

natural powers. Children learn first by imitation. Parents are always pleased to witness the progress of their children in learning the use of words by imitation; so in Music the juvenile ear is sure to catch every pleasant sound from the lips of the parent or teacher, and soon to distinguish between concordant and discordant intervals. The ear is now tender and susceptible, and will readily receive and retain impressions of the different degrees of musical sounds; and the voice being, also, delicate and flexible—unfixed in its inflections by long habits, yields ready submission to the controul of the ear. How easily, then, could our children generally learn to sing. I do not say that the musical tones could be perfectly imitated at first. Improvement of course, even in youth, must be gradual. Parents should be as reasonable in this matter as they are in teaching their children to articulate words, &c. The terms *Father* and *Mother*, beloved as they are by the affectionate child, are not distinctly pronounced without many trials. "The totally deaf never learn to articulate sounds, and the r— is plain, they cannot hear and imitate them, although their vocal organs naturally may be perfect. Ask an adult why he cannot sing, and his answer will be, that he never did, although he never has been conscious of any difficulty in learning the use of words by imitation, or, the various and most delicate modifications of the vowel sounds. Now, had the attention of this same adult, in his youth, been directed to musical, as it was to conversational sounds, his case would have been different. His ear would have as readily distinguished musical tones as different words. How soon does the child learn to distinguish his mother's voice from that of any other person; and yet, cannot a power so delicate and susceptible learn the simple degrees of the musical scale?"

What is commonly called a Musical ear, and consequently a fondness for music, depends almost entirely upon early impressions, and not, as some suppose, upon a peculiar natural gift, which but few possess. It has been noticed that when parents sing, their children do also; and this has led some to suppose, that, music is more natural to some families than to others. In some measure this may be true, and so it may with every other talent. As a general thing, however, this difference in the musical taste of different families, may be attributed to the fact that children, in some families, early acquire a taste for music from the singing of their parents, whose musical sounds they soon learn to imitate. Some have received their first musical impressions from the soothing songs of the tender mother—impressions which, in after years, have returned her a rich reward in the daily improvement of her children. Let parents often sing to their children, and they will soon learn the important fact, that singing families become so by hearing music in childhood and youth, and not by any unequal distribution of natural powers; though each gift may be given in unequal degrees to different persons. No matter how simple their strains, they would catch the attention of their children, and initiate them into sacred song. Sounds for the imitation of children, at first, should not indeed be presented to them in their combined and melodious forms, but first one at a time, then in diatonic succession, after which they may sing simple but pleasing melodies, and thus continue their progress. I am aware, however, that there are now many parents, as well as teachers, who have never learned to sing; all, however, can place their children in schools in which singing, now is, or may be taught.—Teachers who could sing might be selected for all our public and primary schools. Perhaps the best way would be to sing both at the opening of the school in the morning, and at the close in the afternoon. The teacher should so pitch the tune as to bring it within the natural limits of their voices, that they may all sing in unison. The children could easily commit to memory a few short and suitable hymns, which might be sung daily in sweet and simple melodies. This would be sufficient to interest them in the subject, which would soon lead to the use of the black-board, and other means for a more thorough musical education; and soon, as a matter of course, all our teachers would be qualified for this pleasing part of their duty.

The use of music, as a branch of common education, in many places, has produced the happiest effects; and it has been strongly recommended by some of the most able writers on education. A writer, in a recent number of the *New York Evangelist*, says, in reference to Church music in Boston, "For many years music has been taught in most of the common schools at Boston, as a

branch of Education; the consequence is, that the people of Boston are a singing community. It is just as easy and natural for a large congregation of Bostonians to sing a popular church melody in good concert, as it would be for the same number of them to read in concert, the plainest and easiest paragraph in the English language."

Milton, in a treatise on Education, strongly recommends the use of Music in Schools, and says, "If wise men and prophets be not extremely out, it, music, has a great power over dispositions and manners, and soothes and makes them gentle, from rustic harshness and distempered passions."

The celebrated Dr. Rush is very clear on this subject. He says that singing should never be neglected in the education of any youth, especially young ladies. Besides its cheerful and moral influences, he considers the exercise of singing important to health. "I here introduce a fact," says he, "which has been suggested to me by my profession, and that is, that the exercise of the organs of the breast by singing, contributes very much to defend them from those diseases to which the other causes, amusements, expose them."

In many countries, especially Germany and Switzerland, singing is now made a part of Common School Education, and, if intelligent travellers and writers can be credited, its good effects are most obvious. A celebrated Sicilian scholar, on hearing of the sad effects of too close study among the literary men in the States, inquired what were their amusements? On being told that they did not consist of music, he expressed great astonishment, and said that he did not wonder they became sick with study and died. Within the last few years, however, singing has been made a branch of Common Education in most parts of the United States.

Another writer, in urging the importance of "Music in Schools," says, "Mankind are framed for social enjoyments; that society which is forbidding in its amusement, too austere and too gloomy, will show drunkenness and crime as the inevitable results. How deeply important it is, then, that our amusements should be social in their character, and harmonizing in their influence—they should be such as the family may unitedly participate in. It is indisputably true that thousands on thousands of our youth are ruined, by being forced abroad for amusements; and then they do not meet those which are either refined in kind or beneficial in influence. Let, then, those who would stay the tide of intemperance, and guard the morals, and secure the permanent enjoyment and happiness of the great mass of the people, ponder well if there be any step which promises such unmixed good as the general cultivation of Music, rendering social intercourse more cheerful, and realizing the sweetest enjoyment our Creator has placed within our reach."

The Rev. Dr. Channing, after referring to the many happy influences of music, says, "These remarks shew the importance of encouraging the efforts which have commenced among us, in Boston, for spreading the accomplishment of music through our whole community. It is now proposed that this shall be made a regular branch in our schools; and every friend of the people must wish success to the experiment."

With this quotation I conclude my article, and humbly submit it to the indulgence of my respected readers.

USES OF BOTANY.

Very many excellent people—men, women and children—have made it a constant rule of their lives, when they purpose doing any thing, to ask themselves what good purpose it would answer. So we are now to answer the question—What good will it do to study Botany? Our answer shall not be very long.

First, it is a healthy employment. When we say that the study of Botany is healthy, we mean that it will lead you into healthy practices. You will be abroad, every opportunity you have, ranging among the trees, in the fields, or perhaps on the mountains. You will be glad to do so to breathe the fragrant and pure air. And it is healthy.

Secondly, it will lead you to observe what is before you. Many boys and girls go through the world almost without seeing it. Now, he who has eyes, and does not use them in such a beautiful world as this, is very much to be pitied. But the study of Botany will learn him to keep his eyes open. The habit of noticing things