

## FOR MUSIC'S SWEET EAR.

LOGAN, June 17, 1896.

I want to say a word to members of choir and others who follow and make use of the divine art. I have been a member of some vocal and instrumental organization for the last 32 years—ever since I was eight years of age. I have made music a study simply for the love I have for it, and also to try and make myself useful to my fellowmen. I flatter myself in saying that I have been an apt scholar, for I have devoted nearly all my spare moments to improve myself.

About the first thing that I found out of importance in music was "tone." Without this very important portion which goes to make melody, we can make but poor progress indeed. It is also very important to have an accurate ear. If one is lacking in this, he or she must depend upon some one else. An instrument, accurately tuned, to test one's voice is very good. How often do we hear people with verabundance of vocal power, but how often are they deficient in tune or tone, and together with this they are entirely ignorant of the fact, for they are continually pushing themselves forward. Simply because they make lots of noise they conclude that they are good singers and ought to be appreciated. During my experience I have met many of this class. At this writing I am reminded of a certain young man who has a voice equal to two or three ordinary men. A portion of his notes are all right, but the other portion are easily out of tune. If every tone were equally good in tune and tone, he would certainly make an excellent singer but the condition he is in does injury to the organization to which he belongs. He is rather forward also, which makes it so much worse. Connected with this, he is not afraid to "turn himself loose," as the saying has it. One important factor is lacking here, that is the ear. If this organ even was all right he would certainly correct himself. Some time since he took vocal lessons, so I understand, but I find him no better, as his voice is yet out of tune, and the young mangoes right ahead and no one has nerve enough—not even his late voice trainer—to tell him that he is out of gear.

I make mention of this because I know that there are men and women many of them, in the same plight. I also make mention of this in order to do them good, for they are not altogether responsible. Still they can (if they are so disposed) improve themselves. Hence, in the end, they have themselves to blame.

There is a certain time in our lives that we think "we know it all." What we don't know is not worth knowing. After a while, when others begin to see that we do know something, is the time we can see that we don't know anything, comparatively speaking. This is a very safe conclusion to be in, I assure you, as then we become of some use. Music is deep, and it takes years of hard study before we become really useful. The great master (Handel) admitted that he was yet in his A B C of the art and science of music.

Now then, if he had only reached his A B C as yet, where are we?

I often think what a hard lot is that of the choir conductor, or leader. A man may be even a master of music and at the same time be sadly wanting as a leader. Bandmasters often think their lot hard, but it is a picnic along side of that of the chorister. The former has only men to direct, while the latter have both men and women, which is often more complicated. By far more jealousy arises among the ladies—they are more envious of each other's success and much more unreasonable to each other than are the men folk. Am I wrong in this? True, as men folks are not perfect, yet I take it that we are more inclined to offer the encouraging word to a worthy neighbor. There is an exception even to this rule, mind you.

There is another very important matter which I desire to make mention of here, and I hope that I can make myself plain to all. It is this: Why is it, I would be pleased to know, that so many excellent voices among the people are ever heard in our choirs? I can't account for this, unless it is that they consider themselves too important or superior to others; I don't know how else to apply them. I have seen so much of this that I can't pass it by. I am aware that professional soloists are told that they must not sing in choruses, as it tends to injure the voice. This, in my judgment, is a mistake. I know this, that soloists (often called) are of little aid in the chorus, while in the chorus are found good soloists. I will here give my reasons to prove my assertion: In order to, successfully, render a chorus, the different parts, within themselves, must, or should, blend. The less, for instance, should be almost as one voice; there should not be even a shade between them. Now, in order to bring the individual voices to this perfection it takes time. How often have I heard the remark that, S-and-so's voice can be selected out from among the rest. I will say about this that it is not to our credit that our voice can thus be "picked out." Rather should our voice be in perfect unison with our associates. Enough on this point.

Now, I want to say a word to our choir leaders. When you have an extra voice solo, or duet, or trio, or quartette, do not go outside of your choir for any one to do the work; rather favor your own. You will do just as well and often better. Going outside shows a lack of confidence to the faithful members you have. The public takes a view of it whether you do or not. Let the professional soloist think himself, or herself, too far advanced to offer their services regularly as a member, leave them out entirely. I have no ill-feeling toward them. If one is gifted and has talent for music, take my advice and offer your services freely in singing praises to Him who has created all things. We owe it to Him. Don't run away with the idea that there is nothing grand and noble in sacred music, for you will make a mistake should you think so.

The oratorios of the grand masters, together with the grand anthems of our own day are, to me, as much above the other class of music as the heavens is above the earth; and if you want to

"bring yourself out," you will do well to take my advice, which I freely give: Offer your services and do all the good you can. You will regret some day that you did not devote more of your time to sacred music. The gift is divine, hence we should devote as much as possible of our time and the heavenly gift to our Lord and Master. Do not understand me as barring out all music other than sacred, for I do not; it is all good and beneficial in its place. But let us

Sing unto the Lord a new song;  
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing unto the Lord, bless His name;  
Shew forth His salvation from day to day.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye hands,  
Serve the Lord with gladness;  
Come before His presence with singing,  
Sing unto the Lord a new song.

DIXIE.

## BINGHAM STAKE CONFERENCE.

IONA, Idaho, June 16, 1896.—The quarterly conference of the Bingham Stake of Zion was held at Iona on Sunday and Monday, the 14th and 15th of June. The Relief Society and Primary conferences were held on Saturday, the 13th.

We were highly favored in that we had with us so many who were capable of expounding the principles of life and salvation, and of instructing the Saints. Of the quorum of Apostles we had with us Elder Franklin D. Richards; of the presidents of Seventy, Elders Seymour B. Young and Edward Stevenson; also President T. E. Ricks of the Bannock Stake, and Elder Mathias Cowley of the Owyhee Stake presidency.

There was a good attendance of Stake officers; all of the High Council, and representatives from all of the wards with the exception of one.

Sunday, at 10 a. m., President Steele reported the condition of the Stake. It is fully organized and in a prosperous condition. Crops are looking well, and the indications point to an abundant harvest.

The Bishops of the Eagle Rock, Shelton, Lewisville and Riverside wards gave reports of the condition of the same. Organizations were complete, health of the people good, and everything working harmoniously.

President Thomas E. Ricks testified that he had been blessed in his labors in this Stake, formerly a part of Bannock Stake.

Elder Edward Stevenson followed him, and in a pleasing manner told of his early experiences in the Church, and the many testimonies he had received of the divinity of the work we are engaged in.

Sunday, at 2 p. m., Elder Franklin D. Richards delivered a discourse occupying an hour and ten minutes. He noted with pleasure the growth of this part of the Lord's vineyard; spoke of the developments and great discoveries in the use of steam, electricity and other arts and sciences, showing that all the great inventions, etc., of this, the nineteenth century, should greatly tend to dispel infidelity and increase our faith in God, being all important actions in fulfilling the prophecies, and the establishing of His kingdom upon the earth in this last dispensation.

The speakers at the meetings on Monday were Elder Seymour B.