

favourite the volume of sound does usually swell very considerably.

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH CHURCH MUSIC

The School of English Church Music at first sight appears of no use to us in this country, but such is not the case on a closer examination. The aims and objects of the founders are to combat the very evils that all interested in the development and improvement of Church music deplore. It is possible for the remote Church to render their services equally well as the best Cathedral choir if they will approach the matter in the right spirit. All they need is a gramophone, a set of records issued by the S.E.C.M., dealing with the whole service.—Responses, Venite, Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, a few psalms, and a record containing a speech by Dr. Nicholson on psalm pointing and speech rhythm.

A set of parish psalters issued by the S.E.C.M. With these in their possession, a willingness to learn new ways, and perseverance, the desired results are within the reach of all. That such a reform is overdue was only too patent last Christmas, when we had a combined Bible Class service, the choir being augmented by members from other choirs. The psalms and canticles were sung with many renderings. The trouble with the existing psalters is that the choir members and sometimes choirmasters misread the signs. For instance, it is a common belief that the signs placed over words in the psalms indicate accent and extra length. Again, in the responses, members read the long notes as meaning the notes to be held the full value. This belief has taken such a strong hold that I find the only way is to discard the present books and start afresh. When I came to Hastings I did away with all accent in psalm-singing, also waiting for two beats on one-syllable words, the result being the chanting is more or less as Sir John Stainer wanted it to be.

Dr. Nicholson has dealt with the psalms from a congregational point of view, making the music secondary to the words, regrouping verses, doing away with pauses if the meaning of the verse is improved thereby.

You have the idea when you read his instructions. He says: "Read the psalm first, and then sing as you read it." The S.E.C.M. issue every year a choir book, containing a selection of canticles, Communion service, anthems, hymns and chants at a very low cost. This book is divided into two parts for the convenience of choirs. Part I. contains responses, psalms, hymns, and an easy setting of the canticles, while Part II. contains the more difficult evening service, the Communion service and seven anthems. The whole of the music is issued in one volume, or the two parts can be obtained separately. Part I. is especially intended to meet the needs of small choirs or for local gatherings of affiliated choirs, supplemented by some anthem, while Part II. is an excellent way of building up a library of good music.

A quarterly magazine is sent gratis to affiliated choirs and individual members, containing instructional articles and notes on suitable Church music carefully graded. It also helps to keep members in touch with present-day news from Home.

The Corporation of St. Nicolas College does not depend on canvassing for the growth of the membership, but rather on the enthusiasm and work of the affiliated choirs spreading the movement to the surrounding choirs. Dr. Nicholson said, on his return to England: Numbers are attractive, and we want to enrol all the choirs that we can get. But there is something more important still. The affiliated choirs must show by their own work in their own churches that affiliation means something more than a subscription, a card, and a badge. The success of the movement can only properly be judged by its concrete results, and each affiliated choir has a definite responsibility, individual as well as corporate, and increasing as the movement grows. It is much easier to stir up enthusiasm than to keep it alive, and it is to definite results that our choirs and those who come to study at our college must turn their thoughts. The value of our work is to be looked for, not in statistics, but in results shown in the actual weekly services of upwards of 1100 choirs, now scattered all over the world.

In the Waiapu Diocese there are now five affiliated choirs, and we hope before long others will see their way to join up.

Mrs. Spinney is the Waiapu representative, and she will be only too happy to supply information about the activities of the S.E.C.M. to anyone interested.

MEETING OF SYNOD.

The twenty-sixth Synod of the Diocese will hold its second annual Session on Thursday, October 10th, in Napier. Synod will meet in the Church of St. John at 10.30 a.m. for the Roll Call of members, which will be followed by the celebration of the Holy Communion. The President will deliver his charge.

At 2.30 p.m., Synod will reassemble in the Synod Hall for the transaction of business.

On Saturday October 12th at 10 a.m. a Conference of the Maori Standing Committee will be held, and, at 3 p.m., the Bishop and Mrs. Williams will be at home to members of Synod and others.

The services for Sunday, October 13th, in St. John's Church, will be as follows:—8 a.m., Holy Communion. 11 a.m. (official Synod service), choral celebration of the Holy Communion; preacher, the Rev. C. G. G. Salt. All members of Synod are requested to be present at this service. 7 p.m., Evensong; preacher, Rev. E. T. Hall.

The annual conference of clergy will take place on Monday, October 14th, at 10 a.m., and the conference of lay members of Synod and lay readers will be held the following morning at the same time.

Business sessions will occupy the afternoons and evenings of each day, whilst there will be daily services at 7.15 a.m., Holy Communion; 9.30 a.m., Matins; and 7.45 p.m., Evensong.

Synod will be preceded by a Quiet Day in the Ormond Chapel, commencing at 7.15 a.m., on Wednesday, October 9th, and concluding at 4 p.m. with Evensong. The conductor will be the Rev. E. J. Rich, Vicar of St. Matthew's, Masterton.