

something much more valuable and important than what has hitherto been usually aimed at in congregational practisings. It is not *parrot-singing*, but *part-singing at sight*, that we contemplate—the training of classes to sing ordinary psalm and hymn tunes with accuracy and taste in four part harmony. The *teachers* employed by the committee are men of proved skill and competency. The *method of instruction* used by the committee's teachers is the Tonic-sol-fa method, which has been preferred for this very sufficient reason, that it is the simplest and easiest means of teaching a popular class to master the first principles of vocal music; while it is the shortest and most practicable way of acquiring the power of reading at sight the ordinary musical notation. Our classes are marvellously *cheap*—the rate of charge in most cases being no higher than *one penny a lesson*; while the textbooks in use are equally cheap. This matter of cheapness is an essential feature in any movement which is to reach and influence the mass of the community. It will be observed that we are striving to act on congregations in *rural districts*, as well as on those in our large towns. We have met with many most encouraging instances of zeal in remote localities, where we were least expecting them. Shepherds in their plaids have travelled long distances to get instruction at our classes, and have been assiduous in their attendance in spite of wintry skies and biting blasts. Though mainly intended for the benefit of our own denomination, our classes have been thrown *open to all comers*; and members of the Established and Free Churches have been admitted to share in the benefit equally with those of the United Presbyterian Church. In cultivating harmony, we have sought to shun sectarian discord. And in more instances than one, ministers of different denominations have presented the pleasant spectacle of taking part as pupils in the exercises of our classes; thus giving their people an example of brotherly concord, well fitted to smooth down the asperities of party spirit, and promote kindly intercourse.

Convinced of the importance of teaching the young, and of giving to vocal music, both as a science and an art, a place in elementary education, the committee are anxious that their teachers should get access to schools in the several localities which they visit, and we authorise them to make offer of a course of lessons to schools on very easy terms. Their services have, in not a few cases, been cheerfully accepted by schoolmasters. The effect of these classes on the congregational singing of the districts has usually been salutary; but that effect varies with the number which have been under instruction. It is to be hoped that ere long, through the wide-spread influence of our psalmody reformation, the anomaly of congregations using a hymn-book, many of the hymns contained in which they cannot sing, will cease; and that congregations will no longer be deterred from adopting the hymn book because of the poverty of their musical knowledge. Besides the effect of our classes on congregational psalmody—the primary end—they are followed by *valuable results of a collateral kind*. Music, especially when wedded to words which are elevating and ennobling, is a powerful social reformer. Its value in enhancing the enjoyments and attractions of home is great. Nor can it be doubted that the acquisition of the power of reading music at sight, which we wish to promote chiefly for the sake of its application to psalmody, will be of incalculable advantage as a means of social regeneration. It will open up new and refining enjoyments in the family circle; and, by supplying youth with the means of gratifying the musical faculty in a legitimate and improving way, will enable them all the more to resist those lures to evil to which, unhappily, music is too often made to lend its fascinating power.

In this psalmody reformation, it is now acknowledged that the United Presbyterian Church stands in the foremost position among the churches in Scotland. It is to be hoped that we shall maintain the character we have won, and that ministers and sessions will sustain and strengthen the hands of the committee by their zeal and hearty co-operation. We are ready to arrange for the formation of summer classes, and invite communications from sessions on this subject.

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#### ENERGY AGAINST INTEMPERANCE.

The Rev. W. Arnot, A. B., a Free Church Minister in Glasgow, has published a