

"THE MUSIC TEACHER."

SOUND GENERAL CULTURE NEEDED.

The Conference of Music Teachers was continued at the Elder Conservatorium yesterday. In the morning Mr. I. G. Reimann gave a profound and highly interesting study of "The Music Teacher," and in the afternoon Mr. Frederick Bevan read a paper on "The Art of Singing."

Mr. Reimann spoke of the importance to the teacher of a sound general culture as well as a thorough knowledge of musical technique. In his preliminary remarks he referred to the fact that it was just fifty years since he began to teaching music.

It was generally recognised, said Mr. Reimann, that the calling of the music teacher, considering the influence which he exercised on his pupils, was a noble one. For that reason it was evident that the training of the teacher should not be limited to the acquirement of the usual amount of special knowledge.

"Love for children," a modern psychologist had said, "is the chief characteristic of the pedagogic calling." That sentence, said Mr. Reimann, he would like to underline a number of times, for love of children held the key to the secret of the art of all education.

Training the Teacher.

To secure a real mental advancement of youth, and also to aspire to a teaching method which bore upon its various mental activities, it was absolutely necessary that the music teacher—apart from a thorough practical training—should also acquire an adequate standard of general culture.

also enable him to command that respect in society to which his artistic calling entitled him. Robert Schumann and Fritz Kreisler were examples of this. He gave his hearers a full bibliography, from which they could get a comprehensive knowledge of the scientific and artistic basis on which pianoforte playing rested.

The music teacher must, above all things, possess teaching talent. If he did not possess the gift of expressing his thoughts clearly and in a simple manner, and was

also unable to co-ordinate his knowledge to the receptivity and individuality of the pupil, he had better leave teaching secretly alone. Above all, a love for children was essential, and for that reason women were, in general, better fitted than men to the training of young children.

Mr. Reimann concluded with an appeal for an improved status for the music teacher, and pleaded for thoroughness in the training and culture of the teacher, the acquirement of such certificates and diplomas as really counted in the musical world, the gradual enlightenment of the public in regard to the value and status of such distinctions, and lastly, an insistent training of the character. (Applause.)

The Art of Singing.

In the afternoon Mr. Frederick Bevan spoke on "The art of singing." He said he had no idea of introducing them to new thoughts, but would confine himself to a

few practical suggestions, which he had gathered during his experience in teaching and studying singing. The art of song was one of the oldest. The present school of singing was founded centuries ago, and the text books revealed nothing new, being based on the works of the early Italian masters, which had been revised and brought up-to-date, notably by such men as Lablache. He regarded as undesirable books which dealt with the physiology of the throat on the ground that a little knowledge was a dangerous thing.

Training a Singer.

The singer must have something more than a compelling desire to sing. A good education was essential, besides the will any energy to master his art, a cultivated intelligence and a high ideal of life. It was not sufficient for the vocalist to learn his work by rote, but he must have some knowledge of pianoforte, understand and feel the sense of rhythm, and appreciate the intricacies of tonality and rhythm.

he song was alone, and the moment he began to think he ceased to feel. Fine pronunciation was the inevitable result of proper mental and bodily discipline, and fine tone the inseparable companion of fine pronunciation. Very few people spoke correctly, and consequently when they sang they failed to sing correctly. Impure vowels and defective utterance were alike reprehensibly ugly. They should also endeavor to use the whole power of their bodies in the production of tone, but they should never try to produce a tone which forced their bodily resources. The path of the singer was beset with many pitfalls, but perhaps one of the greatest was nervousness. They should be self-possessed, and they must train themselves to forget the presence of others. They must also perform the more difficult feat of forgetting themselves. Those who were blessed with a singing voice should regard themselves as high priests and priestesses of their art, and sing with sincerity without either personal vanity or mock humility.

Mr. Silver's Recital.

After Mr. Bevan's lecture, an adjournment was made to the Elder Hall, where Mr. William Silver gave a pianoforte recital. In deference to requests, Mr. Silver's programme was composed of pieces continually used by teachers. It covered an extensive range of both classical and romantic works, and also exem-

plified the growth of musical form from the time of Bach to the present day. It included the works of Bach, Rameau, Beethoven, Schumann, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Brahms, Grieg, Tschai-kowsky, Saint-Saens, Merwall, Palmgren, and Percy Grainger. Mr. Silver, who was in good form, won merited applause by his sincere and sympathetic renderings of these well known but none the less enjoyable numbers. In the "Gamsucker's march," for two pianos, Mr. George Pearce ably presided at the second piano. The programme was as follows:—"Gavotte in D minor" (Bach); "Tambourin in E minor" (Rameau); "Rondo in G major," Op. 51 (Beethoven); "Impromptu in F minor," Op. 149 (Schubert); "Song without words," No. 1, E major (Mendelssohn); "Mazurka in E minor" (No. 27); "Nocturne in G minor" (No. 6); "Study in F major," Op. 25 (No. 3); "Prelude in G minor" (Chopin); "Bird as prophet," from "Forest Scenes" (Schumann); "Rhapsodie in B minor" (Brahms); "Melody in A minor," from "Lyric Pieces" (Grieg); "Romance in F minor" (Tschai-kowsky); "Rhythm study in A flat major" (Saint-Saens); "Berceuse in C sharp minor (Merwall); "The sea" (Palmgren); and "Gamsucker's march" for two pianos from "In a Nutshell" suite (Grainger).

This morning the Rev. Brian Wibberley will speak on "Musical aesthetics" at 10.30, and Miss Hilda Reimann will give a violin recital at noon with Miss Melita Riedel as accompanist. In the afternoon Mr. Clive Carey will deliver an address on "Folk songs." There will be a concert in the evening by Miss Hilda Gill and Messrs. Harold Parsons and Harold Wyld.

The programme for today's sessions is—Morning, 10.30, address, "Musical aesthetics," by the Rev. Brian Wibberley, Mus. Bac.; noon, violin recital by Miss Hilda Reimann; afternoon, 2.30, "Folk songs," by Mr. Clive Carey, Mus. Bac.; evening, concert in the Elder Hall by Miss Hilda Gill, A.M.E.A., Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Harold Wyld, F.E.C.O. Only members of the conference may attend the lectures and discussions, but the public are cordially invited to all concerts and recitals.

MODERN EGYPT.

PROBLEM OF GOVERNMENT.

Another phase in this interesting series of University extension lectures delivered by Professor J. A. Prescott, which concluded last evening, was touched upon when the subject was the problem of Government. The lecturer, who is on the staff of the Waite Institute of Agricultural Research, spent some years in Egypt and is thus able to speak with authority and conviction upon questions affecting that country.

The queerest of all the paradoxes of a land of paradoxes, said the lecturer, was the political status of Egypt. Egypt was not a part of the British Empire, although its destinies for many years had been ruled by Englishmen or Scotsmen; yet the business of ruling it had always been through the British Foreign Office and not through the Colonial Office. To-day Egypt was nominally independent, having had in turn Greek Ptolemaic rulers, Roman rulers, Arab rulers, Turkish rulers, and finally British rulers. Even now the anomaly remained, for the independence was conditional on a showing of something like a sense of the new responsibilities which independence demanded, and of which Egypt so far had shown little routine.

The present troubles of Egypt began in the earliest part of the 19th century, when first Napoleon, and then Muhammad Ali Pasha, tried to put Egypt on the map of Europe. For the preceding three hundred years Egypt had nominally been under the suzerainty of Turkey, but an appointed Pasha to control the country. He, however, was under the local control of a group of resident military troops, the Mamluks, whose colonels had on and off for some hundreds of years been the ruling force of the country. Napoleon's aim was to break the link in England's chain to India, and for three years he held the country. After Napoleon's departure Turkish authority was for the moment restored. In 1832, the forces of Mohammed Ali, and his son Ibrahim, threatened the sovereignty of Turkey by triumphal marches through Syria. English advice carried the day and Mohammed Ali was able to make a temporary peace with his master, the Sultan. Eventually the combined forces of Turkey, Austria, and Great Britain drove Mohammed Ali back into his original Egyptian shell. His successor, Abbas I., was notorious for his ruthlessness. To Mohammed Ali Egypt owed a great deal, for he was a tough man of genius. Abbas closed the schools, dismissed a number of European officials, and closed the factories. Said, who followed him, had a French education and surrounded himself with foreigners. He welcomed foreign developments. Ismail, the next in power, was in many respects bigger than his predecessors, but he was a spendthrift, and it was his excesses that first brought European control into the country. In 1876 the crash came. The Egyptian Government suspended payment of Treasury bills. A commission of public debt was appointed to act as representatives of the bondholders, and a few days later the debt was consolidated at £91,000,000. The condition of affairs in Egypt at this time was deplorable. One-fifth of the arable land had passed into the hands of the Khedive, who tried to work it with forced labor. Eventually the Powers recommended Ismail to abdicate, and he was succeeded by Prince Tewfik. Trouble occurred in the army, and in 1889 three colonels, led by Arabi, denounced the Minister of War for ill-treatment of native officers, and Arabi was able to force the dismissal of the Minister.

The lecturer traced the story of the assassination of Europeans in Alexandria, and the bombardment of that town by Great Britain. The British occupation began in 1882, but was never intended to be more than temporary. Lord Cromer went to Egypt as Consul-General in 1883, and for the first few years his regime was a fight against bankruptcy. The Sudan after the British occupation an Egyptian force was annihilated by the fanatical forces of the Mahdi. Professor Prescott referred to the abuses from which the Egyptians had suffered from time immemorial, and the reforms carried out during the period of Lord Cromer's stay in Egypt. He was succeeded by Sir Eldon Gorst. The Nationalist movement was already on the way. Lord Kitchener was appointed in 1911, and his presence had a sobering effect on all parties. When the war broke out the position of Egypt was critical. The war brought the Egyptians for the first time into contact with a new set of ideas. It was generally recognised that the weakest feature of the British occupation had been the position of education, which had been restricted by financial stringency. The Egyptians were not blameless. Their religious university was still run on medieval times.

The lecturer dealt with the Nationalist movement led by Zaghlul Pasha, and said the British Government recognised that an independent Egypt could only be safeguarded from the abuses of the past by a democratic form of government. The Constitution, however, was not enough. It was of little use trying to force a twentieth century Constitution on a people whose political organisation was still that of the middle ages. The abuses possible during Egyptian elections were due largely to the fact that the internal administration of Egypt was still of an autocratic character, and had not been modified to fit it with the new Constitutional ideas. Finally the lecturer quoted what Lord Cromer said regarding the fall of Ismail Pasha. "Ismail Pasha's abdication sounded the death-knell of arbitrary personal rule in Egypt. It may be hoped and believed that that rule can never be revived, but in spite of the strongest guarantee which can be recorded on paper there would unquestionably be a considerable risk of its revival in some form or another if the British occupation of the country were allowed to terminate prematurely. When it is quite clear that this risk has ceased to exist the question of the cessation of the occupation will assume a new aspect. In the minds of all well-informed and calm observers it seems, however, that some long while must elapse before they can feel assured that this political transformation has already taken place."