

## EDUCATORS DISCUSS TIMELY PLANS FOR BETTERING SYSTEMS OF STUDY

Prominent Musicians Speak on Topics of Import Before the Thirty-eighth Meeting of the Music Teachers' National Association in New York—Community Singing, Public School Methods, Standardization and High School Credits Among Subjects Presented

THE thirty-eighth annual meeting of the Music Teachers' National Association opened at Rumford Hall, New York, on the forenoon of Wednesday, Dec. 27, and closed Friday evening, Dec. 29. It was announced that about 400 members, representing twenty-five states, were enrolled, this being considered by the officers as an unusually good attendance. Some came from as far west as California. The sessions were crammed with matters of interest, stress being placed on questions of genuine import. In this connection may be cited the conference on community music, public school music, standardization, American music and the history of music and libraries.

President J. Lawrence Erb's address, "The Musician and the Community," was succeeded by a paper by Frank Wright on "The Value of Examinations." On its heels came Carl W. Grimm's dissertation, "The Realm of Scales," in which it developed that there are to be found 382 separate and distinct scales in the key of C alone. The outstanding event of the morning was Walter Damrosch's strikingly interesting talk on "Symphony Concerts for Children and Young People." The conductor of the New York Symphony explained how he makes the music of the masters a living, eloquent force for the young folk. Mr. Damrosch in the course of his remarks aimed a good-natured shaft at New Englanders. He said: "In New England I have noticed a prevalent idea that the appreciation of music is a kind of mental exercise to be undergone with becoming gravity and no trace of smiles. But much of Beethoven's music is intended to interpret laughter. Children understand this, and, feeling at home in their native element of play, a bond of sympathy is at once established between them and the great composer."

### Damrosch on War and Music

"The people of all nations should be taught to love and understand music," Mr. Damrosch concluded. "Art flowers best in international soil, and when people love the same thing a bond is created between them which will sometimes restrain them from fighting. I believe that

music alone may be largely influential in the establishment of a world-wide peace." Mr. Damrosch was applauded with great heartiness.

The Wednesday afternoon session opened with Amy Graham's paper, "Music as a Fundamental of Education." The first conference on the program succeeded it. "The History of Music and Libraries" had an able and authoritative exponent in O. G. Sonneck, head of the music department of the Library of Congress at Washington. Mr. Sonneck's lengthy and well-knit paper was called "The History of Music in America—A Few Suggestions." Mr. Sonneck touched upon a good many phases of this question, stressing particularly the superficiality, lack of exhaustiveness and inaccuracy to be noted in the existing histories on this subject. He made a plea for earnest and intelligent bibliographical work and censured the present library policy, under which, he declared, there is no opportunity for valuable research work. The history of music in this country is not unworthy of consideration if its recorder be animated by a spirit of research devoid of mercenary motives, he declared.

### Music Journals as Historians

Mr. Sonneck paid a tribute to musical magazines and papers by his remarks to the effect that they will prove of material value to the future historian of American music. "They serve to mirror the regular happenings in our musical life, and provide, moreover, a legitimate medium for publicity," said Mr. Sonneck. He recommended research on some such question as "Music in Our Colleges." "At present," remarked the speaker, "the history of music in this country still hangs in the air." Right after Mr. Sonneck finished was heard the statement of tentative plans of the committee on the history of music and libraries. It was proposed that no history course in any public school should omit the names of the great composers; that Beethoven's name should be accorded equal respect with Shakespeare's in the schools, and that the teaching of musical history should not be attempted without the use of musical illustrations.

The next conference was given over to American music, under the chairmanship of Francis L. York. "The American Singing Teacher" was the caption of the opening paper, offered by Herbert W. Greene. The latter traced the growth

of the American vocal teacher and pointed out the flaws inherent in the governmental protection and control of vocal teaching in France and England. Mr. Greene advocated a post-graduate department for singing in colleges.

Calvin B. Cady was scheduled for an address on "Piano Playing and Piano Teaching in America," but was not in the city and his talk was omitted. Peter C. Lutkin, the next speaker, dealt with "Choral and Church Music." Dean Lutkin outlined the requisites necessary for worthy church composition and paid a tribute to Horatio Parker, the American composer. "Our church music," said Mr. Lutkin bluntly, "at present lacks sincerity and craftsmanship. It is a trade." This viewpoint was hotly contested, a quasi-debate ensuing between John Hyatt Brewer and Mr. Lutkin. It was agreed that the American composer has much to learn, and that he does not evince as much devotional spirit as do the great European composers of sacred music, although he is, in many cases, giving forth all that he has to say.

### Tribute to Gilchrist

The day's sessions closed with an exceedingly interesting paper on "America's Share in Contemporary Music," delivered by Philip H. Goepf. Mr. Goepf took an optimistic viewpoint of the situation. His paper included a tribute to W. W. Gilchrist, the recently deceased Philadelphia composer.

Thursday's proceedings started with Henry P. Eames's paper, "Machine-Made Music—Is It Bringing Us More and Better Music Students?" The conference on community music was next in order. Kate S. Chittenden, the chairman, was absent, as was Arthur Farwell, who was to have presented the first paper in this conference. His address, however, entitled "The Community Chorus and the Music Teacher," was read by Acting Chairman J. L. Erb. Mr. Farwell's paper was a fine example of prose. It explained the nature of the spirit animating community music and scored those musicians who disdain openly and see only the naïveté of this form of musical expression.

In some ways the most interesting and stimulating talk of the entire convention was Harry Barnhart's "The Spiritual Significance of Community Singing." This well-known community singing leader, who has earned the right to be considered one of the most important factors in the movement, spoke with the directness and simplicity which characterize him in action. He took occasion to hit at the petty enmities which exist among various local club factions. Public school music was also criticized by Mr. Barnhart as lacking in warmth and humanity. He urged teachers not to give lessons in their homes where all the daily humdrum of their lives transpires. Community singing Mr. Barnhart called a "dangerous thing," a power of incalculable force. "Great things happen when the people as a mass sing," declared Mr. Barnhart. "This power can be directed to wonderful ends." Mr. Barnhart uttered a plea for the making of music a universal thing, something for all of the people to share and participate in.

### Barnhart Attacked

His words created a great deal of warm and intelligent discussion. Mr. Barnhart came in for censure because he assigned the various solos in Handel's "Messiah," recently given by his community chorus in Madison Square Garden, to a chorus of comparatively untrained singers, whereas they are intended to be sung by highly skilled soloists. Mr. Barnhart reiterated his opin-

ion that the people love to participate in the performance of great music, and affirmed that he has been present at more than one professional production of the Handel masterpiece at which half the audience had quitted the hall before the oratorio had been concluded.

The annual business meeting followed this fascinating phase of the convention. New members of the executive committee were elected as follows: Karl W. Gehrken, W. R. Maxwell and J. Lawrence Erb.

The Thursday afternoon session was opened with Clement R. Gale's paper, "Anglican Chanting—Suggestions Derived from the Plain Chant." This was followed in turn by W. D. Armstrong's "The Relation of Poetry to Music" and J. Beach Cragun's "The School Survey Movement in Public School Music." Mr. Cragun's paper was read by Chairman Erb. It advocated a scheme of scientific regulation as opposed to one based upon personal opinion. The public school music conference was in charge of Ralph L. Baldwin and was highly interesting. George Oscar Bowen's was the first paper, it being concerned with "High School Music Curriculum and Credits." Following this intelligently worded address came Will Earhart's "Plan for Accrediting Outside Music Study in the High School," read, in the absence of Mr. Earhart, by Chairman Baldwin. The paper outlined the revised plan adopted in Pittsburgh and predicted that the next ten years would witness the general accrediting in schools for outside music study.

### High School Discussion

John P. Marshall's "Plan for Examining Outside Music Study on the Part of the High School" was read by his assistant, Edna C. Johnson, and set forth the plan adopted in Boston and other Massachusetts cities. Inferior private music teachers, it was contended, will be gradually eliminated by the failure of their pupils to pass the various examinations in the prescribed groups. Another plan, this one for outside piano instruction as basis for credit in the high school, was outlined in a paper by Julius Hartt. Rebecca W. Holmes rounded out the discussion with her intelligently expounded "Plan of Study in Violin Instruction as Basis of Credit in the High School."

The final paper of the afternoon was provided by George Chadwick Stock, who answered his own "Can Voice Culture Be Effectively Handled as a High School Subject?" with an affirmative conviction born of successful practical experience. Experiments in the New Haven High School have proved that the students embrace eagerly the opportunity to study vocal culture, he stated.

Friday morning was given over to addresses and a lecture-recital. Arthur Scott Brook spoke on "Musical Interpretation"; Mrs. Lydia H. Hamlin's talk was on "Musical Culture in Negro Schools and Colleges"; Dr. Percy Goetschius was represented with an exceptionally fine treatment of the theme: "The Task of the Modern Harmony Teacher" (read by his colleague, Mr. Andrews), and Ernest R. Kroeger gave a refreshingly enjoyable piano program called "The Emotional and Picturesque in Music," interest in which was heightened by Mr. Kroeger's explanatory remarks.

Among the finest papers heard was Arthur Foote's "Some Forgotten Piano Music," which opened the afternoon session. The veteran Boston composer was vehemently applauded upon the conclusion of his talk. Followed the

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