

with reading, so with music. I believe a child can be more successfully taught to sing when it begins its school life than later on, because at that period its vocal organs are comparatively undeveloped, the teacher can train and strengthen them better, and prevent them from being formed in such a way as will undoubtedly afterwards prove a hindrance. If the teacher does not train them the child will do so himself; and it is unnecessary for me to state or criticise the methods which most boys, and perhaps girls, adopt in order to train their vocal organs. Every one is thoroughly familiar with them. At that period the teacher will not have to encounter the timidity and painful self-consciousness from which many a poor child suffers when asked to sing alone. Every teacher knows the refreshing naturalness and perfect confidence which nearly every toddler possesses on beginning school. Then that is the time to seize the opportunity when it does not know enough to be afraid to sing. It will then recognize that singing is on the school programme as a matter of course, and will acquit itself with the same confidence and justice as in any other subject. There should be no more trouble about individual singing than about individual reading. The child will obtain a more thorough knowledge of the subject as there will be more time in which to learn it.

4. How shall we teach it?

In introducing singing into the school the teacher will have some difficulty in overcoming the shyness of the children. The boys especially are terribly frightened at the strangeness of hearing their own voices, and are also afraid generally of the bantering which they are likely to inflict on one another. There is seldom much trouble with the girls. They seldom tease one another on that

score. This is an occasion on which the teacher must bring all his power of tact and sympathy to bear. He must not show any shyness or embarrassment himself. If he show confidence the pupils will speedily acquire it. Above all, he must be careful not to betray by his manner or otherwise that he is criticising their poor efforts adversely. Rather pretend not to notice their faults at first, but give all the encouragement possible. The best way to begin is with a good lively rote song. This will arouse their interest and make them forget their timidity. Loud singing should be discouraged from the beginning. They should be made to understand that it is not an essential element of good singing. They should be taught to listen to their own voices, so as to train their ear for music. It is necessary, therefore, that they use a soft style of singing, but at the same time a very distinct utterance. This last requisite cannot be too much insisted upon; and special exercises should be used to cultivate it. As the pupils progress they may be allowed to criticise and express, not only their disapproval, but also their approval of the efforts of their fellows.

Music is founded, as everybody knows, on the major diatonic scale. When that is acquired, together with the easiest intervals, a great step is gained. I would have the pupils sing the scale as a whole at first, the teacher giving the model of course. It is better to use the vowel *o* or *a* to begin with, as one of those perhaps is the easiest. Take the other vowel sounds successively. This will accustom them to different positions of the mouth and vocal organs. Then introduce the syllables, *Do*, *Re*, *Mi*, etc. In singing these and in all subsequent singing, insist upon distinct utterance. Do not allow them to sing indistinctly without being checked for it. This is