

"MUSIC—HOW TO COMPOSE."

There was a large and interested audience at the University on Thursday evening, when Professor Ives delivered the first of a series of six lectures on "Music—how to compose." Professor Ives, whose remarks were couched in clear, lucid language, stated at the outset that he had no intention of making composers of his hearers, but that he would be amply repaid if during his course of lectures he was enabled to discover some native talent which patient and industrious study would successfully develop. It had been said that poets were born—not made, and in like manner composers of music were on a similar level, but in each case preparation and study were highly essential, for all great men in either branches of art had become great by their own assiduous labors. Environment was an important factor in the success of the individual, and persons brought up in an atmosphere of music were bound to possess the instincts of a musician, but the lecturer was anxious to disabuse the minds of his hearers that composers were born in the sense that they could write music without serious and well-considered effort. Genius, he asserted, was best described in the power, ability, and willingness to do hard work. The power of composition was to a large extent natural, but it was incumbent on those who possessed this natural ability to cultivate that power, for although it was largely a natural endowment it might also be acquired. The groundwork of all composition was the making of melody, for melody was the alphabet of composition just as the scales were the alphabet of melody. There existed a type of thinkers in the present day who contended that it was unfashionable to be melodious, but in spite of their contentions it could be pointed out that Mozart was the greatest type of melodious composers. Melody had been defined as a succession of sounds, but in its broadest sense it meant a succession of sounds which had some relationship to each other. Melody must be written in a definite key and must have a definite rhythm in the same way that all popular poems and all popular songs were regular in form and rhythm. Music was akin to poetry in that every musical phrase had a companion phrase, and that these had a certain reflex. The lines of a musical composition were made by means of cadences, cadences being fitly described as the clothes of musical thought, while they had their different value in the same way that punctuation had in literary composition. Having by graphic illustrations and similes devoid of technical obtruseness conducted his hearers to the point where musical composition commenced, Professor Ives in an equally clear and eloquent manner gave purpose to his teaching by writing the notes of a simple melody upon a blackboard, and with the aid of the piano illustrating the fact that melody and harmony were inseparable, it being one of the canons of musical composition that melody did not come into existence without its accompanying harmony. The lecture throughout was accompanied by verbal and instrumental illustrations which appealed to the veriest tyro of the musical art and therefore proved of the greatest interest to all, and there is little doubt but that the successive lectures of the series will command large and interested audiences.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURES.

"MUSIC—HOW TO COMPOSE."

On Thursday evening Professor Ives, Mus. Bac., delivered the first of his course of six lectures on "Music" in the music-room of the University before a large audience, consisting principally of ladies, who were evidently much interested in the subject of the discourse. In opening the lecturer remarked that he was afraid he had undertaken a somewhat ambitious task in promising to teach his auditors the art of composition. Still, if he failed to discover any striking native talent, his lectures would at least help them to better appreciate and enjoy the writings of the great composers. Pointing out the fallacy of the idea that composers needed no special training in the mechanism of their art, and substantiating his remarks by reference to the training Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven underwent, the Professor stated that while some inborn talent was always necessary culture would do much towards making a successful writer. Professor Ives impressed upon his auditors that he must take it for granted that they possessed a certain rudimentary knowledge of the elements of music—harmony and counterpoint—as it was impossible for the lectures to embrace these subjects. Melody, he said, "best defined as a succession of single sounds having a relation to each other," must be in a definite key and rhythm. These attributes were then illustrated in the melody of "Home, sweet home," the Professor pointing out how the whole air is made up out of short two-bar phrases, and analysing it step by step. A popular hymn tune was played and dissected in the same manner. The various cadences were then explained and illustrated in turn, and the Professor proceeded to construct a melody on the blackboard according to the rules which he had laid down. Choosing the key of G, a short phrase of four measures was written, without bar lines; playing this on the piano, the Professor showed how innate was the sense of rhythm and accent in human nature. He also emphasized the fact that every melody had its own implied harmony, which is in a sense born with it. By altering the cadence the character of this short phrase was altered so as to necessitate the addition of some further measures, and the Professor illustrating his procedure by homely remarks and analogies, added four more bars to the first. Going on in this manner, and showing by practical demonstration on the piano, the melody was continued until it reached twenty-four bars in length, and was brought to a satisfactory conclusion, every step being clearly explained. After showing that this example was really in character an ordinary hymn tune, the lecturer proceeded to alter it by the various little devices of passing notes, suspensions, and reiterations until it assumed quite a lively character; as the Professor remarked, quite *à la* Haydn. The concluding remarks were devoted to emphasizing the fact that composition was generally undertaken in a perfectly mechanical, deliberate manner, according to the well-known definite rules of music, and not in a frenzy of mental excitement. The lecture was listened to with rapt attention and evidently deep interest by all those pre-

present, many of whom took notes of the Professor's remarks. It appears likely that these lectures may serve to awaken a new interest in the "divine art," and they should be the means of inducing many who have not as yet studied the theoretical side of music to do so, and attend the regular lectures of the musical course at the University. The lectures are to be continued each Thursday evening at 8 o'clock, and several of them will be illustrated by vocal and instrumental selections.
