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Registers.

After a short interval Madame Larkcom read yet another paper, dealing this time with vocal registers. This was, she said, a vexed question. Some teachers denied the existence of registers, some ignored them, some trained them up, some trained them down, some never thought of them. According to her experience as a teacher, the head notes were the last to be developed and the first to go, the medium and chest notes were available for many more years, and sometimes remained beautiful even in advanced age.

Dr. Davies moved a warm vote of thanks to the speaker.

Piano and Violin Recital.

The feature of the conference on Wednesday afternoon was a most attractive and successful piano and violin recital given by Miss Maud Puddy, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Gerald Walenn. The large audience, appreciative at the beginning, warmed up to more and more enthusiasm as one number followed another. The programme was particularly well arranged to illustrate various styles of music, as well as to afford both musicians ample scope for their art. In the ever-famous "Kreutzer Sonata" by Beethoven this was especially true, and throughout both Miss Puddy and Mr. Walenn were absolutely at their best. Miss Puddy's piano solo, "Papillons, Op. 2" by Schumann, was one more example of her delightfully pure, liquid touch, which, holds both assured technique and sympathetic expression. Her other numbers were Schubert's "Minuetto, op. 78," with its delicate and dainty dance measure, and, by way of contrast, Brahms's "Rhapsodie in G minor, op. 79." In each case she gave a most artistic rendering; and, in response to an enthusiastic encore, Miss Puddy played Schumann's ever-delightful "Schlummerlied." Mr. Walenn in Viouxtemp's "Ballad and polonaise" displayed just the qualities that the Adelaide public has learned to expect from him—restrained handling, quiet sincerity of technique, a very thorough command of his instrument, and a thoughtful rendering of the composer's work. His bracket later on included the quaint "Chanson et Pavana" (Couperin-Kreisler), "Tambourin" (Le Clair), and "Theme and variations" (Corcelli-Kreisler). In response to a recall, Mr. Walenn played a "Serenata" by Moskowski. Mr. Harold Wylde accompanied.

Educational Value of Music.

Madame Larkcom, who was heartily welcomed, in her first address dealt with "The educational value of vocal music." She said there was a great desire amongst educationists just now that music should have a good place in future schemes of education. It was believed by many that one of the best ways of stimulating the musical sense which was present in an active or latent form in the majority of children, would be to arrange that lecture-recitals of vocal music by really good singers should be given at fairly frequent intervals in schools and young people's clubs and institutes. An illustration of the kind of programme which would be useful for the purpose was given. Some of the most charming English songs should be sung, and care should be taken that they should be, not only simple and pretty



Miss Agnes J. Larkcom.

enough to inspire the hearers with the desire to sing them themselves (which was the end in view), but also that they should be those in which the words were of literary value and beautiful in sound as well as in sense. The performer would then have an opportunity of demonstrating that the English language was really very lovely when used by fine writers, and enunciated by singers who had mastered the difficult art of pure and correct diction. It was well known that if a human being saw or heard anything being done he was usually inspired with a desire to go and do likewise. Young persons would be much more likely to be interested in music after hearing some attractive examples of vocal art beautifully sung and expressed than from any amount of teaching, urging, or exhortation. All the fine arts made their appeal to the emotions, and these exhibited two aspects. On the one hand there were the aspirations after the pure, ideal, and sublime, and on the other the call to the sensuous enjoyment of material things.

Words of genius could appeal to the lower as well as to the higher nature. Art was not necessarily elevating because it was clever. During the last few years they had had many examples of horrible paintings, hideous sculpture, offensive literature, and ugly music. That state of things was particularly dangerous for the young; but as far as literature, painting, and sculpture were concerned, it was fairly easy to select what was educationally good and uplifting and to reject what was gross and debasing. When they came to music, however, there was a difference. That art was so intangible, so elusive—it told no stories, painted no pictures, delineated no shapes. If it was imaginative, original, and skilfully constructed, how could it be either moral or immoral, how anything but pure and elevating? Music, however, exerted an enormous influence, which was so insidious and difficult to detect, that its effect for good or evil might be more far-reaching and tremendous than that from any other branch of art. Music had the power of creating an atmosphere which was capable of stimulating and enhancing every kind of emotion. The educationist should devote a good deal of time and attention to the kind of music which was put before the young and impressionable. Selections should be made from music which from experience had proved to have the power to arouse beautiful ideas and feelings; and that which seemed to have the opposite effect should be rejected.

Referring to English music, Madame Larkcom said it had special characteristics, and if they studied it seriously they would probably find that two qualities stood out above all others. These were the outcome on the one hand of the sense of reverence, the yearning for the sublime and spiritual which existed in the English people, and on the other of the unquench-

able gaiety of heart which showed itself in the love of the open air, the fresh water, the forest and the flowers, and which made them long for the sea and the sunshine, and revel in the sweet-smelling meadows. It was the spirit which had been so evident in the soldiers and sailors that made them carry on with a smile and a jest, no matter how weary the heart might be or what hardships and dangers might beset them. English music was not very passionate, at least it had not that kind of passion which was evident in much of the music of foreign peoples. Personally she thought their musical development had been greatly retarded through the presence in their midst of so many foreign and semi-foreign musicians, who had played on the natural tendency of the English to deery themselves whenever possible, and had seriously delayed the development of characteristic native art. (Applause.) When speaking of English music the names of Elgar and Sullivan immediately occurred to her as exemplifying perfectly in their works the two types of mind which seemed to be essentially British. There had been a tendency in recent years to relegate music to professional musicians, with a few to perform and thousands to listen. She would advocate the opposite of that—as many as possible to perform and only a few left out to criticize and applaud. Madame Larkcom referred to the excellent educational work which in the past had been done by amateur choral associations, and said nowadays conductors and instrumentalists, and even sometimes choristers, were taken en bloc from town to town. There was little local interest, and really hearty widespread love of music flagged. Concert performances tended to become more and more exotic, and appealed mostly to the few, the fashionable and the highly trained. A tribute was paid to the value of community singing, as Madame Larkcom had heard it at the Adelaide Town Hall. She said singing should be no longer the Cinderella of Music's daughters. That it had ever been so was probably because it was so very lovely. (Applause.)

Expression in Diction.

Madame Larkcom then dealt with "Expression in diction." She said the art of expression rested entirely on sympathy and understanding. It should be studied from first principles, and not from isolated examples of poetry and music. Words and musical signs were inadequate to convey all the meaning which lay behind them. Only by insight and imagination could they ever hope to interpret the real meaning of great poets and musicians. Their ambition ought to be to train and develop their resources until they were able in some degree to enter into the state of mind of the poet and musician, to see from their point of view, share their emotions, and rise to their ideals. A fine artist-interpreter might be considered to contain in himself the same kind of capacities for feeling and expression as those which animated the creative genius whose works he sought to interpret. Education was necessary to the interpretive artist, and side by side with the education of the mind must go the training of the physical organs employed in voice-production. After the lungs and throat had been developed and strengthened, the articulating organs needed very definite attention from the singer. Good and beautiful diction was interpretation's skilled handmaiden. By diction was meant the correct pronunciation and clear enunciation of words, added to a way of expressing them which conveyed their full spiritual

value clearly and truly to the mind of the listener. Words might be sung distinctly but not beautifully, beautifully but not distinctly, or both beautifully and distinctly but not expressively. Clarity alone was not sufficient. Words seemed to have a life of their own. Every inflection of the voice affected their importance. Mood was suggested by the color of the vowels, but consonants were the real means of expression. Every emotion affected the physical condition more or less, and the result of that was apparent in the way they enunciated their words. The vocal artist must study the effects of emotion on the articulating organs, and by careful observation and practice become capable of producing at will the same conditions as those which were the spontaneous outcome of real feeling. Madame Larkcom then dealt with the different groups of letters of the alphabet and explained the uses of each. She said a good deal of beautiful vocal expression was the result of intuitive feeling and sympathy, but the teacher ought to study the expression of the emotions scientifically. Such things as love, joy, fear, anger, and indignation had signs with which everybody was familiar. These were explained by the speaker. The aim of the teacher of singing ought to be to form thoughtful, original, and independent artists; not to turn out mere singers with good voices which needed to be coached in every work or song they performed, and whose styles were simply the reflection of the idiosyncrasies of the last professor under whose influence they happened to be.

The teacher should realize that in order to understand emotion properly and interpret and convey it intelligently, the artist needed a cultivated mind, a vivid imagination, and wide and varied sympathies, as well as a finely-trained voice. (Applause.)

Registers.

Madame Larkcom had as the subject of her third address, "Registers." She stated that her object was to present in as clear and simple a manner as possible the theory of registers as taught by Manuel Garcia, and explained by him in a paper read before the Royal Society of Great Britain in 1855, after a long period of research, accompanied by experiments he had carried out on scientific lines. He was a very old man when she had the privilege of studying with him, but up to the time of his peaceful death in 1907, at the age of 101, he never lost his interest in science, or relaxed in his unselfish devotion to the highest ideals of vocal art.

At the close of the lectures Dr. Davies expressed the thanks of the audience to Madame Larkcom. He said they would never forget what she had said. They were all in accord with most of the views she had expressed. They realised more than ever that teaching the art of singing was no light matter, although many people seemed to think that very slight qualifications were necessary. He endorsed Madame Larkcom's remarks concerning the desirability of the culture of diction and a wider and deeper knowledge of the meaning and use of language. (Applause.)

Piano and Violin Recital.

The educational value of the concerts given in connection with the conference is one of its chief attractions. On Wednesday afternoon a splendid object lesson on the resources of the pianoforte and the violin, when the instruments are manipulated by artists of the highest class, was given. Miss Maud Puddy, whose powers as an executant on the piano have won for her a place of eminence in her profession, gave a further display of her wonderful technique and her artistic perception, and Mr. Gerald Walenn was no less successful on the violin. In the famous "Kreutzer Sonata," for piano and violin (Beethoven), the two players presented the work with a sympathy which revealed the many beauties with which the sonata abounds. Miss Puddy played "Papillons," opus 2 (Schumann) with unerring taste, and was rewarded by a storm of applause. The poetry of Schubert's "Minuetto," opus 78, was made luminous by the beautiful exposition of the work, and the heavy demands of Brahms' "Rhapsodie in G minor," were met by the artist with apparent ease. Mr. Walenn gave an exceedingly appealing interpretation of the first part of "Ballad and Polonaise" (Viouxtemp), and a brilliant exposition of bow and finger work in the second part. A group of "Chanson et Pavana" (Couperin-Kreisler), "Tambourin" (Le Clair), Theme and variations (Corcelli-Kreisler) made an attractive contribution to a capital programme, the individuality of each item receiving careful attention. A supplementary item had to be given. Mr. Harold Wylde, F.R.C.O., was pianoforte accompanist to the violin numbers, and played in his usual accomplished style.

Advertiser 15/7/21

University College, London, has received a great windfall in the shape of a donation of £150,000 from the Rockefeller Trustees for the purposes of medical research.

MUSIC TEACHERS CONFERENCE

THE SINGER'S ART.

LECTURE BY MADAME LARKCOM.

The music-teachers' conference was continued at the Elder Conservatorium on Wednesday. A large audience assembled at the morning session, when Madame Agnes Larkcom (of the Royal Academy of Music, London) addressed the conference on "The Singer's Art." Professor Harold Davies presided, and, in introducing Madame Larkcom, mentioned that she had been travelling for about 12 months. She had had a large experience in connection with the subjects she would speak about. For some time past he had read accounts of her work in English papers, and he knew that she had taken a deep interest in the matter, and was in every respect qualified to talk to them on the subject of singing.