

MUSIC IN SCHOOLS.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS.

At the Conference of Music Teachers, which was resumed at the Conservatorium yesterday, Mr. F. L. Gratton (Supervisor of Music to the Education Department) spoke on "Music in Schools." He dealt with the recent developments in school music in this State and in other countries. The lecture was illustrated by a group of girls from Flinders-street school, who won applause from the audience for their demonstration of voice training and reading music.

The morning session was devoted to the answering of questions, which were chiefly concerned with technical matters. The question of the formation of a Music Teachers' Association was raised. Dr. E. Harold Davies, in his reply, said such an association could not be formed under the aegis of the University, but if teachers wished to create such a society they should take action themselves. With that matter was connected the collection of teaching fees. On this point Dr. Davies said he could not give advice on the question of law whether the teacher could sue a pupil for fees owed. The matter, however, would be much simplified if an association were formed and music teachers were registered.

Mr. Gratton said music was a very popular subject in the State schools, and there were in the service of the Education Department many teachers who could not only teach music in class, but also prepare interesting school concerts, train school bands, develop individual singing, and make the musical work of their schools attractive to the children and a valuable asset to the community. Much of this special work was a labor of love on the part of the teachers, but they gave the necessary time and effort cheerfully and willingly.

Aids to Musical Training.

One of the most interesting of recent developments in musical education in their schools was the introduction of systematic training in rhythmic exercises and English folk dances. About two years ago Miss May Clegg was appointed by the Director of Education to supervise the physical training of the girls in city and suburban schools, and to train student teachers in this work. Mr. Gratton paid a warm tribute to the value of her labors. He said the exercises undoubtedly made the girls more graceful and active, and developed their powers of control and observation. It was a pleasure to see them dancing their quaint old folk dances to the music of the school gramophone. It would be an excellent thing if the boys could receive similar training. In this connection it was interesting to note that the Dalcroze system of eurhythmics had recently been used with success in England, as an aid to the teaching of languages. These "grammatical eurhythmics" included exercises for the control of the voice, the study of grammatical laws by the aid of physical movements, and the interpretation of prose or verse by group recitation, combined with appropriate movements of the body. It had been justly claimed that they enabled children to speak more correctly, and also to express their thoughts with much greater freedom and clearness.

In discussing the use of the gramophone, Mr. Gratton said it was being employed much more frequently as an aid to musical education in the schools. Many schools now possessed fine gramophones, and a good supply of interesting records, which were used to illustrate correct voice production and artistic interpretation, and to provide the music for the daily assembly and for physical exercises. By means of that useful invention teachers with little musical ability could carry on their school singing lessons with a fair amount of success. The children listened carefully while each record was being reproduced, and then tried to imitate the singing.

Part Singing.

The practice of part singing was still giving a considerable amount of attention. Beginning with simple rounds, the children were gradually trained to sustain a part correctly in two or three part harmony. The work, as was shown in the annual "thousand voices" concerts at the Exhibition, included classical songs, some of considerable difficulty. More schools were seeking admission to the Decoration Society, and there was an increasing demand for additional concerts each year, to enable the general public to hear the results of the musical training given in the public schools. During the last few years special encouragement had been given to boys to take part in these concerts, and there was a marked improvement in the voices of the boys and in their interest in music. It was difficult to train boys for this work, but they gave greater volume and brilliancy to mixed choir work, and made it pos-

sible to attempt music of considerable range and technical difficulty. In connection with cathedral and other churches, there were increasing opportunities for boys with good voices and musical ability. Those boys often received free education and books, and sometimes board and lodging in addition, in return for their services in the choir.

In the High Schools comparatively little time could be devoted to music, and so the singing lessons had been chiefly recreative in character. A considerable impetus, however, had been given to the study of music in city and suburban High Schools by the inauguration of combined concerts on similar lines to the primary schools demonstration. It was probable that combined effort would become an annual event. Singing for boys attending secondary schools was optional, for most of those boys were at the age when sustained vocal effort and the practice of difficult music would probably be injurious. In several schools, however, the boys whose voices had definitely settled down, were encouraged to join with others by singing the alto part an octave lower, or by taking the melody of a unison song at a suitable pitch.

After giving a comprehensive review of the conditions of music in the schools of New South Wales and Victoria, Mr. Gratton passed to England, and America. He said it was evident that in those countries the study of music was gradually being placed on a better footing. One of the chief aims now was to turn out intelligent listeners, rather than an immense number of indifferent performers, although the power of self-expression in music was being developed as far as was practicable.

He concluded by saying it was now generally recognised that music was a form of intellectual and spiritual training that should not be neglected. "Music," stated Mr. Gratton, "broadens the child's outlook, fosters the love of the beautiful, develops new instincts and channels for self-expression. Music is also intimately connected with literature, and the proper study of music in public schools may therefore open to the youthful mind the greatest and best in the world of literature and art." In respect to the musical work of the schools, the speaker suggested several lines of improvement. They should consider the advantages of a closer connection between the music of the schools and the musical work of the Conservatorium and similar institutions. Greater attention might be paid to the teaching of staff notation in the higher classes of public schools. Concerts might be inaugurated specially adapted for audiences of children. They should consider the development of musical training in public schools throughout the Commonwealth. Occasional conferences might be held of those interested in musical education in the various Australian States. And lastly they should consider the extension of country districts of the undoubted advantage of combined musical efforts, such as the annual concerts given by primary and High Schools in Adelaide.

Recitals and Concerts.

In connection with the conference, an enjoyable pianoforte recital was given by Miss Elsie Willmore at noon. She played with exquisite lightness of touch, and her rendering of the Scarlatti pastorate especially showed a delicate artistry, which was much appreciated. The programme was composed of:—"Pastorale in D minor" (Scarlatti), "Theme with variations, Op. 34" (Beethoven), "Ballade in G minor, and Berceuse" (Chopin), "Ricordanza Etude" (Liszt), "Rhapsodie in E flat, Op. 119" (Brahms), "La Nuit" (Glazounov), "Hexentanz" (Macdowell), "Staccato Etude" (Rubinstein). There was a large audience, and all the items were well received.

The concluding concert was held in the Elder Hall in the evening before a large audience. The programme opened with

a sonata for violin and piano, opus 21 (Dohnanyi), played by Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A., and Mr. George Pearce. A bracket of four traditional 16th, 17th, and 18th century songs, "O mistress mine," "Phyllida flouts me," "Spanish lady's love," and "Come, sweet lass," were admirably given by Mr. Clive Carey, Mus. Bac. Mr. Carey played his own accompaniments. A violin solo, including "Aria" (Zipoli), "Theme and variations" (Tartini-Kreisler), "Minuet" (Steudel), and "Tableau Oriental" (Bacotine), was rendered by Miss Whittington, and a further bracket of songs, "Spring sorrow" (John Ireland), "The mad pincee," "At the beer-side," and "Lullaby" (Armstrong Gibbs), was given by Mr. Carey, accompanied by Mr. George Pearce. The closing item was a well-executed pianoforte solo, "Ballade, opus 24" (Grieg), by Mr. George Pearce.

UNIVERSITY GOWNS.

CONDEMNED BY STUDENTS.

Melbourne, July 17.

A thousand university students in the lecture theatre in the new arts building this afternoon decided against the wearing of gowns within the university or elsewhere. The meeting was noisy and excited. Emphatic speeches were made by supporters of both sides on this burning question. Women students were strongly in favor of wearing gowns, but were heavily outvoted.

Reg. 18.7.25

MUSIC TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

Fifth Day's Proceedings.

Friday was a busy period of the week devoted to the Music Teachers' Conference at the Elder Conservatorium, of the Adelaide University. The last of the business sessions were held, and a recital and a concert were also included in the programme. The conference will conclude this morning in the Elder Hall, with a demonstration of aural culture and Dalcroze eurhythmics, under the direction of Miss Heather Gill.

Question Box and Discussion.

Yesterday morning's proceedings were commenced with a question box, and an ensuing open discussion. Many perplexing points were thus brought under the notice of the director of the Conservatorium (Dr. E. Harold Davies), who gave helpful advice. Technical matters constituted the principal contents of the varied questions which had been forwarded in writing a week prior to the conference. One important matter concerned the suggested formation of a Music Teachers' Association, and it was asked if that could not be arranged. To this Dr. Davies replied that a Music Teachers' Association was not an organization that the University could take the lead in building up. It should come from the body of teachers themselves. Connected with this same discussion was the enquiry as to what litigation would be possible with regard to the collection of overdue fees. The Director remarked that he regretted being unable to give an opinion upon the matter, but he felt that it required a legal opinion. Undoubtedly there would be benefit felt in such a course, if the music teachers were registered as a body.

A Pianoforte Recital.

Miss Elsie Willmore, Mus. Bac., attracted an audience to the Elder Hall when she gave an enjoyable pianoforte recital. Among the selections, so admirably played by Miss Willmore were compositions from the old masters, including Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt. The modern school was also represented by works from Macdowell and Brahms. Each of the finely interpreted numbers was received with obvious appreciation. Included in the programme were the following:—"Pastorale in D minor (D. Scarlatti), Theme with variations, Op. 3 (Beethoven), Ballade in G minor, and Berceuse (Chopin), Ricordanza etude (Liszt), Rhapsodie in E flat, Op. 119 (Brahms), "La nuit" (Glazounov), "Hexentanz" (Macdowell), Staccato etude (Rubenstein).

"MUSIC IN SCHOOLS."

Full of interest, and delivered in a concise and informative way, was Mr. F. L. Gratton's address upon "Music in schools," given at the afternoon meeting. In his capacity as Supervisor of Music to the South Australian Education Department Mr. Gratton could speak from valuable sources of information gained practically during some years of such experience, and his audience listened with keen attention both to the address and to the practical demonstration of the methods used in teaching voice culture, such as tonic sol-fa, staff notation, and other branches of the art. A number of girls from Sturt Street School—typical exponents of all the city and suburban State schools—mounted the platform in the South Hall, and ably responded to all the vocal tests put to them by Mr. Gratton. Introducing his subject, the Supervisor said that four years ago he had addressed a conference of music teachers in that hall, and then outlined the chief aims of musical education in the State schools; but on this occasion he wished to deal with recent developments in school music in their own State, and also in other countries. Music was still a very popular subject in their State schools, and the children enjoyed their singing lessons. In the service of the Education Department there were many teachers who could not only teach tonic sol-fa and staff notation, but could also prepare interesting school concerts, train school bands, develop individual singing,

and make the musical work of their schools attractive to the children and a valuable asset to the community. One of the most interesting of recent developments in their musical education was the introduction of systematic training in rhythmic exercises and English folk dances. About two years ago Miss May Clegg was appointed by the Director of Education, to supervise the physical training of the girls in city and suburban schools, and to train student teachers in this work.

Part Singing.

The delightful social recreation known as "community singing," which had become so popular in Adelaide and in other parts of the State, had also found its way into our schools. The use of the gramophone as an aid to the teaching of singing, was becoming much more general in their schools. By means of this useful invention, teachers who had little musical ability were able to carry on their school singing lessons with a fair amount of success. Broadcasting had not yet been developed, though it was surprising to find what a number of children had wireless outfits at home.

It is hoped that soon many public schools in South Australia would be provided with the necessary apparatus, and thus be enabled to enjoy the unique privileges afforded by broadcasting and wireless transmission. The practice of part-singing still received a considerable amount of attention. Beginning with simple rounds such as "Chairs to mend" or "What are my posies?" the children were gradually trained to sustain a part correctly in two- or three-part harmony. Their highest achievements in choral music were heard in connection with the annual "thousand voices" concerts at the Exhibition. At these concerts children from 11 to 12 years of age had not only given effective renderings of classical songs, but also rendered such difficult part-songs as "The soldier's chorus," "The Miserere," and "The Madrigal" from the "Mikado." At this year's concerts, for which preparations were being steadily made in the 35 schools which would take part, the massed choir would sing the well-known "Barrabas" from "Tales of Hoffman"; the popular "Floral dance," "The house that Jack built," "The song of the Vikings," and other interesting selections. More schools were seeking admission to the Decoration Society, and there was an increasing demand for additional concerts each year.

High Schools and Teachers' College.

During the last few years, special encouragement had been given to boys to take part in these concerts. As the result of this the interest taken by them in good music was more marked than in former years. It was more difficult to train boys than girls for work of this kind, but the additional effort involved was amply rewarded, for well-trained boy singers gave greater volume and brilliancy in mixed choir work, and made it possible to attempt music of considerable range and technical difficulty. Many subjects must necessarily be studied by students at high schools and other secondary schools, so comparatively little time could be devoted to music. A considerable impetus had been given to the study of music in our city and suburban high schools, however, by the inauguration of combined concerts on similar lines to the annual primary schools' demonstration. Two such concerts were successfully given before large audiences in the Adelaide Town Hall last month. The programme consisted chiefly

of unison songs and choruses by a massed choir of 400 girls, whose ages ranged from 14 to 17 years. This choir gave effective renderings of well-known selections by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Massani, and other famous composers. From 200 to 300 students were trained for their profession at the Teachers' College each year. Among other subjects, music received a considerable amount of attention. The training in this subject included voice culture, musical theory, musical interpretation, part-singing, and the teaching of singing in schools, and the students' glee club was a popular feature of the social life of the college. Reference was then made to music in the other States, and in English and American schools.

Valuable Points.

It was evident that the study of music in England and in America was gradually being placed on a better footing. One of the chief aims now was to turn out intelligent listeners rather than an immense number of indifferent performers, though the power of self-expression in music was being developed so far as is practicable. It was now generally admitted that music was a form of intellectual and spiritual training that should not be neglected. Music broadened the child's outlook, fostered the love of the beautiful, developed new instincts and emotions, and new channels for expression. Music was also intimately connected with literature, and the proper study of music in public schools might, therefore, open to the youthful mind the greatest and best in the world of literature and art. As far as the musical work of their own schools was concerned, the following points were worthy of special consideration:—1. The advantages of a closer connection between the music of the schools and the musical work of the Conservatorium and similar institutions. 2. Greater attention to the teaching of staff notation in the higher classes of public schools. 3. The inauguration of concerts and other musical performances specially adapted for audiences of children. 4. The development of a uniform system