

Advantages of Conservatory over Private Instruction.

The great Conservatories of European fame were so called because they were intended to preserve (conserve) the true theory and practice of musical art from corruption. The first was that of Santa Maria Loreto of Naples, founded in 1537. Since then many others have been established in Italy, Germany, France, Russia, England and other countries, some of which are wholly or in part maintained by Government or otherwise subsidized. In America the conservatory system depends almost solely upon public patronage for support.

The advantages of Conservatory over private instruction are so numerous and varied, and so obvious to anyone giving the matter serious thought, that it is sufficient merely to suggest the more important aspects of the subject.

The genuine Conservatory of Music stands in much the same relation to the private teacher as the University to the private tutor. Exceptional circumstances render it desirable at times to employ private instruction, whether in music or other branches of learning, but such exceptions only serve to emphasize the need of institutions carefully organized to meet the needs of the large majority of students. Unfortunately the musical profession embraces more or less incompetent teachers, no one being debarred from entering it, whether properly qualified or not. It therefore rests with each individual, when seeking the services of a private teacher, to form his judgment as best he can on that person's fitness for his vocation. A Conservatory of Music, worthy of its title, presents no such uncertainty to the mind of the pupil. It is morally certain that the teachers of a Conservatory are selected mainly on account of their ability, as it would not be in the interests of any institution to sacrifice its reputation by employing other than good teachers. Again, the stimulating atmosphere of a large music school is another distinct advantage over private instruction. Narrowness and one-sidedness of culture are always to be guarded against by the music student of high aims, and no better safeguard from these faults can be found than in the broadening and inspiring influences of a comprehensive and progressive Conservatory of Music.

The Class System is available in all branches for such as desire it, although individual instruction is generally advised, more especially for students taking the Artists' course in vocal and instrumental music.