

written representation. But the incompetent teacher, who is unable to teach even a simple song effectively, finds a snug harbor by resorting to manipulation of elements; the lack of good instruction is not so apparent here; visitors, and even school authorities do not discriminate very closely, particularly if the procedure is bolstered up with a good many of the high-sounding words known to educational terminology, and is serenely represented as being something quite superior to the commonplace but real teaching of music.

Where music is a recognised branch of study, however, note-reading, in due proportion and at the proper time, is to be taught, and elements, so far as necessary to this end, must receive attention. What shall constitute the material for studies in note-reading and for the musical practice from this stage onward? For it is necessary that such material be selected as will in the best manner help forward the true development of the pupil.

Many teachers rely upon writing impromptu exercises on the blackboard, which, when sung through by the pupils with a tolerable approximation to right pitches and tone-lengths, are immediately erased to give place to others of the same nature. This method, though it gives the pupils (or at least a few of the bright ones in the class) a degree of courage and facility in attacking and deciphering written music, is open to the objection that the exercises, having little thought bestowed upon their construction, have little musical merit or attractiveness, and being so hastily sung and then forgotten, have little or no valuable residuum in the children's minds.

The same objection is valid against those singing books for children filled with interminable "exercises," certain of them fitted with words and called song, written by some penny-a-liner who feels perfectly competent to write a whole book all by himself. He tries them over on his piano, and they sound pretty, much better he fancies than the old school tunes,—forgetting that what sounds well when played is almost sure to sound poorly when sung, on account of the difference in the means by which it is to be rendered. Said one of these writers, when looking over a standard school music book, "What is there about those exercises and songs that anybody couldn't write?" What is there about that dainty little bit of poetry,—so perfectly simple and