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MUSIC NOTES.

For Chorus Singers.

On next Sunday evening the College Chorus will render the annual musical service of *Christmas Carols*. A few words on the subjects of *Carols* appeared in our last issue, and an excellent summary of the subject was presented by Miss Blanche Dixon at the Students' Collection Service on Sunday morning. The Hymns too, for the service were appropriately chosen. There perhaps remains to be said a word in respect to Chorus Singing. A goodly number have been faithful to the cause thus far this year and we are glad to say that others have expressed a desire to become members when it is convenient to accommodate them. This is as it should be—and to those whose interest is in this direction we offer a few words on the subject of *Chorus Singing* in its various phases.

Music Reading.—It goes without saying that one of the primary qualifications necessary to a choral singer is the ability to read at least fairly fluently, either the staff notation or the sol-fa method. But the honest truth is that a considerable number of the members, even of some good choirs, can read neither notation with any degree of accuracy. A discussion of the methods of sight reading is out of place here, and is merely mentioned as a reminder that it is a qualification "devoutly to be wished," and what is more to the point, not difficult of attainment under systematic practice.

Breathing.—This is another important point the urgency of which seems to be disregarded to a large extent among choral singers. They will tell you that they never paid any attention to the breathing; and you will hear the very poor results. One of the chief causes of "flattening" of choirs is the fact that singers often continue singing on one breath till they are spent before taking another. Then this next breath has often, perforce, to be taken at a bad place.

Phrasing.—This subject is closely allied to the preceding. It simply means grouping the words into such phrases as will best bring out their meaning, and then separating each phrase by taking a breath. In solo singing the performer can decide the phrasing for himself, but in order that the best results may be obtained in chorus work, every member of the choir should use the same phrasing, all breathing together. It is difficult to conceive of anything more treacherous than the memory of a choral singer with regard to this subject.

Blend of Voices.—This is the most important phase of choral singing. To produce a "blend,"

no voice, however well trained and perfect, may be prominent, and singers who cannot subdue their ambition to "get a hearing" should never join a choir! The "balance of parts" may be left to the conductor but when he or she has done all that is possible in this way it still remains for each individual member of the choir to listen as he sings, and endeavor to "tune" his voice nicely with the other voices.

Expression.—What has caused this pitiable state of things! Chiefly, perhaps the inability of the one in charge to overcome the tendency of choral singers to sing at a "dead-level." It is also to be feared that many, without intending any injury, totally disregard marks of expression, feeling certain that every other member will perform them religiously!

Time.—Another ideal to be striven after, whether the chorus be of 30, or 100 voices, is that its singing shall be rhythmical as the singing of *one person*. Of course there is only one way to achieve this, and that is by every singer subordinating himself to the conductor's will.

Enunciation.—What underlies much of the indistinct utterance is the disinclination of singers to make special effort in using the tongue, teeth and lips. A great deal of stress has been of late years laid upon the enunciation of the consonants—yet the vowels are very important and very useful in getting intelligible utterance.

Conclusion.—One of the most inconvenient members of the choir is the one who takes into his head that rehearsals are too commonplace for him, and if he should "look in" at rehearsal late it is as much as any one should reasonably expect of him! It is very necessary, if a choir is to be successful that the rehearsals should be carried on in a business-like manner. Be in time to commence punctually, and then you may reasonably hope to get away punctually. *But then you have been very good about all these things! The season's greetings!*

Mr. and Mrs. Clark Mendenhall, of High Point, were the guests of Prof. and Mrs. J. F. Davis last Sunday.

Miss Martha Lewis, of Winston-Salem, spent the week-end here with her sister, Callie.

Miss Maude Gainey visited her sister Jessie at the State Normal last Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. Harris Johnson, of the class of '14, spent Saturday and Sunday here with friends.

Mr. Roy Millikan was a visitor here last Sunday.

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