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Published in 1848, this short work by Joseph Mainzer (1801–51) argues for the considerable value of music as part of general education. A German priest, teacher and composer, Mainzer had an important influence on the development of amateur music and the choral movement in the first half of the nineteenth century. Attracting large numbers of adult labourers, he gave free singing classes, using his own highly influential teaching system. Music, Mainzer argues here, not only brings direct moral and social benefits, but also takes the place of potentially harmful habits and leisure activities, such as the drinking of alcohol. The work defines music in relation to its educational value and potential, exploring the origins, development and moral influence of music since the ancient Greeks. Mainzer also discusses the ways in which music is taught at all levels.

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JOSEPH MAINZER



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BY  
DR. MAINZER.

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DEDICATED

TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND.

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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At the conclusion of the Annual Report of the High School of Edinburgh, (1847,) we read the following lines by Dr. Schmitz, its Rector :—

“ In regard to singing, no one in our days will venture to deny the salutary, refining, and moral influence which the practice of the art of music in general, and especially the music of the human voice, exercises upon youthful minds ; and it is confidently hoped, that both the patrons of the High School and the public at large, will heartily welcome and sanction the introduction of so powerful an agent, in inspiring our youthful pupils with a love of what is noble and beautiful. Singing once was the glory of Scotland ; and may it again become an ornament to the country, and serve in our churches to enhance our best feelings of piety and devotion.”

This question of the introduction of singing into the High School came before the Town Council on the 21st September. Bailie Duncan, who had, with some others, been appointed as member of a committee to examine this subject, made his report, advising:<sup>1</sup> *that singing should not be taught; that the Scottish mind was not prepared for it; and that he could not see what connection Music had with Greek.* (A laugh.)

At the same time that the Town Council of Edinburgh was carrying such resolutions, committees were forming in several towns of Scotland for the promotion of musical instruction in schools and classical institutions; and from some of these towns we received letters, in which the writers, as by common consent, protested against the opinion of the City Magistrates in regard to the ripeness of Scotland for music. A teacher of the Canongate passed a more severe sentence on this decision, in saying, that he hoped the Town Council had only meant Edinburgh, and not the Canongate, as there the mind was quite prepared, and singing had been taught a long time. We fear, when we examine the question more closely, that it is not the Scottish mind, but the mind of the Town Council of Edinburgh, that is unprepared.

Since the Town-Council is not yet prepared to make mathematics, history, and the physical sciences, indispensable branches of a curriculum in a High School, can we expect it should be more so for the

<sup>1</sup> See *Scotsman* of 22d September 1847.

cultivation of the fine arts? Let us suppose that Latin and Greek had never been taught, and that their introduction had been proposed instead of music; we should have read in the *Scotsman* of the 22d, that the College Bailie had moved, and that the Council had unanimously approved of the resolution, that Greek and Latin should not be taught; that the Scottish mind was not prepared for it; and that they could not see what connection these dead languages, the tongues of heathen philosophers and popish priests, had to do with the present youth of Scotland, who had a great, and very pardonable predilection for the language of their ancestors, and were not at all inclined to exchange it! (Sensation.)

Although much inclined to indulge in a further analysis of the exposition which the Town-Council have made of their sentiments in regard to music, yet we abstain. We remark only, that we intended to address a letter to the Lord Provost, Bailies, and Councillors, on their resolution of the 21st September, but the letter became a book. Should they find it surprising that they occupy a place in it, may they consider, that since they have spoken of music, music has a right to speak of them. They will understand in what relation music stands to the Town-Council, although they cannot see what connection it has with Greek.

At all events, the friends of youth, the friends of education, those who appreciate music as an educational element, will thank me for having raised this

little public monument in honour of the Magistrates, as a memento of their services and patronage, bestowed with such lustre and enlightened views, upon science, literature, and art, especially that art which has been treated by them with such peculiar favour, and has enjoyed their unanimous recommendation, that it should not be taught: words of oracular importance, and which will mark a glorious epoch, both in the history of music and that of Town-Councils in Scotland.

## P R E F A C E.

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DR. JOHNSON said, in his *Journey to the Western Islands*: “The character of a schoolmaster is less honourable in Scotland than in England; it is therefore seldom accepted by men who can adorn it.” Scotland seems to have but little felt this stigma thrown on the profession of the teacher, and the want of appreciation of so important a ministry of the public welfare. Almost a century passed, and not a step was taken towards its intellectual and social advancement. The teacher at last, filled with the importance of his mission, and forced by the claims which the progress of time and civilization imposed on him, rose to efface, from his profession and his country, a reproach unworthy of both. He thus called to his brethren: Let us advance in knowledge! let us study! let us unite! if union be strength, study is knowledge!

The call was heard and re-echoed from every hill and every shore; the light of hope, like the beacon-fire of former days, was seen from every village, and in a moment there stood eighteen hundred teachers, as

a phalanx united, ready to defend the rights and claims due to the youth, and to the honour of their country.

The National Schools in Ireland, the Teachers Union of England, and the Educational Institute of Scotland, are heralds of a new era in the history of education in Great Britain. The hour in which the latter was decided, we consider the hour of the emancipation of the teacher in Scotland. From being the neglected, the despised member of society, he will, by his talents, superior accomplishments, and public usefulness, rise and reach that station which he deserves,—he in whose hands are the morality and happiness of the coming generation. This Institute, which placed itself high above all sectarian differences, and has thus shewn a superior spirit quite in conformity with the age, and worthy of the high vocation of the teacher, will become a powerful lever to raise the social and intellectual standing of that profession which cannot but be considered as one of the mightiest pillars of society and nations.

In dedicating the present work to the Educational Institute of Scotland, we do so, not that we deem the teachers particularly learned in music, or that they have bestowed particular attention on it, either as a science or an art; but because the Institute has, despite the national prejudices, acknowledged music as a branch of public instruction, as an element in the education of youth.

Yet there are still some who would rather impede than favour its cultivation in schools, as much from



a disappreciation of it, as from an exaggerated importance of the branches they teach. It can be demonstrated, that hitherto the Scottish teachers and the Scottish clergymen are infinitely behind the rest of Europe in the knowledge of music. The stern Covenanter, though he fought at the battle of Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge, to the tune of *John come kiss me now*, or died singing psalms in the midst of the crowd at the Grassmarket, or on the heather of his solitary moors ; yet, his fright of a fiddle, or a dance, in which he always saw the cloven foot behind, has become well nigh the general feeling of Scotland with regard to music. On the other hand, singing has been too much associated with drinking ; many sing only when they are drunk. Can we wonder, then, that Music is not considered an agent of mental and moral culture by those who know it only as an art of debauchery, the priestess of revels and public-houses ? Can we be surprised that young men are peculiarly guarded against music, when it is considered to be to them, what the flame is to the moth—destruction ? But even this fear is a new homage of its power, a genuflection before its throne. The young man who knows music is sought, is courted, and carried along in the whirlpool of youth. If he were the rule and not the exception, were there many such musical phoenixes, the individual would not be so much thought of. If the family afforded recreation through music, they would not want to seek it elsewhere. A country which has allowed the

art to sink to so low an ebb, wears, like the galley-slave, the chain of its own guilt. How couldst thou forget, land of song, home of the bard, “meet nurse of a poetic child,” Caledonia! that there is also a holy music, a music that lives, and loves, and suffers with us, that raises the soul, bent in sorrow, out of the dust, and bears it beyond the clouds; a music that, like an aurora of eternity, penetrates into the night of life, cheers and illumines our path! how couldst thou forget that, like the rainbow, music is a memorial of a covenant between the earthly and the celestial, blending equally, and reflecting all colours! that she has accents for all nations, all ages; that every epoch of our life has its own tones: that to the boy she appears, with his spring, his plays, his birds and butterflies; to the adolescent with his love for every thing that is beautiful, great and elevating, for liberty and country; to the aged a sweet ripe fruit of life and wisdom, a setting sun that throws a purple veil over days and recollections of the past, and brightens the pilgrim’s path towards futurity. He who thus penetrates and reveres music, to him she is the virgin of charity, who, with her love, her tears, and her inspiring breath, is near him in all moments and trials of life, a sister-soul in whose bosom he confides every silent thought, and every emotion.

Thus has the Scottish Institute looked upon music, and therefore has it acknowledged it an educational element; a late and feeble homage paid to the art, but a distant foreboding of better days to come. As it ap-

pears to us as a pharos of hope in the darkness of the night, we have associated our thought and our work with theirs ; and in exposing our principles, hope to strengthen and support their own, and shew how, in united zeal and activity, they can be realized for a country's welfare, and a nation's glory.

Music will no longer be a destitute child of persecution : it will become a welcome guest under every roof, in every cottage. Soon the youth will cease to be mute ; not a hundred children, but a hundred schools, will unite in love, and harmony, and innocence. In those sublime moments, when simple but graceful strains are carried upon thousands of infant voices, all will feel the power of the multitude, as Haydn did, in tears, when he heard the charity children of St. Paul's ; or, overcome by the majesty of simple grandeur, exclaim with Catalani, when she heard the primitive chants of the Grecian Church : “ My song is of this world, but this is a choir of angels.”