

and thus the third might be a member of the School. We shall, doubtless, be attacked on all sides for daring to suggest such a complete and novel re-organization, but we shall not grumble at the rejection and derision of our plan, if we do but stir the latent energies of more able Reformers than ourselves, to take up their pens and propose one more practicable.

THE SCHOOL CONCERT.

If there is one improvement recommended by the Commissioners for trial at Rugby which can be said to have been a more decided success than another, it is the reorganization of its musical system. The singing in Chapel and at the Concerts, up to October, 1864, was barely tolerable. The choir had (we believe about 40 voices) met for practice one hour a week, and depended on the paid choristers for all the real work. The main attraction at the Concert was *Vive la Compagnie*. The arrival of Mr. Goldschmidt and Mr. Edwards changed the whole face of things. The numbers quickly ran up from 40 to over 100; any piece of music that was taken in hand was carefully learnt, before being sung publicly; and since that time the improvement has been so marked and rapid, that every successive concert has shown itself, in some point or other, better than the one before it. For a time the concerts were rather an experiment, and as such rightly met with lenient criticism. Now we need no longer hesitate to let them be judged by their own merits, as the efforts of trained musicians. Last Term, with its scarlatinas and rashes and coughs, was a very trying one for the choir, but none the less they brought it to a brilliant ending with the School Concert, on the evening of December 23rd.

At eight o'clock the Concert was opened by Goss' Christmas Anthem, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings." Mr. Goldschmidt conducted, the Rev. Charles Smith accompanied on the piano, Mr. Edwards on the organ. The simple but stately anthem was given with spirit and precision, particularly when the full choir joined in on the phrase "For unto us is born this day," after the lead of the tenors and basses only. Mr. W. Anstice followed with a beautiful air from Mehul's *Joseph*, quieter than his usual class of music, but sung with great taste and smoothness. Then came the great feature of the evening—the string of choruses from Handel's *Israel in Egypt*. The choruses are

the best test of the progress of a choir, as they need both fullness of tone, accurate time, and diversity of expression. No three successive choruses could have been found better fitted to show how thoroughly the choir are masters of all those qualifications for good chorus-singing, than "He sent a thick darkness," "He smote all the first-born," and "But as for his people." The stifling chorus "He sent a thick darkness," came first, and was sung with the utmost care by all voices. Everybody was fully alive to the difficulty of the work, and put forth his best efforts. This was followed by "He smote all the first-born," which was sung with splendid firmness and regard to time. The delightful pastoral chorus "But as for his people," was sung immediately after with equal skill, and formed a charming contrast to its forerunner. With that chorus ended the selection from *Israel in Egypt*, which from beginning to end was sung with intelligence, accuracy, and spirit, such as to place it far above anything ever before given at our School Concerts. The next piece was the exquisite Terzetto "Lift thine eyes," from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, sung with great delicacy by Messrs. W. Anstice, Trevelyan, and C. S. Arkcoll. The more praise is due to Mr. Anstice for his singing, from the fact of his having to undertake it on the very shortest notice, in consequence of Mr. W. Goldschmidt falling ill on the last morning. The sacred part of the Concert was finely closed by Handel's chorus "And the Glory of the Lord," given in a style in no way inferior to the other choruses.

After an interval of 15 minutes, the second part of the Concert was opened by the singing of the new Carmen Feriale "Floreath Rugbeia," both words and music by the Rev. C. E. Moberly. The applause with which it was greeted, both before and after the encore, showed what satisfaction it gave to the school for whom it was written, and Mr. Moberly was forced to rise and acknowledge the loud calls made for him. Messrs. Trevelyan and C. S. Arkcoll then sang a pretty duet of Keller's—"Morning in thy splendour glowing!"—in a very pleasing style, but did not meet with the encore they deserved, only, let us hope, because the audience were too much exhausted with their applause of "Floreath Rugbeia." Gottschalk's "Wake thee, my dear!" was sung by the choir with considerable expression, but perhaps a little too heavily. Mr. S. P. Micholls played Mendelssohn's Rondo Capriccioso on the piano, with great care, considerable brilliancy, and a

manifest appreciation of the spirit of the piece, and he deservedly met with warm applause. Mr. F. Tobin ma. hardly did justice to his voice in the air from Barnett's *Ancient Mariner*, "O happy living things!" owing apparently to his nervousness. In delicate part songs, such as Mendelssohn's "Primrose," the choir shows itself to least advantage. They always sing such things carefully, but as though they did not understand them, and without sprightliness and delicacy: there is room for great improvement in their rendering of such pieces. The instrumental piece—the March from Meyerbeer's *Prophète*—was received with great favour. The performers were—on the flute Mr. Leslie, on the violin Mr. Wheler, on the violincello Mr. Rowden, on the piano Messrs. E. J. Norton and Boyson. The performance of the whole party was good, but Mr. Leslie may be singled out for special notice. Pearsall's lively part song, "Who shall win my lady fair?" was very well sung by Messrs. W. Anstice, P. Hornby, Cropper, C. S. Arkcoll, Botfield, Hallsworth, W. Fletcher, and J. C. Lambert. This also met with an encore, and was certainly one of the best executed pieces of the evening, the performers evidently feeling the nature of the music, and singing accordingly. The next song on the list was Mozart's trio, "*Cori fan tutti*," which met with an encore, which it certainly deserved, although it could hardly be expected to meet with such popularity as the Laughing Trio of last Easter. "*Vive la Compagnie*" fell to Mr. F. Tobin's (ma.) lot, and very ably he acquitted himself. It was well and distinctly sung, and distinctness is the most important requisite for its success. The words were the best that could be made out of such a scarcity of events. Pearsall's arrangement of "The Hardy Norseman" went off with good spirit and in good time. "God save the Queen" then brought the musical part of the Concert to a close, and the cheering instantly began. We should have mentioned that, by the special request of the Old Rugbeians, Mr. Anstice repeated for the third time the song in which he won his first laurels last Christmas—" *Toujours gai*," and that it was, as usual, capitally sung.

Of the Concert as a whole, we need only say that it was a grand success, in the teeth of sickness, and bore the clearest marks of constant and careful work on the part of Messrs. Edwards and Pettersen, and the members of the choir. The hearty thanks of the choir, and the School generally, are due

to the Rev. Charles Smith, who, since he came to Rugby, has not only done his best to help the singing in chapel, but has played the piano accompaniments to all the sacred music at our Concerts, in what manner it is needless to say.

While we are speaking of the School music, we feel tempted to make one or two remarks about the singing in chapel. No Old Rugbeian can fail to be struck with the immense improvement in the singing there of late years, but it is still far from being up to the mark of our Concert singing, and there are many shortcomings that a little determination on the part of the choir would go far towards removing. One fault that is noticeable is the absence of any recognised leader in the intoning and singing. Ought it not to be the duty of the head of the choir? If nobody were to begin till they heard the note pitched by him, the *decani* and *cantoris* might get through the confession together, on one and the same note, oftener perhaps than they do now. Then the hymns are sung too slowly, though that is more a matter of personal taste. But on the third point surely no one will differ with us: The want of tone and life in the responses to the commandments is a disgrace to the whole musical service. Intoning has once, and, so far as we can discover, only once, been heard in Rugby Chapel,—on the Tercentenary Celebration. What the choir did so well then we are tempted to imagine they might do now if they would only try. It is true that the chapel is a very bad place for sound, and that must cause a great deal of the heaviness of the style of singing, and disinclination to try to sing, but if some twenty of the best voices in the choir would make an arrangement to carry on the singing in chapel as vigorously as they do in the music school; if they would sing and intone every word of the service that required singing or intoning, the whole body of the choir would probably quickly follow their example, and Rugby might very shortly have just cause to be quite as proud of its chapel service as it now is of its psalm chanting and its concerts.

On Thursday last Mr. Bonamy Price was elected Professor of Political Economy at Oxford. Mr. Price came as an Assistant Master at Rugby in 1830, under Dr. Arnold.

Mr. George Melly, an Old Rugbeian well known as the author of "The experiences of a Fag," is spoken of as a Parliamentary candidate for Liverpool at the next election.