make selections satisfactory to Marjorie's taste; there were so few branches that were perfect on close inspection though the general effect was good viewed from a distance. There were broken leaves and leaves that failed of the color which adorned their mates. In their quest for perfect branches they wandered farther down the coulee than they thought unkindful of the distance till Marjorie exclaimed: "Why, the sun is going down. O, it will be dark before we reach the house; it is so far up around the spring."

"We can fix that," said Nelson, "it's not very far to the house, the way the crow flies, from here. We'll imitate the crows."

"Do you chance to have a flying machine in your pocket?"

"Not exactly but I can carry these branches across the muskeg, then come back and carry you across and the crows time from here to the house won't beat ours so very much."

Marjorie's face flushed a little and she looked a trifle frightened. While she hesitated a moment between the long walk around the spring and being carried across the muskeg, Nelson started across with the branches. When he came back, without hesitation as though the matter were settled he said: "Now, little girl, you next," and picked her up in his strong arms almost before she knew it and walked to the edge of the muskeg. She sat rigidly upright, discreetly leaning away from him. At the edge of the water he stopped and said: "Marjorie, if you lean so far forward and I unexpectedly step into a hole or catch my foot on one of these trailing vines I will pitch ahead too fast and we'll both fall into the drink."

"O dear," said Marjorie.

"Yes, that's me," said Nelson.

"O, you know that isn't what I meant."

"Yes, I know, but really now, you will have to hold on to me so that we keep our balance together or we'll never get across without tipping over."

She slipped one arm over his shoulder cautiously and leaned a little nearer. As he stepped into the water, pretending that he had stepped into a hole he stumbled a little. The arm slid round his neck and held on tightly. Before he reached the centre of the muskeg he caught his foot and lurched forward suddenly. Both arms went round his neck and clutched him in fear of the water for it was getting deeper.

"That's better," he said, "you're learning."

"Bah, what nonsense you talk," she said, "I believe you did that on purpose."

He stopped and laughed till the situation became precarious. "See here you mustn't make me laugh any more or I'll drop you sure," he said, from here on the bottom is bad and the water is deeper. If I stumble between here and the bank there will be no joke about it. It will be you and me in the drink. I had to have you trained for the bad going before we reached it. Here goes; hold on, now."

She held close, her head beside his. A soft, little silken curl strayed across his temple. Almost before he knew it he had kissed her. "I couldn't help it," he said in a voice that was new to her. The raillery was all gone out of it. His whole soul was in it. She said nothing but he felt her arms draw a trifle closer. When he reached the bank, before setting her down he said: "Marjorie, if I homestead out here will you live in my shack?"

"Yes, and we'll make it the prettiest shack in the country."

"We'll ask Hunt and Nelson to the wedding and those cowboys at the ranch who started me out on this straight trail."

"You told me you were a mind reader?"

"So I am," replied the professor.

"Well, why do you hesitate? Why don't you read my mind?"

"I'm searching for it!"

The Cynic:—"What are you thinking of, Mary?"

Mary: "I am dreaming of my youth."

The Cynic: "I thought you had a far-away look in your eyes."

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