

natural,—that anybody couldn't have written? Suffice it to say, that neither you nor I happened to think of it, and probably never should have done so to the end of our days. The combined literary taste of the world treasures such things when it finds them, and that is how we come to have literature.

There is a literature of school music, which has lived to come down to us from the the last ten decades through the survival of the fittest; the combined judgment and experience of those who have labored in this department of school work fixes the stamp of value on certain things, while cart-loads of rubbish have perished with the quill that wrote it. Bushels of chaff to grains of wheat is the rule in new productions of all ages.

Far better is it to lead the pupils up to reading something of musical importance, than cause them to wander through a wilderness of exercises graded down to a level with their present technical ability. Those compositions which have been tried repeatedly, and have been proved as to their educational value upon generation after generation of pupils, will, it is safe to say, prove of value in the future; and they are not to be discarded as worn out or antiquated until we are sure that we have something to take their place. Of that we cannot yet be sure,—for the new must become old before the verdict of combined experience can be rendered.

We occasionally meet with teachers who practice on the principle that each little item of theory must have its own especial technical exercise, and that these scraps of tune must be long practiced before any piece of musical composition containing the same things can be properly studied. However good this principle may be in acquiring technique in instrumental music, it is most unphilosophical when applied to children's singing. The saying of an eminent English choir master is well worthy of attention here: "never use the exercise to illustrate a theory; but use the theory to explain the exercise." Then, if the exercise itself is one that possesses inherent merit, and it is sung in connection with proper elementary analysis and theoretical explanation, and with a vocal delivery that accords with the spirit of the composition, we may hope for good results in the real musical advancement of the child.