

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOL.

The regular general meeting of the city school teachers was held today, October 28. The chief feature was an address by Prof. George C. Young, director of music in the Salt Lake City schools. He said:

The genius of music is as old as creation. In the twilight of history the "music of the spheres" was but the prelude to a science that has commanded the attention of the profoundest thinkers of all times, and the development of an art that appeals to the highest type of culture.

And yet the three famous verses on Peter Bell, to whom

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

might be readily paraphrased, and in their new setting be justly applied to the crusty Dr. Johnsons, the self-elected critics, and to a large class of presumably intelligent people to whom music is mere sound and "nothing more."

If for no other purpose than to serve as a means of defense against the unwarranted assumptions of those who would deny the potency of music as an agent for intellectual and moral growth, it may not be uninteresting for us to pause a moment at the threshold of this discussion to note what some of the master minds of the world have said about it.

Plato wrote, "Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything. It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate and eternal form."

"Music," said Guther, "is one of the best arts. The notes breathe life into the text. Music drives away sadness, quickens and refreshes the heart. It is half the discipline, and makes men more gentle, more modest and sensible. Music I have always loved. A school master must know how to sing else I will have nothing to do with him. It is a beautiful and noble gift of God."

Beecher esteemed music so highly as to take the ground that "in singing you come into sympathy with the Truth as you perhaps never do under the preaching of a discourse."

That wonderfully gifted woman, Margaret Fuller, wrote in her journal in regard to the influence of music, "I felt raised above all care, all pain, all fear, and every taint of vulgarity was washed out of the world."

The Grand Old Man of England says, "They who think music ranks among the trifles of existence are in gross error, because from the beginning of the world down to the present time it has been one of the most forcible instruments both for training, for arousing and for governing the spirit of man."

Even the trenchant Carlyle found it possible to rise above the mutterings of his discontent into the serene atmosphere of music, when he said, "All inmost things are melodious; naturally utter themselves in song. The meaning of song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infi-

nite, and lets us for moment's gaze into that!"

If these estimates are true, and they might be almost indefinitely multiplied, we may at once claim a place for music as a regular branch of instruction in public school education; and if it possesses sufficient merit to justify such a claim, its value, from whatever point of view it may be regarded, is worth some consideration.

The one great value that music possesses consists in the relation that it bears to other studies, aiding them both directly and indirectly by means of this contact. While it stimulates the faculties in general, it renders us little assistance in the cultivation of the will, it strengthens the memory, inspires the imagination, leads to habits of exact thought, and promotes graceful expression in reading and speaking. In every song a child attempts to interpret, he is straining the eye, the ear, the memory, the voice, each performing a distinct service, yet blending in one the thought the song is intended to convey; nor must we forget that beneath these outward forms lies the silent influence of that inward grace, the training of the emotional nature, and the cultivation of that peculiar sympathy which human nature always demands, but which is so desirable in child-life.

Perhaps the more immediate effect of music as a related study is apparent in the work of reading. It is very evident that the cultivation of the soft, pure tone of voice in every singing exercise, whether that exercise be a practical drill or a song for recreation simply, cannot pass without, in a large measure, reacting on the vocal drills incident to the reading lesson. It does not of necessity follow that a good singing school must be a good reading school, but, other things being equal, the child that uses its voice correctly in singing will know how to use it correctly in reading. Speech may be made melodious, and the testimony of those who have taken the pains to look into the results in this regard is unanimous in support of the belief that the rapidly fading song and drawl of the reading class of our earlier years is largely due to the influence of music in the school room. If reading is thus made better, all oral work may be improved; and if proper articulation, clear enunciation, and correct intonation be made an essential part of every musical exercise, it will surely bear fruit in promoting flexibility, facility, correctness in everything in which our pupils are expected to express themselves in any way whatsoever.

Again, were music desired for disciplinary purposes merely as a means of control, it would be found to fully meet all that could reasonably be demanded of it. How often does it act as a safety valve through which an overflow of boyish fun or girlish mischief may expend itself, and thus, in the pleasantest way possible, harmonize the discordant elements that so frequently arise between muscular and intellectual activity? Periods of unrest, moments of fear, and occasions of nervous excitement may all be controlled by some simple song.

Another source of more than ordinary value in the study of vocal music, and one which is of vital interest to every person, is the service it renders

in the promotion of health. It accomplishes this directly, by the exercise which it gives the lungs and other vital organs; and indirectly, by the cheerfulness and genial flow of spirits which it is the prerogative of music to bestow. Vocal music cannot be performed without an increased action of the lungs; and an increased action of the lungs necessarily causes an increased action of the heart; and of all the organs of digestion and nutrition. The singer brings a greater quantity of air in contact with the blood. Hence the blood is better purified and vitalized. Good blood gives more active and vigorous play to all the organs of absorption, assimilation, and execution. The better these functions are performed, the purer will be the influences which ascend to the brain. The scientific physiologist can trace the effects of singing from the lungs into the blood, from the blood into the processes of nutrition, and back again into the blood, into the nerve, and, finally from the whole vital tissue into the brain, to be there developed into the flower and fruit of cheerfulness, increased health, increased strength, and prolonged life."

In support of the foregoing, and especially of the preceding statement, which is given from a musical point of view, I beg to quote the opinion of Dr. Charles Warren, of the United States bureau of education. He says: "It is well to remember that singing, when well and gradually done during the whole school life, affects favorably distinctness of hearing, the health of the throat and lungs, the station and carriage of the body, and the development and shape of the thorax; that by judicious alternation with other studies it preserves the beautiful childish capacity of quick perception and retentive memory, while it does not interfere with the acquirement of that tenacity and continuity in an effort which will be found useful in later life; and that of all arts it is among the most social, natural, humanistic and permanent in all the occupations and responsibilities of maturer life and culture."

Before so intelligent an audience it is needless for me to enlarge upon the influence of music in relation to the development of the moral nature. Not a small part of the earnest teacher's work is to illustrate both by precept and example the moral value of refined pleasures, and I assume that you appreciate the advantage that music affords in this particular.

For the same reason I shall refer but briefly to music as a means of culture, awakening and refreshing as it does the intellectual activities, cultivating the phantasy, and touching the life of the soul far beneath the analytic processes of thought, thus abiding with us as an agency for good in our strivings for the ideal life. This power which reaches out into the infinite for its inspiration, this force which permeates all nature, is not an emotional fancy, is not the caprice of a mere turbulent soul, is not the whim of some day-dreamer's vagaries. Take the best of Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Chopin or Schuman, let it enter into one's inner life and become an essential part of his being, "what culture can he lack that would