"Faust"

(Continued from page 1.)

implores the exhausted and grief-stricken girl to fly with him and thus escape the shameful death before her. Mephistopheles joins his entreaties also, hoping thus to catch another soul.

But Margarita has now regained her right mind, and resists the temptations which they bring before her; and, feeling only remorse and true repentance, she refuses all their entreaties, declaring that her only hope now is heaven, and the acceptance of her sincere prayers for forgiveness.

Her prayers are answered, and ere the time arrives for her execution the unhappy girl dies peacefully. Faust is overcome with grief, and even Mephistopheles is cowed, and shrinks back, baulked of his prey, as angel voices are heard rejoicing over the "sinner that repenteth." in welcoming the spirit of the gentle Margarita as it is carried by the angels into the realms of bliss.

In act one we are introduced to Dr. Faust, who, considering that his life has been spent to no great purpose, contemplates the cup of poison. Mephistopheles appears, tells of the elixir of life, and of the beautiful Margarita. The act closes with the doctor's acceptance.

The dramatic church scene in act four will also be broadcast, with Signor Cesaroni as Mephistopheles and Miss Jeanette Sterling as Margarita. One of the most remarkable scores is "Mephistopheles Serenade," the culmination of the church scene. The evil spirit, not content with having brought about the ruin of Margarita, returns and sings to the guitar this fiendish serenade, taunting her, insulting her, and laughing at her. The sardonic "Ha ha ha!" followed by infernal mocking laughter, lends a truly devilish atmosphere. Further notes on the music will be found on the gramophone page.

Of Topical Interest

THE Americans have, in their desire to record all aspects of life on the sound screen, recorded the dying squeals of the animals slaughtered at the abattoirs in Chicago.

THE new and the old have been quaintly mixed in a Cornwall village where the bells of the church have not functioned for twenty-five years. The expenses of putting these bells in order being more than the population could bear, an ingenious scheme was lighted on. In the ancient, ivy-grown tower an electro-dynamic speaker and power amplifier was installed. With the aid of a pick-up and a special record, conveniently situated in the manse, the bells chime out every time there is a call for them.

Promising Pianist from 3YA

A Young Artist Wins Many Distinctions

ON VARIOUS occasions listeners to 3YA children's session heard pianoforte solos played by Cousin Marjorie. They were brilliantly played with splendid attack and rhythm. But who was Cousin Marjorie?

The pianiste was Miss Marjorie Alexander, who, as a musician, has the promise of a great future. She has still several years before she is out of her 'teens. Thus far, she has had a noteworthy career, and it can safely be said that there is no more brilliant pianiste for her age in New Zealand.

Only just seventeen, she won her first prize when she was eight, and her attainments to date include eight gold medals, three of them of the Royal Academy, and a fourth a special prize for scoring the highest marks in New Zealand for the L.T.C.L. examination. In addition to her musical honours she has been dux of her school.

Marjorie Alexander is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Alexander, well known Christchurch residents, and her sole tutor has been Miss Lilian Kennard, of Christchurch.

In the Associated Board examinations in 1927, 1928 and 1929, she passed the Intermediate, Advanced and Final Grades respectively, winning gold medals and being awarded a special gold medal for her record marks in 1929.

In each of these years she won the Violet Ward Prize for highest marks in Christchurch in these examinations. At the competitions in Christchurch in 1928 she won Begg's Scholarship and in Wellington the Wellington Competitions Society's scholarship. In 1929, at the Christchurch competitions she secured the Bristol Scholarship and in the same year three gold medals fell to her lot at the Ashburton competitions.

This year again, at competitions in Christchurch and Ashburton, she won not only the classes for pianists under 18 and 21, but also the open class. The secret of the young lady's success is not only her natural talent, but her aptitude for practising. Listeners to 3YA on the evening of Wednesday, October 8, will hear her playing "La Campanella" (Paganini-Liszt) and Liszt's 6th Rhapsody.

Improving the Pick-up

I HAVE been experimenting with pick-ups and thought you might be interested in the results—perhaps make some comment on them.

The amplifier and speaker (moving-coil) are specially constructed by a firm in Dunedin. The amplifier uses a 210 valve and the whole is extraordinarily good—my radio gives about twice the undistorted output of an A.C. set and infinitely better quality—not booming bass and weak treble.

As a gramophone with a standard pick-up it also was very good. However I happened to have a powerful electro-magnet and can work it from a tap of the transformer in the amplifier. This magnet I put on the pick-up, and the improvement was remarkable—bass coming out much better than one ever hears it from the studios. I have yet to hear a commercial electric gramophone to equal it for all-round performance—volume, brilliance, separation of instruments, etc. Why should an increased flux make this improvement? And one wonders why it has not been used in commercial pick-ups.—A. J. Trotter, North Otago.

[The improved quality is due no does not the greater weight damage did not the greater weight damage the records?—Tech. Ed.]

Musical Thunderstorms

Interesting Short-wave Phenomenon

THE General Electric Company, Schenectady, New York, forwarded the following information to Mr. R. Leslie Jones, Wellington. It should prove of great interest to readers:—

"Musical thunder, accompanied by a vivid electrical display, has been encountered by radio engineers of the G.E.C. in their investigations near Schenectady of high-powered, short-wave broadcasting. In these miniature thunder storms, which occur during any kind of weather, daylight or darkness, clear or overcast skies, the thunder is converted into music which corresponds to the input of the radio microphone. WGY engineers have solved the problem of handling 200 kilowatts of power modulated, on long waves, but new difficulties are presented in the use of powers above 15 kilowatts on the short-waves. In using powers up to 15 kilowatts in the antenna no unusual phenomenon has been observed, but when it was first attempted to increase the power to 35 kilowatts in the antenna vivid coronas flashed, wavering like ghostly spectres in mid-air.

"This corona demonstration did not appear as long as the carrier alone was on, but as soon as the engineers attempted to modulate, the arc was struck in the surrounding air. This arc generally started about three or four feet from the antenna and shot upward four feet in the air. Since the power supplying the arc was modulated with music the arc alternately collapsed and built up in size corresponding to the modulation. This action set up air wave vibrations similar to thunder, but instead of the roar and roll of thunder it was a musical sound similar to the music being broadcast. Men working 300 or 400 feet away thought they were hearing the output of a giant loudspeaker. If the arc were allowed to continue it moved out toward the end of the antenna, due to movement of the hot gases, arced across the insulators, cracking them open, and finally the intense heat melted the copper and caused the antenna to drop.

The trouble was solved in two ways. Antenna wire of larger diameter was adopted, and a large corona plate or half-sphere was placed on each end of the antenna. These measures reduced the voltage gradient at the wire surface due to the increased radius of curvature of conducting surface. It is now possible to get 35 kilowatts of power, modulated 100 per cent. in the antenna without wasteful and destructive coronas."

1YA Radio Plays

IT was Mr. J. F. Montague who produced the first radio play at 1YA, not Mr. J. M. Clark, as stated last week. Both gentlemen have had a long connection with radio plays, but the unique distinction is due to Mr. Montague.