

Nov 14.7.25.

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CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT.

There was a good attendance at the Elder Hall in the evening, when a fine example of chamber music was presented by the Elder Conservatorium String Quartet. The first number was Mozart's "Quartet in D Major," the instrumentalists being Mr. Charles Schilsky and Miss Kathleen Meegan, A.M.U.A. (violin), Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A. (viola), and Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac. (cello). Each of the four movements of the work, which abounds in beautiful phrases, was played with refinement of expression, the different instruments entering into the spirit of the writing in a manner which revealed not only the charming melodies, but the beauty of the harmonies, which are a conspicuous feature of the composition. In the opening "allegretto," the sympathy between the instruments was marked, and it was no less apparent in the graceful "minuetto." The melodious "adagio" and "allegro" were presented with taste and artistic emphasis. Two movements were played from Tchaikowsky's Quartet Opus 11—the "Andante Cantabile" and the "Scherzo." The former was treated with great delicacy of expression. The appealing strains and the haunting melody were presented with muted strings. Beautiful tone was preserved throughout, and the softer passages especially were invested with a rare charm which won from the audience a spontaneous outburst of applause. The "scherzo" was given with appropriate vigor, and the striking contrast between the two sections of the composition made a decidedly pleasing effect. For the final number, the piano quartet in G minor (Gabriel Faure) had been chosen. The writing is characteristic of the eminent French musician, and it made an admirable contribution to the programme. Mr. Harold Wylde, F.R.C.O., took the piano part, and the other performers were Mr. Schilsky, Miss Whittington, and Mr. Parsons. The movements—"allegro molto moderato," "allegro molto," "adagio non troppo," and "allegro molto"—were played with vivacity, and the pleasing rhythmic flow made the interpretation very enjoyable. Particularly impressive was the third movement, in which the opening theme is announced by the piano, and is then responded to by the viola, the two instruments leading the way for the fuller harmonies of the whole quartet. That the appreciation of the entire concert was thorough was evident by the genuineness of the applause.

undergoing this training at present, but only a small percentage of them reach a high level of attainment.

TRAINING LISTENERS

"Then again, musical education may be directed toward the actual making of music—that is along creative lines. There is a great movement on foot at present in the schools of Wales for teaching children to compose their own tunes. They do this just as easily and



PROFESSOR E. HAROLD DAVIES

Elder Professor of Music, who today delivered an address on musical education to a conference of musical teachers.

naturally as they improvise little stories.

It is certain that a great composer cannot be made in this way, but, on the other hand, it is equally certain that children can thus be taught to regard music as a perfectly natural form of self-expression.

The third direction in which musical education may move is in the way of training listeners who may or may not be performers. That aims at the development of the power of musical perception.

It is not difficult to make the average man understand a good deal of what music means, and if it were possible to train the mass of the people to listen intelligently and discriminately to music, what an extraordinary reaction it would have upon the work of both artists and composers.

LEARNING TO HEAR.

"Poor performances which are now applauded to the echo by ignorant hearers would no longer be tolerated, and poor compositions which sell by hundreds and thousands would go where they belong—the waste-paper basket.

There is only one great key, however, to all forms of musical education, and that is learning to hear. Music is really a language, and as a language it should be studied and learned word by word.

The constant tendency of teachers of music is to concentrate upon the technical problem only, and it is almost unbelievable that many students are unable to accurately distinguish the simplest differences between two musical sounds.

"How should we regard the student of drawing or of painting who had no eye for outline, for perspectives, or for color effect?"

"My own judgment," continued the professor, "is that there is no possible hope of real musical attainment apart from the progressive development of the ear. When we acquire the habit of thinking musically, to improvise simple strains of melody, to harmonise naturally, to modulate effectively, all become instinctive processes.

In short, we learn the language as a language should be learned, and in this way find the ability to express ourselves in terms of music, simply and intelligently, as we do in everyday conversation.

Following the address, which was received enthusiastically, afternoon tea was served.

PROGRAMME OF CONFERENCE.

At 3 o'clock tonight a Chamber Music concert will be given by the Elder Conservatorium String Quartette in the Elder Hall. The quartette consists of Mr. Charles Schilsky, Miss Kathleen Meegan, A.M.U.A., Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A., and Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac.

At 10.30 tomorrow Mr. I. G. Reimann will address members on "The Music Teacher," at 2.30 Mr. Frederick Bevan will speak on "The Art of Singing," and Mr. William Silver will give a pianoforte recital at 4 o'clock.

The Rev. Brian Wibberley, Mus. Bac., will address the conference on Wednesday at 10.30 on "Musical Aesthetics," at noon Miss Hilda Reimann will give a violin recital; at 2.30 Mr. Clive Carey, Mus. Bac., will speak on "Folk Songs"; and at 8 Miss Hilda Gill, A.M.U.A., Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Harold Wylde, F.R.C.O., will give a concert in the Elder Hall.

Proceedings on Thursday will open with an address by Professor Davies entitled "Form in Music," at noon Miss Ada Wordie, A.M.U.A., will give a vocal recital; at 2.30 Mr. W. H. Foote, A.R.C.M., will explain "Orchestral Instruments," and at 4 o'clock Miss Maude Puddy, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Charles Schilsky will render a piano and violin recital.

At 10.30 on Friday questions and subjects previously forwarded will be answered; at noon Miss Elsie Willmore, Mus. Bac., will give a pianoforte recital; at 3 Mr. Frank Gratton will talk on "Music in Schools," and 8 o'clock Miss Whittington, Mr. Carey, and Mr. George Pearce will give a concert in the Elder Hall.

Miss Heather Gell will demonstrate aural culture and Dalcroze Eurhythmics at 10.30 on Saturday morning.

All concerts and recitals will be free to the general public. Lectures and discussions will be confined to members of the conference.

ADVERTISER. 14.7.25. MUSICAL EDUCATION

CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS.

A conference of music teachers was opened at the Elder Conservatorium on Monday. A large number of teachers from all over the State were received by the Vice-Chancellor of the University (Professor W. Mitchell), the Director of the Elder Conservatorium (Dr. E. Harold Davies), and the Registrar (Mr. F. W. Eardley). The members of the conference were presented by the secretary (Mr. Othams).

The Vice-Chancellor, in welcoming the members, said all the resources of the University were at their disposal during the week they were in the city. In speaking of musical appreciation, he said music was the pure language of the emotions, and so was useful to the psychologist, or would be if only he could get to the material. Music from the psychological point of view was a very complex thing, but his hearers were extremely fortunate in being able to read it as easily as others read phrases in a book. Music was the universal language, but it was completely outside the three dimensions of space, although it had three dimensions of its own in rhythm, melody, and harmony. Entry into that world, however, was a puzzle to the poor psychologist who had not been blessed with a musical education. (Applause.)

Dr. Davies said his hearers were coming to their own University, their "alma mater." They should all take the same view of the matter, for all those wishing to learn or to teach would be received as having part in it. Reading music was, after all, just like reading words, for in each case one saw the graphic symbol and heard a sound. If they did not, they should. (Laughter and applause.)

There were three directions in which musical education might move. It might proceed along more or less technical lines, aiming at the training of performers, either singers or players. Its results were mostly mediocre, and they might think with some dismay of the thousands of students who were undergoing it, of whom only the very smallest percentage reached a high level of attainment. Musical education might also be directed along creative lines. He did not suggest that great composers could be made by purely educative means, but it was certain that children could be taught to compose delightful little tunes as easily as they could be taught to improvise little stories. In the schools of Wales at that moment thousands of original melodies were being written by the children, who, in the sheer joy and zest of creative activity, were learning to love and understand music for what it really was—a perfectly natural form of utterance.

The third direction that musical education might take was in the way of training listeners, who might or might not be performers; that was, to develop the power of perception. At that stage he would only ask his audience to think what would happen if everybody were able to listen to music intelligently, and with something approaching a true sense of values. Indifferent performances, which were now applauded to the echo by ignorant hearers, would no longer be tolerated, and rubbishy compositions, which to-day sold by hundreds and thousands, would go where they belonged—to the waste-paper basket. It was essential that they should train their children, who were trying to acquire skill as players, to a perception of the beauty of music in all its manifold content of sounds and rhythms. His view was that at least a year or two should be given over to ear and rhythm training before a child was allowed to touch an instrument or begin to acquire a technique.

Hearers, Not Doers Only.

There was a familiar Scriptural injunction, said Dr. Davies, which said, "Be ye doers of the Word, not hearers only." The best possible text they could take for a talk on musical education would be an inversion of that injunction, "Be ye hearers

of the word and not doers only," and that, as they would presently discover, was the very crux of the whole matter—learning to hear. But in order to get a clear idea of the subject it would be well first to decide what music really was; then to think what education meant; and putting the two together, it was comparatively easy to form a right conclusion of the meaning of musical education.

There were three views about music, of which one was wholly wrong, one was partially right, and one wholly right. The wholly wrong view was that it was just a clever and ingenious trick of combining sounds of varying quality and duration. It did not need much imagination to conceive the possibility of arranging them artificially to make an infinite variety of sound effects. That was the lowest view, and the people who took it told them very wisely that there was no special utility in music, that its highest office was to amuse or divert, and moreover, that those who followed it were a rather unreliable folk, who wore their hair long and often forgot to wash themselves; who ran into debt, and did not keep their appointments. Then there was the partially right view, that music was one of the fine arts—perhaps the greatest of all the arts; that it was subject to the aesthetic laws of symmetry, unity, and variety, and that its whole influence was elevating and refining, and its pursuit was a most desirable form of culture. But music was more, much more than that.

His audience would remember Browning's words—" 'Tis all triumphant art, art in obedience to law"—the law of man's need of utterance. There they had the wholly right view, that music was first and last a speech, growing up side by side with language, natural, spontaneous, inevitable, voicing, as nothing else could voice, the heights and depths of human feeling. Speech and song had come from the same source; and primitive folk song bore the same relation to a Beethoven symphony as primitive speech bore to Shakespearean drama. Music was a universal thing, and every race had developed its own traditions of song. If they kept that in mind they would realize that what they were pleased to call the Art of Music was really the mother tongue of them all, sublimated into a splendid literature which enshrined the whole story of human passion, of human desire and aspiration. That was the true view, the exalted view. And if music were really a language, there was only one way to learn it, word by word and meaning by meaning. He feared that instead of that many of them were trying to speak it parrot-like, without any comprehension of its true meaning. He had often met students who could give quite a fair performance of a Beethoven sonata, yet could not distinguish between a major and a minor third. If they were to spend years in learning to play without experiencing the simplest difference between two sounds, they might just as well devote themselves to reciting poems in Hindustani without any knowledge of the language.

On the question of education there was much misunderstanding, for there was a greater aspect of education than that which considered it merely as instruction. It was the bringing out or developing of all that was latent in them of sense or of ability. What they were, or what they became, as a result of training or experience, was the chief thing, not what they knew by the aid of memory, or what they could do skillfully as a result of practice. In other words, the fruits of education could be found in heightened perception,

in latent faculties raised to their highest point of efficiency. And so they realized two vital truths; first, that music was a wonderful language, and, secondly, that education meant acute sensibility, quiet and intelligent perception. Musical education, therefore, was effective in so far as it enabled them to hear or read or make music with perfect understanding.

Stimulating the Appreciation.

It was impossible to learn to draw or paint without developing a quick eye for outlines, for perspectives, and color effects, and for the same reason there was no earthly hope of musical attainment apart from the progressive development of the ear. And as a natural consequence of being able to hear musically, either actually or silently, they acquired the habit of thinking musically. To improvise simple strains of melody, to harmonise naturally, to modulate effectively, all became instinctive processes. In short, they learnt the language as a language should be learnt; and even if they never became great composers, they could still express themselves in terms of music simply and intelligently, as they did in ordinary conversation.

And now, having spoken of most of the things which were essential, he could imagine them asking what earthly hope there was of covering such an extensive field of training, including the development of technique, in the limited space of a half-hour, or even two half-hour's weekly lesson. It was certainly a problem which called for deep reflection, and probably a good deal of reorganising of existing methods as well. The poor and often underpaid teacher, however well qualified and anxious to do good work, must necessarily set a limit to his efforts. Time and means were stern facts of which no sentiment could dispose. Still, as teachers, they must not shelter themselves behind those obvious disabilities. It should be their constant endeavor to avoid waste of time, and in the giving of lessons be

REGISTER. 14.7.25. A SOP TO DEMOCRACY.

Workers' Education Association.

At the University Commission to-day Professor Stewart said he was strongly of opinion that, until the many needs of the colleges were satisfied, no increased support should be given to the Workers' Education Association. The commission should obtain figures showing the proportion of real working men in that organization. He added:—"It is not serious work, and, in many respects, is a sop to the democratic feeling of the country."

NEWS. 14.7.25.

MUSICAL EDUCATION

Conference of Teachers

ADDRESS BY DR. DAVIES

With the object of assisting music teachers from all parts of South Australia to gain a better knowledge of the problems and possibilities of their profession, and to ensure the intelligent direction of their activities, a conference of music teachers was opened at the Elder Conservatorium at 3 o'clock this afternoon. It will continue until Saturday morning.

Visitors were received by Professor W. Mitchell (Vice-Chancellor of the University), and Professor E. Harold Davies, Mus. Doc. (Elder Professor of Music).

Professor Davies chose for the subject of his inaugural address, "Musical Education."

"In speaking of musical education," said the professor, "it is necessary to note the three directions in which it may move. It may aim, for instance, at the training of performers, either players or singers, along more or less technical lines. Many thousands of students are