

T. G.

TALK TO PARENTS AT St. ANNE'S SCHOOL.

11, Manor Place, Edinburgh.

1926, July.

I want to give you this afternoon, if I can, a bird's-eye view of the musical work I have been doing here for the last five years. It is only in recent years that music, in this country, has been recognised as a really important and valuable factor in every child's education. It is, in fact, very far from being universally acknowledged yet.

To some of us who had very little musical education in our schooldays some of the new terms and methods of teaching may seem rather bewildering, and we wonder what all this Ear-training, Rhythmic Work, Appreciation Class and so on mean and whether the time given to them is not out of proportion to other subjects - We do not want to turn the children into musical prodigies! But we know that every child has in him some instinct for music, and that if it is given no outlet while he is young, it will probably die, and thus he will lose something really vital to his full development.

It is because I do believe that music may be one of the greatest powers for good in building up a child's character and in the development of all sides of his nature, mental, physical and spiritual, that I am grateful for this opportunity of speaking to you this afternoon.

"The Teacher in the Kindergarten" says one writer "has an unique opportunity, for up to the age of ten almost every child is responsive and enthusiastically responsive to the influence of sound. He has an instinctive love of colour and rhythm and if encouraged to listen to music and to express it by some simple means....there is every reason to believe that he will keep and develope that love as he approaches maturity."

There are four distinct branches of musical training in the school singing class - all of which eventually merge, but which in the early stages are more easily taught as separate subjects:-

- 1) Singing -
- 2) Rhythm-
- 3) Eartraining -
- 4) Appreciation -

and I will speak of them in that order - after which I should like to tell you something of the work in the Junior Music Class.

The ages of Children I have taught have been from four to twelve years.

The time given to my work in the Time Table has been either four or five twenty minute periods a week up to the age of seven or eight, sometimes rather less with the older children, but never less than three twenty minute periods a week.

Of this time one hour a week was allotted for singing only in the younger forms, about two-thirds of the total time with the older children. This means that all the other sides of musical work, rhythm, sight reading and appreciation have had to be fitted, as best I could, into at most two twenty minute periods a week, sometimes less.

The sounds that you would hear the first few weeks of the Session coming from the Transition and Kindergarten singing class (ages about 4 - 7) could perhaps hardly be dignified with the name of music, they are often very curious! For many of the new children it is quite a novel experience to try and sing a song, hardly any of them have tried doing it together. Often a little child gets hold of the words from his next door neighbour and sings, chants or shouts them fully a bar behind the rest of the class, arriving ~~alone~~ at the end but blissfully unconscious and thinking that he is getting on famously, and so he is! Others have no idea of tune at all but love the rhythm and the sound of the words and shout them lustily on one note. Others again in this strange new world of school just gaze round and make no attempt to join in - I love these early days - all sorts of pleasant surprises come and in a few weeks things are shaping and both new and old children are joining in together and we are getting along finely.

May I say at this point that I have never yet found a child with NO EAR - Slow ear, yes, quite often, especially when the child has had little or no music at home. Slow musical memory too; often a child can imitate one note, but is quite lost in attempting to recall two or three in succession. Quite often the "drones" or "grunters" are very sensitive musically and have very good ears and it is simply lack of proper co-ordination

and adjustment of the Muscles of the throat. I have found this most with boys, especially when they have been handicapped by frequent illness or are very highly-strung children and one often finds that they have difficulty also in other subjects requiring muscular control, handwriting or dancing for example. But with encouragement and patience and whenever possible a little individual practise they do arrive sooner or later at being able to sing in tune with the rest of the class. There are several charming little singers in the school now who were terrible "growlers" a year or eighteen months ago. I shall never forget the day when quite suddenly one of our most vigorous growlers found his voice and was able to sing in tune. His face was absolutely radiant. How often it has happened that such children are silenced and are considered totally unmusical and are given no attention, whereas they need the most care and encouragement. Some children again are slow at memorising words, and if the pitch memory is weak also they must be quite fluent with the words before they can sing the song in tune - Also - but more rare - is the case of the child who has great difficulty in pitching low notes and so sings an improvised tune which wanders at times high above the other - such children are very disconcerting, much more so than the growlers!

I have spoken at some length about this problem of "No Ear" because I have so often been asked about it by parents of children here, and others.

We start, of course, with very easy little songs and nursery rhymes, except when an Entertainment is looming when I try to sandwich extra easy, and if possible, amusing songs between the harder carols or songs we want them to learn to sing with the whole school. On an average in all classes we learn about twelve songs a term, this, of course, includes memorising all the words and trying to get clear articulation.

I try to give as many varieties of songs as possible - some slow and sustained, others very quick and lively - some good for attack, or for diction or phrasing. Some because they are full of imagination, or have a particularly beautiful rhythmic line. Others again for characterisation, which give me an opportunity of testing the progress of individual children e.g. "Who killed Cocky Robin" the answers by the sparrow, the fish, the duck, etc., etc. or again Cumulative Songs - unrivalled for teaching concentration, and how they love them! e.g. "The House that Jack built" - "The Twelve Days of Christmas" - Most children love trying a bit alone it very seldom happens as it did last term when I asked a boy to conduct and he came right over to me and said very quietly "Please if you don't mind I would really rather not". They start conducting their songs almost at once, as soon as they know the beat in 2 - 3 and 4 time - or before! The whole class do it together first and then I pick out different children to act as conductor for the class. Many a child who is very weak at singing seems to find in conducting a real means of self-expression and can show the rhythm, the light and shade and mood of a piece in quite a remarkable way.

The great aim at this stage is to enjoy singing, to try and establish pitch, and to cultivate the team spirit. These are surely of far more value than a highly polished performance.

The Singing Class, quite apart from its musical value, helps in the education of the child, by its by products as it were. It helps him to concentrate, it gives him a new outlet, a new and joyful means of expression and creation, and, at the same time, imposed in the music itself is a discipline and control which lead to balanced character - It helps too in his physical development - as the 16th century musician, William Byrd says "The Exercise of Singing is delightful to Nature and good to preserve the health of Man. It doth strengthen all parts of the breast and doth open the pipes - It is the best means to procure a perfect pronunciation and to make a good orator."

And in the learning of poetry too, with its beauties of rhythm of choice of words and expression of thought it surely sows the seed for a true appreciation of literature and art.

I must pass over the next year or two very briefly. We now pay more detailed attention to musical points, attack, crescendo and diminuendo, phrasing, word colour and so on, and also have most of our songs with the piano playing an accompaniment, not the melody notes; we have songs where the time is less straightforward and we really have to consider more consciously what is in the music. It is at this stage, ages seven to eight, that the choice of music is so important and so very hard to find - You must have good words and music which will repay the trouble you take over it, and yet it must be well within the comprehension of the child. I have tried all through to give them the best, it is, I think, the least we owe them, and they undoubtedly do grow in love of the best and can differentiate between good and bad music.

Musical memory is an amazing thing - I believe that very few of the songs they learn here will be forgotten and so I say - A SONG WHICH IS NOT WORTH REMEMBERING IS NOT WORTH TEACHING.

I asked the older children last term (ages 10-11) to tell me all the songs they remembered having learnt at school (all had been nearly three years, some longer). They recited off the names of 60, to me that day - the next day they came bursting to tell me some 15 more that they had remembered at home - and when I hummed the opening phrase they gave me the titles or some words of another twenty - that is 95 songs and that is not all they knew for I did not ask for Christmas Carols and they knew many more of these. It may interest you to know of what this list of 95 consisted - Nine English folksongs, Six "Songs of the Hebrides", Six Irish and Scots Folksongs, Twenty eight songs by modern English Composers, Six old English Songs, Six two and three part Canons, nine or ten Classical Songs by Bach, Handel, etc., about fifteen Christmas carols and a few nursery rhymes and rounds. They love the best songs and will tackle absolutely anything, and I do not confine them to songs

written for children - they have given me some extraordinarily good artistic work, some renderings which I have never had equalled; in my senior school work or adult pupils elsewhere. I do feel it is invaluable to give them all the musical experience <sup>one can</sup> before the age of twelve, for in later schooldays it becomes increasingly difficult to spare the time.

Here is a specimen syllabus of one term's work at this age. In addition to these new songs we kept up five or six learnt the previous term -

- 1) Dance to your Shadow ----- Songs of the Hebrides.
- 2) Eriskay Lullaby " " " " "
- 3) Whither ----- Schubert.
- 4) Where'er you walk ----- Handel
- 5) My heart ever faithful ----- Bach
- 6) Shepherds' Cradle Song ----- Somervelle.
- 7) Have you seen but a white lily grow - Old English.
- 8) Easter Hymn ----- Frank Bridge
- 9) Mayflowers ----- Two part Canon - Hobson.
- 10) Willow Tit Willow ----- Gilbert & Sullivan.
- 11) Two or three rounds, and two American Bird Songs.

I have taught here over 200 songs and nearly fifty Christmas Carols. (I cannot give you the exact figures as I did not keep a note of everything the first two years).

Of these about 25 were English Folk Songs.

10 Songs of the Hebrides.

25 Classical Songs by Arne, Bach, Purcell, Mozart, Schubert, etc.

12 other British folksongs.

12 old English - "Now is the month of Maying", John Peel, etc.

Twelve American bird songs (Junior) and, of course, for the juniors plenty of nursery rhymes. Modern English Songs by all the well-known composers, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Rutland Boughton, Sir Walford Davies, John Ireland, Parry, Quilter, etc., and for lighter fare, songs from the Mikado, Just So Songs, Cautionary Tales, Alice in Wonderland, etc.

Christmas Carols, both traditional and by Modern Composers.

We have not done much part-singing - partly because most of our children are too young - also because singing low notes constantly is very bad for their voices at this age. We make a start with rounds and then two and three part canons - and now that descants are being written for school songs we have made a ~~start with them~~ - these being melodies woven above or through the song melody they are a splendid training in the independence necessary for part-singing. We have also done a few simple two-part songs and carols.

Before leaving the singing class I should like to say a few words about the technical side. Friends who have enjoyed hearing our children sing have said to us "How do you do it?" Well, it is by no patent methods at all! I do not teach breathing exercises unless in cases of really faulty breathing. Breathing is, after all, a natural thing, and grows in power if nature's ways are followed. I do teach phrasing, and the breath capacity increases with the growth of musical feeling. I have now only to say to the older children "Phrase that properly" and they do it - they sing long phrases with an ease that many an adult singer would envy e.g. the ~~florid~~ passage in Handel's "Where'er you walk" and Bach's "My heart ever faithful". If the voice is easy and unforced breathing should never be a problem. Diction is - an endless problem. For when we get past the difficulty of baby ways of speech, we get to the stage of losing first teeth when good articulation is very difficult, big gaps in front and tender gums and, ~~later~~ sometimes dental plates! It is only by constant careful attention and practice both in saying and singing words that clear expressive diction can be obtained.

Nor do I directly give voice production exercises for children under twelve - I do not say that our Tone is outstandingly good - it varies from year to year with the quality of the leading voices, but it is very tuneful, fresh and full of vitality, I think. I have heard highly trained children's choirs, and beautiful though the blend is, there is often, to my mind, a lack of spontaneity and verve.

I do think that young children should think first of the music and experience the joy of singing, only considering the voice where it fails to interpret the music as they want it to. Even with the times I try to get them to criticise themselves and so do better, and they love "polishing" a song, trying to get rid of bad patches of tone or diction or rhythm. And so by critical judgement of themselves they grow in the appreciation of beauty and grow very sensitive also - I had this indicated to me very clearly and much to my amusement when I first took a group ~~of~~ children to the Edinburgh Musical Festival to listen to Junior Solo competitions. They had notebooks and pencils and made comments on each performer - their remarks gave me the satisfaction of knowing that they had undoubtedly assimilated many points in my lessons:

Here are some Festival comments picked at random from their notebooks (Eight to eleven year olds).

Did not look happy enough - rather nervous.  
Was ~~late~~ coming in.

Couldn't hear a word she was singing.  
Rather squeaky.

Good diction but not very good tone.  
Scooped.

Slightly sharp.

A bit slow and she did not breathe very nicely.  
She holds herself very well.

Good - she looked as if she liked it.  
Very dainty.

Very good phrasing.  
No difference between loud and soft.  
Breathed very well - very light and bright.  
Very smoothly sung.  
Diction ~~bad~~ but nice voice.  
Slightly depressing.  
Nerves and a pretty face - (of a very affected, selfconscious  
child.)  
Words nice and clear but quavered sometimes on her notes.  
It did not sound her natural voice.  
Very nice indeed but she looked worried.  
Didn't open her mouth.  
Sang in her throat sometimes.  
She sang "The Lamb" too heavily.  
Rather breathy - He swooped awfully at the end.  
Sang deep down in his throat.

(Illustrations Sung). The vocal technique is mostly taught indirectly through a very careful choice of songs - This song, for example, is as good a diction exercise for the sound of p as you could find (Though I do give numbers of diction exercises. The children think them great fun).

"Chippy, Chippy, Chippy, Chippy, Chippy, Chippy, Chip,  
'Tis the voice of the Chipping Sparrow.  
Chippy Chippy Chippy Chippy Chippy Chippy Chip  
From the Cherry tree," etc.

or for long sustained vowel sounds this beautiful "Slumber Song" by Rebikoff.

"Close thine eyes and sleep my darling  
May thy dreams be bright and fair,  
While thy faithful Nannie rocks thee,  
Crooning low an old, old air.

or for word colour think of Shelley's poem "The Cloud".  
Set to music by Edgar Bainton.-

"I wield the flail of the lashing hail  
And whiten the green plains under  
.....(and later)  
That orb'd maiden with white fire laden  
Whom mortals call the moon  
Gilds glimmering o'er my fleecelike floor  
By the midnight breezes strown.

For delicate tone and imagination listen to this tiny song "Spring" by Whittaker. Sung pianissimo throughout with long legato phrasing.

"Spring goeth all in white  
Crowned with milk white may,  
In fleecy flocks of light  
O'er heaven the white clouds stray;  
White butterflies in the air  
White daisies prank the ground  
The cherry and the hoary pear,  
Scatter their snow around.

or of similar style the Old English Song  
"Have you seen but a white lily grow".

Again for breadth of style and what Walford Davies calls "A splendid travelling rhythm" listen to

"Let us now praise famous men" by Vaughan Williams.  
or the well-known

"Creation Hymn" by Beethoven

or

"This joyful Eastertide" by Somervelle.

These are, of course, too heavy for them to sing to you at School Entertainments but how they love learning them!

## RHYTHM

I must perforce pass very hurriedly over the next two sides of my work - namely, Rhythm and eartraining.

When I come here I was very keen to work on the lines of Dalcroze Eurythmics, and all our early work was based entirely on those methods. We did stepping and beating exercises, phrasing studies and so on - Every young child wants to move to strongly marked rhythm. Before long, however, it became very inconvenient for me to have the use of the large schoolroom and so I had largely to discontinue stepping and running exercises and to find some other means of training. In some ways I do not altogether regret the change - You will realise that in one twenty minute period in a week with little children you cannot get very far on Dalcroze lines - for the difficulties of control of the legs and arms claim so much attention that the musical side of the work is often quite subsidiary. It is, for example, much easier to clap or to play on a triangle  than to step it - also you can look at the signs while playing and so ear and eye are trained simultaneously.

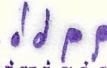
We do most of our rhythmic work in the early stages with the help of Percussion instruments. We have a good drum - Triangles, cymbals, tambourine and bells, also some delightful Indian children's instruments which we call "clappers" and "hit bells".

I will summarise our work very briefly in three stages:-

The first stage is in the Transition and Kindergarten forms-

First we realise the pulse in music - in two, three and four pulse measures - variations of speed and degrees of loudness.

Hear how music moves in little phrases - one little tune, a breathing space and then another little tune - or compare it with lines of poetry or a train slowing down at stations, etc. For easily grasped phrases I often play English Country dance tunes, they are very clear in construction and with frequent repetitions besides being delicious tunes. First I may play the tune right through, telling the children to give a loud clap at the end of each little tune journey - Then we arrange that the triangles will play the first tune, the "clappers" the second, the drum the next and so on - or sometimes I call out which instrument is to come next so as to keep them all alert.

We learn how to picture the walking step  and after that we learn one by one the divisions of the beat with the french time names:-



 for a rest we say "sh" very softly to remind ourselves that this sign means that there is no sound at all.

I have numerous cards with these different signs written large and clear so that we can listen to an easy tune and build up the time pattern with cards e.g.     and then play it, or we can make up our own patterns (it is so much quicker than writing them on the board) and by changing one card we can make great differences and try to puzzle each other.

Or sometimes I say "If I play Taa's the drum is to play, if  Tate's the clappers and so on - There are endless play ways of teaching rhythm, for example, if I am playing a straight forward marching tune in four time I may tell them to play four beats, clap the next and beat the next four - or the drum play the first beat and **every one else** the 2nd 3rd and fourth.

A few weeks ago I put on a gramaphone record of "If all the world were paper" and of "Rufy Tufty" - I told them that they were to play as conducted by me -

Right Hand	Boys play.
Left Hand	Girls play
Both Hands	All play

Conducting high over my head - Triangles only.  
" low down - No one play.

At first I only made the changes at the end of a phrase, but that proved too easy, so I varied it, sometimes changing after one or two bars, but I could not catch them out, not even the tiny four and five year olds in the front row.

Always we have some quite free work - coming in when and how the spirit moves them, and inventing little rhythmic patterns for themselves - and so from the very beginning I aim at training both the ear, eye and hand (for on a percussion instrument any blurring or inaccuracy is easily detected) and so laying the foundations of a real training in rhythm.

We also start "scores" (Schumann Melody shown and explained).

At the third stage we go on to more difficult figures and more elaborate orchestration (shown "The Triumph") and we do not now have time for hand lessons every week. Sometimes they orchestrate the scores themselves, or we work it out together and discuss why we want different effects. I fear hurrying over it like this it may all sound dry to you but it is ~~usually~~ great fun and the children just love "Band Day".

I do think our work with scores has been valuable - for in addition to the actual practise in reading and playing it shows the form and structure of a piece very clearly - it is just splendid team work, for each child must be alert and unhesitating and perfect or the whole effect is spoilt. It is also a splendid introduction to appreciation of Orchestral writing with all its interplay of instruments and varying colours and rhythms.

The idea of "Scores" for percussion band is my own - and as far as I know is not used elsewhere.

(One "Score" from each Stage played by a group of Children)

### EARTRAINING.

In the golden days of English music no one was considered an educated English Gentleman unless he could read music fluently at first sight. That is a state of affairs we hope to make again are long through the ~~eartraini~~<sup>ng</sup> Class!

My Eartraining here has been based on the Tonic Solfa method applied to Staff - it is a very logical and sound method for beginners. The Eartraining side of my work has been the hardest here and I have I feel, achieved least. It is only possible to do good work in this subject if your classes are graded and all one stage - You cannot make progress at all until your foundations are very secure. Anxious as I am that the children should be able to sight-read music the occasional necessary alterations in the arrangement of classes almost inevitably in the early years of a school and the influx of children at all ages and stages make it very difficult. Some groups of children who have been with us steadily from the age of five or six are quite fluent readers. I decided this year not to start sight-reading below Form 1. The Transition and Kindergarten classes work together and there are therefore too many stages of development. Also, so many of the boys leave us at the age of seven and would only forget the little they had learnt, so in this class this year we have done imitation exercises and solfa exercises with hand-signs to help to establish pitch. Unless you can have a little sight reading frequently at this earliest stage you can make no steady advance.

Our children of ten and eleven can read fairly fluently in several major keys with both pitch and time, and sight read most of their songs and they can write down simple ear-tests both tune and time.

The Appreciation Class has been held at intervals, not as a regular subject in the time-table and I have done very little under the age

of eight. Sometimes in the summer term we have a lesson instead of band work. I just fit it in where I can without encroaching too much on the other work. I should like it to have had it given a recognised place in the music time-table for I feel that though there is less visible result it is in many ways the most valuable side of the work.

We listen to music - that is the chief thing and the lesson is a very happy one, ~~for~~, of course, the first essential of appreciation are enjoyment and discovery - no one can force you to appreciate music!

Here are some of the ways of listening which we have enjoyed: -

Finding out how tunes are ~~made~~<sup>made</sup>. National songs like John Peel and dozens of others just like one little tune which we call A, and an answering tune B, B again and then A - a very simple formula. The class divides, some singing the A tune, others the B, it becomes quite an exciting game when variations of A and B come in the development of the tune and the class divides into A' A<sup>2</sup> B' B<sup>2</sup> and perhaps a jolly ~~coda~~ at the end.

We talked about dances from one term: from the primitive music of savage tribes to the dances such as the Gavotte, Bourree and Minuet with their clearly defined rhythmic basis. Then sometimes we talk about a composer, his life and his work - we had the story of Mozart's life and spent several lessons over the "Magic Flute" opera - Coleridge Taylor and parts of "Hiawatha", Handel and the "Messiah" and so on. We have studied two operas in detail "The Magic Flute" and "Hansel and Gretel" (Hansel and Gretel for all the children over seven). We learn the main themes and notice their recurrence all through the opera as well as having the story and hearing most of the songs and learning the simpler ones. We have taken two groups of children to hear these operas, and they are nearly as excited at recognising the themes coming in on different instruments in the orchestra as over the story.

Sometimes again I just play to them without any comment and often I get quite unsolicited comments from them. When playing Walter Carroll's "Sea Horses" to them one child laughed - at the end I asked her what the joke was and she said "I saw one of them tumble off his horse into the water". Another time to the babies I played a little theme with variations - one variation having  in the left hand - a mite of four shouted out "Oh, listen, its gone all wriggly below."

Since I bought my gramaphone this spring the possibilities of this class become endless. We have, for example, records with each of the instruments of the orchestra named and played in turn and I have pictures of them to show, and I am gradually collecting good records illustrating the use of the instruments, either solos or two or three in combination. The other day when it was very hot we had our lesson in the garden, and we were having a talk about some of the instruments and trying to describe the different character of their sounds. We had the violin, viola, piccolo and flute that day. -

I said to them "Supposing you were not a musician and could not make up tunes, but you were an artist who painted pictures and you heard the piccolo (putting on the record) what would you paint?" I had several answers at once - perhaps one of the nicest was from a 7 year old, "I'd draw a picture of a kitten playing with a ball of string". A boy said, "A single figure dancing, a kind of dance something like a Highland fling but with high leaps in it."

"Would you use a piccolo for a lullaby?" "No, a violin" - and one child said half to herself, "I think I should use a viola but I can't explain why."

May I tell you just one other experience I had here some years ago, which came to me as an absolute revelation of what music means to children. I was going to play two Schumann pieces to them - a little group of seven children of about 9 years of age. The first "About Strange hands and people"; the second "A child falling asleep" I said to them, "If you'd like to write anything down about these pieces you may". That was all I said, and this is what I read in their classbooks when I got home about the second piece. Of course I did not tell them the titles -

"A child falling asleep"

A garden at sunset with white pigeons flying about.  
It is like silent water on a summer's day and no waves.  
It is more of a sleepy tune than the other and more growly.  
Very slow and sleepy.  
A stream bubbling down very slowly.  
A baby getting rocked to sleep.  
A town at night asleep.

Out of seven, five of the children were seeing beautiful picture and each caught the mood of the piece. I have not asked much since. That showed me enough and made me realise how immensely worth while it is to give children as much beautiful music as we can, and what a loss it must be if it is not given its due place in their education.

#### JUNIOR MUSIC CLASS

The Junior Music Class was started last October as an introductory class for children who would soon be learning piano. We have had 20 minute lessons and two twenty minute practises per week. In previous years a chassevant class has been held, a visiting mistress taking the class, while I took the practises. We felt that if we had this class in our own hands it would fit better into the whole musical scheme and would prevent overlapping, being made supplementary to the other class and definitely introductory to piano lessons.

I started in October with 10 children. At Christmas 3 of the older ones began piano lessons, and one or two more at Easter. So that I have now 5 of the youngest (average age 6) who have had a complete session in this class.

I believe that in all branches of musical education we should think not only of our own particular branch of work, but try to take a very wide view. Take piano lessons for example. Just to perform on the piano is of little or no value if it is merely a training of the eye and of the hand - for that can be a very mechanical process it should be a training of musicianship and a development of the

power to listen with appreciation and enjoyment - as one writer puts it, "The mistake we have made in the past is to let the young child begin the study of an instrument without any previous preparation, with the result that many a child loses his love for, and sensitiveness to, music because he struggles to express through too difficult a medium ~~the~~ thought or feeling which is not already a conscious expression of his own." So in this class I have not aimed at teaching the children to play, but rather have tried to prepare the soil and sow the seed for the teacher to whom they will go for piano lessons; to train the ear, the eye and the mind and not the fingers.

Let me give you a summary of the work that we have done this year; - Our first lesson was about the piano, the mechanism of the keys, hammers, strings, pedals etc, "Piano-forte", i.e. the "Soft loud" instrument, so called because it has so much greater range of expressive tone than its predecessors. I played them for a soft piece a little "Lullaby" by Rebikoff, and for a loud one the tremendous opening section of "Finlandia" by Sibelius.

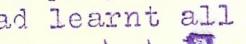
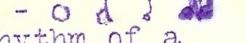
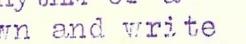
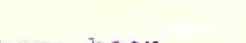
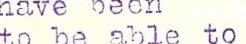
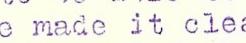
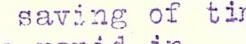
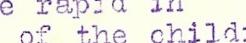
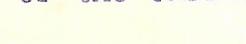
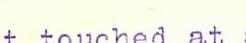
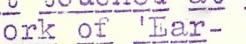
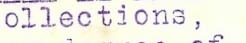
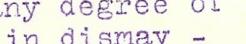
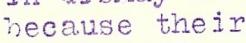
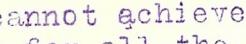
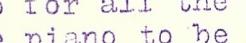
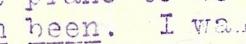
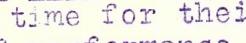
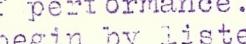
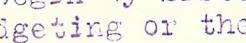
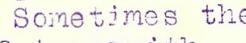
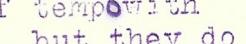
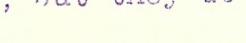
Then we looked at the keyboard, found it was arranged in groups, found all the notes called C, those called G and so on. We tried to see how many of the notes of the piano we could imitate with our voices, and found that the piano could sing the same tunes, but could also sing them very high and very low. Having found C and G we began the sound ladder, leading to the introduction to the staff lines. The large Montessori board is very useful for this as the whole class can use it together, practising placing the notes on the proper lines, or taking them away as called for, or counting "How many G's can you find" and so on.

Alongside this preparatory work on staff lines we work at Ear-training, singing exercises first to Doh, Me and Soh, learning their relation to the staff lines and to the keyboard. Each stage is slow; it is so important with young children to be very thorough with the beginnings. We learn each new sound in the Solfa scale by ear, then to read it, to place notes on boards, to write it in manuscript books, to find, say, all the Dohs, Mes and Sohs in a piece of simple music, or colour them in our books, leaving uncoloured all the sounds that are not Doh, Me or Soh, and to sing them and play simple tunes containing these notes. Sometimes just for hand and eye training and correlation of different ways of learning we sight read a tune, then copy it into our books, and then sing and play it for ourselves. You will understand that all this takes time, for several of the class could not sing a note in tune in October and establishing of this sense of pitch cannot be hurried.

This is only one side of the work. We learn too how music goes fast and slow, that when it is like a march it is pictured  and we call it Taa, trotting we picture  , or with "hands joined"  called Taé, etc. All this they learn too in the rhythm lesson in the usual school time table, but here we go further. We learn to write them, to recognise them, to listen for them in the music we hear played and later on to put bar lines according to our beating of time. As memory test we learn some tunes and play them on the Montessori Bells, and also make up and play scale rhythms and easy sequences. (The advantages of some such instrument over the piano at this ~~stage~~ is obvious. They only require hitting with a stick - there are no

complications of fingering. It is quite easy to play  on the bells, but on the piano quite a difficult feat for tiny fingers.)

We build up the scale and learn the notation of rhythm with various ways of practising, playways and games about which I have not time to tell you now. One great favourite is musical Snap. All the signs we know, clefs notes, rhythmic figures etc. take the place of the usual devices on Snap Cards. There are six of each card. It is played in the usual way, but any child saying 'Snap' may not claim the cards unless he can say correctly what it is - or if it is a little tune can sing it correctly in Solfa. An excellent game this for finding out who really knows the work!

But briefly to summarise the year's work. The children now know the whole scale in Solfa and as applied to staff in Key C with a beginning in other keys. They know the clefs, and the names of the staff lines middle C, clef line G and top line F for the right hand, middle C, clef line F and 'Growly G' for the left hand, and can find them on the piano. They know the formation of the scale, its arrangement of tones and semitones and have found out several scales for themselves at the piano. They can sing in Solfa, and play by sight very simple melodies with their proper rhythm, reading by Solfa and singing while playing with the right hand. (The whole class sings while one plays) by interval with either hand. They can play the scales of C and G with their proper fingering. They had learnt all the simplest time figures with time names and notation -                                   <img alt="A musical note consisting of a vertical stem with a short horizontal stroke at the top, followed by a vertical bar with a small circle at the top." data-bbox="760 4270 920 42

not need to keep strictly to it and often they express a piece in great detail. There are few lovelier sights to see than a group of young children expressing their interpretation of the music, each conducting in his own way. Always I let them hear the same piece at two or three consecutive lessons or at short intervals, and if it is a great favourite I repeat it at their request, but they must then ask for it by name and if possible try also to remember the composer's name. Sometimes they read a melody at sight, for example the opening theme of the overture to 'Hansel and Gretel'. They read it first and then wrote it in their manuscript books and played it on the piano. Then they heard the gramophone record and listened for the recurrence of the theme in varying harmonies and on different instruments. Sometimes we find that the left hand has a turn at playing the tune, and so when they were beginning to play from the bass clef I played Walford Davies 'Solemn Melody' to them arranged for piano (played in illustration). After listening to this tune we had a talk about chords, for the melody is given out first by the right hand, then by the left, and later on is enriched with fuller chords. We tried singing some simple chords, each child singing one note and also trying choosing several notes at random on the piano and striking them together. When I played the chord passage in the 'Solemn Melody' again they all watched the hoppers inside the grand piano and learnt how the pedalling prevents the blurring and mixing of chords. Sometimes if it is a very simple piece they look on at the music and by reading the rhythm can follow as I play. Often we just listen for pure enjoyment with no other object, especially to such purely pictorial music as Kullaks "Grandmamma tells a Ghost Story" or "The Goblin up the Chimney". Always the first hearing of any piece is without analysis of any kind, in subsequent hearings I suggest things to listen for, or they tell me impressions or points noticed. The possibilities of this sort of work are endless.

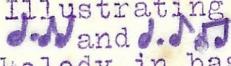
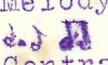
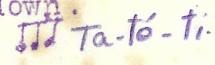
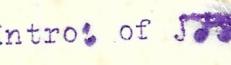
This part of the lesson seldom exceeds five minutes, often only three or four, yet since October they have heard several times over nearly forty pieces, by Beethoven, Bach, Mendelsohn, Rimsky Korsakov, Tschaikowsky and others. I think some of you would be surprised at the things they love. One little boy's chief favourite is The Bach Double Concerto in G minor played by Zimbalist and Kreisler.

Sometimes I play something and they suggest titles and we compare these with the composer's idea, e.g. 'Jagerlied', Schumann. One child said 'Fairies', a second 'No, Giants and Fairies', and an older child then broke in with "No! Huntsmen of course, can't you hear the horns?" I played a little bit at the beginning of Chopin's "Funeral March" and a boy said "It's what you feel like when you've got to come back and do lessons at 3 o'clock!" (i.e. punishment work)

If at the age of six you have in a year (about 5 or 6 hours of time altogether) heard all this literature of music surely the time has not been wasted.

These half hours with this group of children in the Junior music class have been some of the happiest I have spent. They have been ~~so~~ informal and varied, and have made me believe more firmly than ever that there is no music too good for children, and also, what any teacher of young children must often feel, that the children give us far more than we can ever give them.

Piano

		<u>Illustrating or purpose</u>
Rebikoff.	Fillette berçant sa poupee.	The piano can talk very softly.
Sibelius	Finlandia	It can also make tremendous sounds.
Susan Forde.	Gavotte.	It can sound very gay & happy.
Chopin.	Funeral March; 1st section.	Also very sad and solemn.
Tschaikowsky.	Trepak.	For free expression by physical movements.
Schumann.	About strange lands & people.	
"	Jägerlied.	To suggest titles
Brahms.	Waltzes.	Illustrating time figure 
Chopin	Prelude No. 6.	Melody in bass part.
Gürliett.	Ländler.	 (when learning) Taa-ate
Beethoven	Dance.	Contrasting rhythms; also p & f
Mozart	Minuet	
Russian Air.	Song of Volga Boatmen.	Had sight read melody previously; now joined in chorus and acted.
Schumann	Melodie.	Wrote out rhythm afterwards.
Couperin	Gavotte.	Followed music at piano as played.
Kullak	Grandmamma tells a Ghost Story.	The piano
	Goblin up the Chimney	Telling stories.
	Once there lived a princess.	" "
Martini	Gavotte	
Walford Davies.	Solemn Melody.	(Details in lecture)
	Irish Melody. The Londonderry Air.	Follow curves of melody with hands up and down.
English Country Dance.	Bonny Green.	Introduction of 
Corelli	Gavotte	Intro. of  Ta-Tefé.
Marcello	XVIIIth Psalm.	
Gramaphone		Conducting changes of tempo.
Percy Grainger.	Handel in the Strand.	
Bach	Double Concerto in G minor	To suggest titles.
Schumann	Traumerlied	Conduct
Tschaikowsky.	Miniature Overture	
	Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.	
Mendelssohn	Overture to Midsummer Nights Fairies.	Procession - listed for donkey's Ee-Aw.
	Dream.	
Humperdinck	Hansel and Gretel. Overture.	Listen for theme, repetition and fragments.
	" " Witches Ride.	
Gounod	Funeral March of a Marionette.	Suggest titles.
Bach	Celebrated Air on G string.	
Saint-Saëns	Le Cygne	Imagine swan on the water.
Dukas.	L'Apprenti Sorcier.	With the story.