

tion he relishes more. All men are attracted by it; none can escape the spell. Therefore all men should cultivate the habit of diffusing sunshine through this fine, tropic avenue of personality. No habit creates more happiness; nor is any more profitable. The man with sunny ways, other things being equal, is the man whom the people will command to go up higher; promotion awaits him. The world delights to honor the man who has a cordial front and soulful acknowledgment for his fellows. Nor is the impulse a misdirected one; for behind the glad hand, if it be the sincere expression of nature, will be found generosity of heart, largeness of sympathy, and genuine humanity.—*Toronto Star*.

"Oh! That Choir!"

THE wail of the "convention-goer" on "that organ" has stirred up another friend to express his feelings about "that choir" which plays Mrs. Malaprop not infrequently on like occasions.

"Why should a choir," he asks, "consider itself a thing apart from the rest of the programme, singing anything that fancy suggests, at its own sweet will, whether it has any bearing upon the intellectual or devotional side of the meeting or not? Let us give one or two specific instances. In a recent spirited Christian Endeavor meeting, after an enthusiastic speaker had aroused the audience to action, when the theme was life and progress, and when aggressive vigor, earnest hopefulness, was in the air, the choir sang Phoebe Carey's beautiful funeral song,

"O sweetest solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er—
I'm nearer home to-day
Than I ever have been before."

"They might just as well have sung,

"Sleep on, beloved;
take thy rest."

"On another occasion, when the audience were wearied with the long service, a large part of which had been musical, and when all were waiting for one of the chief speakers, whose time had already been cut down from half an hour to twenty minutes by preceding anthems, the choir arose, shook out their skirts, adjusted their stiff collars, cleared their throats, listened to a long voluntary on the organ, and then began,

"A little time for patient waiting."

"Once more, toward the close of a long session, when the spiritual forces were at their best and the congregation was about to go away with new resolves to lead a strenuous Christian life, the quartette choir, wishing to show their musical agility, began each one individually and collectively to declare that he or she was a pilgrim. The tenor declared that he was a pilgrim, and the bass hastened to add that he was a pilgrim, and the soprano volunteered the same information, while the alto, not to be outdone, asserted that she, too, was a pilgrim. Then, each added that he or she was a stranger as well as a pilgrim. They followed each other over hill and dale, jumped all the musical fences, and came in on the home stretch, all declaring unanimously that they were both pilgrims and strangers—a fact which, if true, had absolutely nothing to do with the subject of the meeting or the programme as outlined.

"But most exasperating of all is the mumbling choir,

whom nobody can understand. Many anthems sound to the audience something like this:

"Um, um, am, dum, dum, sam,
Oh, ah, se, la, la, lam."

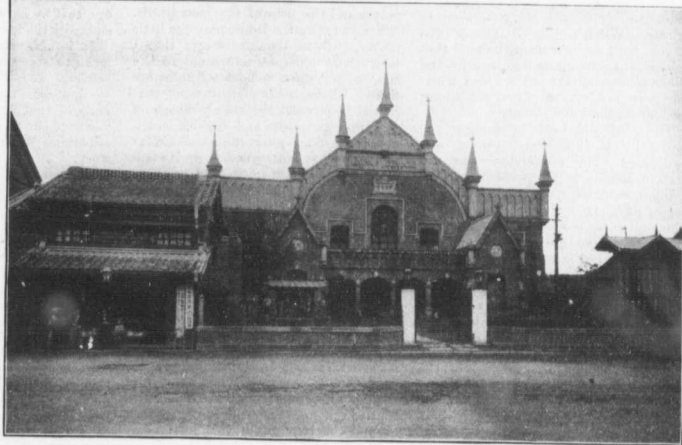
Why should a choir consider the words it sings of no consequence? Suppose a speaker should mount a platform and give vent to a number of connected musical sounds, without any sense or any possibility of being understood by the audience! He would be hissed off the platform. But that is just what half the professional choirs are constantly inflicting on a long-suffering public."

So much for our friend's protest. Who will say there is not much reason in it? The fact is, the anthems and special choir music should be selected to fit the occasion as carefully as the addresses or the Scripture reading.

The anthem should never be chosen to show off the choir, but always to add to the spiritual power of the meeting. Usually, too, there is far too much special music. One short anthem for a convention session is quite enough. Let the congregation do the singing. It is the only audible part they can take in the service. Don't deprive them of this privilege.—*Christian Endeavor World*.

How to Keep Young

NOT a few persons who write 1905 at the head of their letters will do so with a sigh at the reminder of increasing age. Women, more than men, are possessed with a dread of growing old, not realizing that maturity has its charms and compensations. We wish young people often had it impressed upon them that they may provide for a happy old age by laying up a reserve of sound health and a store of happy memories, as well as by cultivating tastes and



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From "The Heart of Japan."

resources which will outlast youth. As for those who are already approaching middle age, there is no surer way to grow old prematurely than to dread the future. It is essential, if we wish to keep young, to cultivate that hopeful habit of mind so characteristic of youth—the hope which makes one able to say with Browning, "The best is yet to be," and with Lucy Larcom, "Every year life is larger and deeper and more beautiful in its possibilities." Allied with this attitude of expectancy must be the ability to see the amusing side of life. Worry and vexation over what would better be laughed at result in disfiguring wrinkles. Above all, if the years bring us, as they should, a better understanding of ourselves, a broadening of active human sympathies, a firmer faith in Providence, we shall find life abundantly worth the living, no matter what may be the number of our birthdays.—*Congregationalist*.