

"Mean to do? I—I don't think I understand."

"Do you mean to be a young lady amateur who plays well enough to entertain her friends in her own drawing-room, or do you mean to work seriously, and make a really first-rate performer? You can do either you like. You have the talent. It is for yourself to decide."

Norah's face was a study in its raptured excitement. "Oh—h?" she cried breathlessly, "I'll work—I don't care how hard I work! I love it so much. I want to do my very, very best."

"Then I'll work too, and do all I can to help you," said Mr. Morris in return. He jumped off the table as he spoke, and advanced towards her, rubbing his hands as one who prepares for a pleasant task. "Now then!" he cried; and for the next hour Norah was kept hard at work, with never another word of praise, but with many sharp corrections and reminders to call atten-

tion to hitherto unsuspected faults. She was radiantly happy, nevertheless, for the first step towards correcting a fault was to discover its existence, and what was the good of a teacher who did not point out what was wrong? At four o'clock Mr. Morris took his departure, and Norah found that Edna had retired to her room to rest, as was her custom every afternoon. Mrs. Freer was also invisible, but Rex came to join her in the drawing-room, looking particularly cheerful and self-satisfied.

"Well, has the old fellow departed? How are the knuckles? Is he any good? He looks a miserable little specimen."

"He's a delightful teacher! I like him immensely! He told me I could be a splendid player if I would only work hard enough."

"Oh, well, I could have told you as much as that myself." It was clear that Rex thought it the polite thing to

inquire about the success of the music lesson, but also that his attention was fixed on some other subject. "Look here!" he said suddenly, "the mater and Edna always rest for an hour or two in the afternoon, and I promised to look after you. Would you like a real, genuine, blood-curdling adventure?"

Norah gave a shriek of delight. "Rather, just! I should think I would. What is it?"

"You can pin up your dress, and put on a big old coat?"

"Yes—yes!"

"And you won't mind if you get rather grimy?"

"Not a bit. I'm used to—I mean, I can soon wash myself clean again."

"Come along then. Follow me, and tread lightly. I don't want anyone to see where we are going." Rex led the way down the cellar stairs, and Norah followed him afire with curiosity.

(To be continued.)



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

WEARY ONE.—You are right in ascribing your symptoms to "nervous debility," but we rather think that anaemia is the fundamental cause. Have you received any treatment for the condition? Iron with some strong nerve tonic, such as strychnine, would be about the best medicine to take. Healthy exercise, as far as this is possible, and plenty of good food are also necessary. You are almost certain to grow out of this state in time.

MAY BLOSSOM.—It is not at all uncommon for pianists to suffer from cold hands when they have run down in health. The condition you describe, that your hands get very cold and occasionally very hot, is due to disturbance of the circulation. It is almost for certain due to anaemia. You are right to take iron, as no drug is more useful in this condition. You should never play the piano in a cold room.

STAR.—As you do not tell us whether your friend's lips get "dry and cracked" only during the winter, or at all seasons, it is difficult for us to be certain that our advice will prove of use to her. Nevertheless, we will tell you what to do for lips that get cracked only during the colder months. A cold wind dries the lips, and they, like every other tissue in the body (and, indeed, most substances apart from the body), crack when they get dry. Usually there is one deep crack down the centre of the lower lip; the reason for this is explicable on anatomical grounds. The treatment is to prevent the lips from becoming dry. For this nothing is better than glycerine or vaseline. Cracked lips are usually sore from inflammation—some slight astringent antiseptic will allay this. Two applications are of especial service—cold cream and a solution of sulphate of zinc (gr. v. in glycerine ℥i. If there is a very deep crack in the lower lip, which refuses to heal, the application of nitrate of silver (lunar caustic) is an exceedingly effectual though somewhat painful remedy.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

P. T.—Thank you for your very pleasant letter. The verses you enclose are marked by one error, the alternate use of the second person singular, and the second person plural "thee" and "you," in addressing the same individual. The lines do not contain anything original in thought; at the same time, for a "first attempt," they are well up to the average of those submitted to us by our correspondents. Your writing is very neat.

H. C. and T. K. H.—We have sent you the poem asked for, but must repeat here that it is quite an exceptional course taken, in this one instance only.

R. E. C. (Bath).—1. We transcribe for your benefit this paragraph from Sir George Grove's Dictionary of Music:—"In the following examples they (the clefs) occupy the position in which they are now most commonly found:—"



We presume the clef to which you refer must be the second on the staff. But we cannot see why the question should be asked, as, certainly, the "second tenor" clef is not in familiar use.—2. We give you the conditions for the degree of Bachelor of Music at Oxford. You will thus gain a general idea of the standard, and can write to Durham for exact particulars of the degree at that university. The candidate must (1) pass a preliminary examination (partly in writing, partly *visu et vocē*) in harmony and counterpoint in not more than four parts. He has then (2) to present to the Professor of Music a vocal composition containing pure five-part harmony, and good fugal counterpoint, with accompaniment for at least a quintett stringed band.

(3) A second examination follows after the interval of half a year, embracing harmony, counterpoint in five parts—canon, mutation, fugue, form in composition, musical history and a critical knowledge of the full scores of certain standard compositions. The fees amount in all to about £18. We can only answer two questions at one time, and hope that they may be of service to our "gentleman reader," whom we thank for his kind letter.

"ADVANCE."—The terms for board and lodging in a family at Leipzig (which we take as a typical place for musical education) vary from £20 to £200 marks a year (£30 to £200). The fees at the Conservatorium are 300 marks (£18) with an entrance fee of 10 marks. The total expenses of a pupil's residence in Leipzig may be calculated at from £150 to £800 marks a year (£97 to £500). You might possibly obtain a position as English companion or governess in lieu of payment for board and lodging, but we should imagine that the amount of practising required from you would prove a difficulty. If you write "An das Directorium des Königl. Conservatoriums der Musik zu Leipzig," you will receive a little pamphlet containing full information. We wish you all success.

WOULD-BE MUSICIAN.—1. We should recommend you to procure and study Sir John Stainer's Manual on Harmony.—2. We believe that past examination papers are published, but you can obtain exact information by writing to the Secretary of the Associated Board, 52, New Bond Street, London, W.

MISCELLANEOUS.

JENNY JONES.—Some have said that the Jones family exceeded the Smiths in number; but, at least, some ten or fifteen years ago the Smiths were credited with the largest following, and Williams, Taylor, Brown, Wood, Hall, and White followed the Joneses in the order given.

LOVER OF "G. O. P."—The bramble-finch is a species of *fringilla*, the mountain finch; the name is *fringilla montifringilla*. A siskin sings very well. You know it belongs to the same species as the bramble-finch, and its Latin name is *fringilla spinus*.

ROOMS.—The duties of a housemaid vary in every household, as a rule. She does the drawing-room, but if there be a parlourmaid, she, the housemaid, generally does the dining-room. As an under-housemaid, she will probably have all the sitting-rooms to do before breakfast; and in some houses, the upper as well as the lower halls. Directly the bed-rooms are vacated, she strips the beds, opens windows, etc., and sets the bed-rooms in order. Some housemaids assist in waiting on the mistress, and at table. At dusk she shuts up windows, lights up bed-rooms, and turns down beds, etc. The under-housemaid follows the upper maid's directions, and, as a rule, receives her training in this position.

L'ESPERANCE.—1. In case of extreme attenuation, a recent writer advises cod-liver oil, in very small houses, several times daily. This should be beaten up in warm milk and drunk while in suspension after every meal. External rubbing with linseed-oil, diluted with orange flower water and glycerine. The friction must be very gentle, and evenly applied for five or ten minutes at a time, morning and evening. Instead of the linseed-oil lanoline may be used, which is a direct nutrient to the skin.—2. We do not understand why you should change to cookery, when you have already qualified yourself as an artist, and draw, paint, and sketch well. Why not go on with this, and qualify yourself as a teacher of sketching, especially during the summer months, when you might do well.

CAT LOVER.—1. The cat appears to be a fine, though not a perfect specimen of a tabby. Your only test would be to send it to a cat show.—2. Your writing is unformed, and very much cramped. Could you not adopt a more flowing style, and endeavour to improve your capital letters?

MYRTLE.—We have seen the road skates in use several times, and thought they looked delightful, and so easy to use, we are told. We think neither they nor a cycle would be improved by going over very rough roads, though you could always select the best and smoothest parts.