

MUSICAL MENTION

JOHN RANDOLPH

The most important musical happening of the past week, filled as it has been with the usual round of recitals and concerts at commencement time, was the performance of the oratorio of "The Messiah," by Haendel, on Tuesday evening, June 9, at the Lansing theatre. This work was given under the auspices of the University Music Union of the university of Nebraska, which body consists of the university chorus and orchestra, with the Lincoln Oratorio society and Philharmonic orchestra. It is only just to say, however, that the credit for so praiseworthy and generally successful an undertaking is due to Mrs. P. V. M. Raymond, whose indefatigable efforts both past and present, for the promotion of the best musical art deserve the gratitude of every musician and musical amateur in Lincoln. Without her patient labor at countless rehearsals in guiding uncertain sopranos and altos and recalcitrant tenors and basses through the mazes of the long roudades of Haydn and Haendel no performances of the works attempted would be possible. It must not be forgotten that these oratorios are works primarily and chiefly for large choral bodies and that no soloist or soloists however good can equal the importance of the chorus. Viewed from this standpoint the performance of "The Messiah" was a very creditable one and showed in every detail the faithful and artistic labor of Mrs. Raymond. The chorus was not a very large one, but was well balanced (even the tenors, that usual weak spot in choral bodies were distinctly audible). They sang with energy and certainty and even regard for the finer effects of shading.

The soloists on this occasion were Miss Florence Worley, soprano; Miss Eugenia Getner, contralto; Mr. H. J. W. Seemark, tenor, and Mr. Homer Moore, bass. Miss Worley was suffering from a cold and her voice was not in its best condition, but she sang the difficult music of her part tunefully and musically. Miss Getner is a debutante in this style of singing and was too nervous to do herself or the part justice. Her singing, however, gave promise of better things in the future. I am glad to record the fact that Lincoln has a singer who can, at short notice and with insufficient rehearsal, sing a part as difficult as the tenor part in this oratorio.

Naturally the interest of the audience was centered upon Mr. Homer Moore of Omaha, the only stranger among the soloists. Mr. Moore is a bass baritone of resonance and dramatic fervor and his first appearance in Lincoln was a genuine success. The solo, "Why Do the Nations," is very difficult for the modern singer, with his disregard for the bel canto and tendency to lyric declamation. It is all the more creditable to Mr. Moore that he sang so admirably and with such perfect breath control the long and difficult roudades in this solo. The

other solos for bass were delivered with the dignity and authority necessary to make them thoroughly successful. Mrs. Will Owen Jones assisted at the piano and Mr. August Hagenow played with the first violins in the orchestra.

UNIVERSITY POLITICS.

The fight between the fraternity and "barbarian" elements has been of long standing. Almost from the start the contest has been between the fraternities and the open literary societies. When the fraternities were first organized their members were also members of the literary societies, but soon they came to be looked upon as inner circles within the larger. Those who were within the secret circles were supposed to think themselves better than the rest. This led to the barb-frat war. Both of the literary societies then organized, by concerted action placed amendments in their constitutions debaring fraternity men from joining them. Those who were already members left, and this division has existed in the university ever since. There are now three open literary societies. Each one has a membership of about seventy-five. There are a number of both mens' and womens' fraternities with a total membership about equal to that of the literary societies. The membership of the societies is composed largely of the students who came from the farm and are working their way through school. Their social entertainments are always inexpensive. On the other hand, the fraternity members usually come from homes of wealth. The sons and daughters of prominent men are asked to join some fraternity almost as soon as they enter the university. The fraternities represent a considerable portion of the institution. By far the larger per cent of university parties and balls are given under their auspices. But while the fraternities, viewed from the standpoint of the literary societies, are aristocratic, yet they are really marked by the same democratic spirit. Even though their membership is limited to a few, many of those who are members of fraternities are doing work to help pay expenses. A man is not necessarily debarred from joining because he lacks wealth or a family name. They are coming to value a student according to intrinsic value.—J. H. MCGUFFY.

Prof. D. R. Lillibridge is ill. James Whitehead has returned from Custer county.

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