

Kindergarten Musical Training

A TONIO SOL-FA HANDBOOK FOR INFANT SCHOOLS AND
KINDERGARTENS, TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION
WITH THE "BIRD MODULATOR
AND BIRD CARDS."

BY

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P R E F A C E .

Thus little work has been arranged in the belief that sufficient attention has not been given to the systematic training of Infant Voices. Under certain circumstances it is possible to teach very young children almost anything, but it is my opinion that in most cases their ears require gradual cultivation, and that if the best results among the greatest number are to be reached, a thorough grounding on Gutwen's "First Step" should be given before attempting anything else.

Where an Infant Class is composed of children from homes where there is little or no music heard, I believe it best to confine them to songs on the Tonic Chord for several weeks, if not months, as by this means the duller ears are developed by constantly hearing sounds in thorough harmony, and even those children who at first have apparently no musical ability are enabled to imitate these sounds by judicious management. For young children, however, mere exercises are uninteresting, and are likely to be forgotten, so that words have been given throughout, although many of the tunes cannot be considered anything else than ear and voice-training exercises.

With the exception of Adamson's "Educational Vocalist" I do not know of any infant song book which gives a sufficient number of songs and exercises on the First Step, and it is to provide the teacher with a plentiful supply of material, which may or may not be used as necessary requires, that I have made the following collection.

Many of the songs are meant to be used specially with the Bird Cards and Bird Modulator, which in my own experience, as well as that of all who have tried them, are found to be of great value in arousing and keeping up the interest of the children.

The best plan for teaching these songs is to introduce the tones of the Tonic Chord by pattern one at a time by means of the Bird Cards, in the order d s m d' s' m' as they are required for the songs, holding the cards in the hands until there are too many to manipulate properly. Then the cards may be fixed on a blackboard or a stand, perpendicularly, in order, and pointed to as a modulator. Afterwards the other notes t r f l may be taught from the cards, or the Bird Modulator may be at once shown and used as an ordinary modulator, according to the instructions which follow.

BIRD SONGS AND KINDERGARTEN MUSICAL TRAINING.

Hints on teaching Infant and Kindergarten Songs.

METHOD. Never sing with the children, but give them a sweet soft pattern while they listen in silence, and imitate afterwards alone to your sign. This refers not only to teaching a new tune, but starting one which is already learned, except where a teacher is taking part in a Kindergarten Song as one of themselves.

In my inspections I am constantly told that the **REASONS** children cannot sing by themselves, and yet in ten or fifteen minutes later they are singing alone tunes they have never heard before, as well as tunes they know. The advantages of this method are—

1. The children's musical faculties are better developed: good listeners make good singers.
2. Their attention is first concentrated on hearing, and then on imitating what they have heard.
3. They learn quickly to be independent and to trust to themselves.
4. They have an opportunity of hearing and noticing variations of force, quality of tone, and shades of expression.
5. The teacher can give a better pattern, and influence the class for good. It is impossible for the teacher to sing softly if the pupils are to hear her voice above their own; and it is equally impossible to get children to sing softly and expressively if they always hear a loud pattern.
6. It saves the teacher's voice—a very important matter when teachers have large classes, or much talking and singing to do.



7. It enables the teacher to sing phrases or lines with the greatest amount of expression she is capable of, and to get the children to imitate her. This is a matter that should not be left entirely to the last stages of learning a song; even at the first singing of the first phrase the style of the song should be foreshadowed, and if there is nothing allowing of special expression, at least a pleasant soft tone should be patterned and insisted on.

8. It enables the teacher to hear exactly what the class is doing, which she cannot do when her own voice is the most prominent thing she hears.

A first singing lesson on the Bird Cards may be given in the following manner. Teacher sings doh in key D for about two beats, metronome 60, holding out the hand [closed fist; see diagram, p. 29] about the level of the waist, or a little higher, while she sings, and withdrawing it at once when she stops. Immediately after she gives the hand-sign for doh again, when the children at once imitate, while she remains silent—not helping them at all, but listening to them.

Teacher. Children.

Teacher counts mentally 1 2 3 4

If there is difficulty in getting them to commence smartly, she must stop them at once, praise any individual who has commenced promptly at her signal (the closed hand), then sing the pattern again with the hand-sign, and repeat the hand-sign for the children to sing. It may be necessary at first to say, "This is my turn," before she sings, and afterwards "Now it is your turn," or "Now you sing," just before giving the sign, but as soon as possible the sign should be sufficient without any spoken word from the teacher.

When the class sings the doh fairly well, with good tone and tune, the teacher may give soh (the fifth above) with its proper hand-sign (the open hand with the thumb pointing upwards) thus:—

Teacher. Children. Teacher.

doh soh

NOTE.—Soh is used instead of the Italian *sol* in order to get a good open vowel that may be held on for any length of time without altering the quality of the sound.

After doh soh can be sung accurately the order may be varied as above, or as follows (the horizontal line indicates that the sound is continued for another beat):—

Children. Teacher. Children.

doh soh

At this stage the teacher must pattern each new group, repeating the name and making a slight movement of the hand for every repeated note. The key should now be changed to E, F, or E flat, especially if the voices have fallen in pitch (as they are likely to do at a first lesson), for children's voices should not, as a rule, sing below D, and the same exercises may be given at a higher pitch, in varied order.

Me (the third) may now be introduced; say in key D:—

Teacher. Children.

me me

Here the first mistake of careless listening is likely to be made, some of the children probably going back to doh. In that case, sing doh alone. Class imitate. Then me alone. Class imitate. Then

ld m || d d d d — || m m m m — || d m s || s m ||

ls m d || d s m || d m s d || d m s m d ||

Change the key as before, and vary the order of the notes, always giving a pattern.

Teacher. Children. Teacher. Children. Teacher. Children.

me me

the higher notes are approached by leap softly, as in all the early exercises given here. Later on this light upper register may be developed by leaping to the octave and coming down stepwise, as in exercise 3, which should be sung at first to "koo," and when a full, sweet, round tone is obtained on that syllable other vowels may be taken.

VOICE Even in the infant room special exercises should be given on voice-training, although most attention will be given to the subject during the ordinary singing of songs and exercises. The objects aimed at are—pure, soft, pleasant tone; accurate intonation, or good tune; correct vowel quality; proper vocal register. The exercises must be short, and need not last more than a minute or two, but they should be given every day, and can be conveniently taken (by means of the hand-signs) at the commencement of the regular singing-lesson, or at change of lessons.

1. The following may begin each lesson after the first, the teacher giving the key-note and patterning each phrase until the class can sing it independently from the hand-signs.

KEYS D, E, F, G (later, D^b, E^b, G^b, A^b, A).

2. When d¹ is known then the following may be substituted:—

KEYS D, E, E^b (later, C, D^b, F).

3. To develop the upper register and get a feeling of certainty in the higher notes the following may be used. It should be sung successively in keys C, D, E flat, E, and, when the voices strengthen, in F; but the greatest care must be taken to insist on soft singing, so that the voices are not strained, and to tell all who cannot sing the higher notes softly to stop until the exercise comes to a note that they can easily reach.

NOTE—Pops growing the exercise an octave lower should be stopped. It is no use at all at that pitch.

KEY D.

4. The next exercise will be found of use in securing an even, smooth tone, without the break which is so often heard between the upper and lower registers. It must be sung softly and smoothly, retaining the same quality of voice right down to the lowest note.

KEYS E^b, E, D (later, F, D^b, C).

In all the above exercises attention must be given to obtaining good quality of tone, perfect tune, true vowel sounds, and a thorough blending of all the voices. If any children are singing out of tune or drowning upon one tone, they should be stopped, and brought together in front for separate treatment. Any harsh, loud, or ready voices must be suppressed, either by being softened down or silenced altogether for a time. Such voices often belong to energetic, eager children, who are doing their best under a mistaken idea that the louder they sing the better. It must be constantly impressed on the children that *loud singing is not good singing, but sweet singing is*.

LEADING VOICES. From the above it will be seen that the practice of encouraging leading voices on which the class learns to depend is deprecated, and that it is much better to induce all the singers to be independent and to trust to themselves.

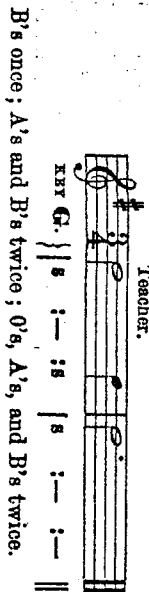
CLASSIFICATION. After one or two lessons the teacher should test each child individually with the hand-signs or modulator, getting them to sing d m s in key D or E after her pattern. Many will do it at once. Call them letter B. When a child has any difficulty in imitating the three notes, pattern d only, and if that is done correctly try d s, then d s m. It may also encourage timid children if the whole class (including the timid candidate) is asked to sing the note or phrase, and the individual immediately afterwards by himself. When a child succeeds in singing these notes, no matter how much coaxing or helping is required, he will still be B, but if he can only sing d or d s call him A, and if he cannot imitate a given sound call him "nought" (0). It may be well to have a pupil-teacher to mark the letter opposite the children's names or on their slates, as they are apt to forget or mix their letters.

POSITION. After all are classified, the "noughts" should be placed in the front seats, A's beside them or in the second form, and the B's behind. When any new tune or exercise is being learnt the O's and A's must remain silent and listen while the B's sing, but once in three times or so, after the B's have sung a phrase the A's may join in, and once in five or ten times (according to difficulty) the O's may join, to show that they are still part of the class, and that their work of listening is expected to produce results when they are asked to sing.

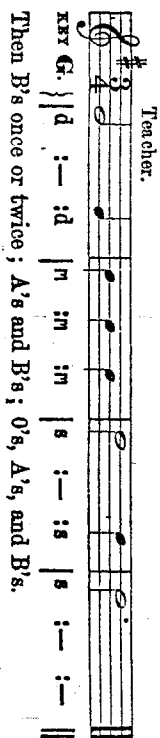
TEACHING A TUNE. Tune No. 7 (p. 34) would be taught somewhat in the following manner. Teacher sings the Sol-fa names and points them on the modulator



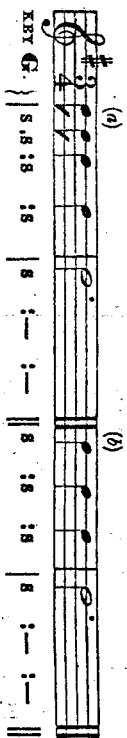
B's imitate once or twice; then A's and B's twice; then O's, A's, and B's once or twice.



B's once, A's and B's twice; O's, A's, and B's twice.



Then B's once or twice; A's and B's; O's, A's, and B's.

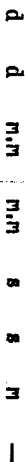


Teacher sings first phrase (a) as above; then second phrase (b); then both together. Then the whole may be gone over two or three times, one phrase at a time, until it is pretty well known, when the words may be introduced one line at a time, the teacher singing them as she points to the letters of the skeleton modulator or bird cards. In this manner the rest of the tune will be taught, great care being taken not to give too much at a time, and, if necessary, to repeat the words in ordinary spoken speech, when the children have any difficulty in catching them. Some teachers may prefer always to teach the words in this way before singing them.

All should learn the words and actions, but when the songs are learnt and being sung to words, only B's should be allowed to sing, except perhaps an occasional verse, for it is quite useless allowing O's and A's to be growing away at their own sweet will on one note, as they only spoil the singing of the others without improving themselves. The teacher, however, should give all an opportunity of getting into a higher grade at least once a week, and it is wonderful how voices and ears improve merely by this process of *silent listening*.

RHYTHM. In the infant room little need be said about rhythm, as the children will learn by pattern all that is necessary while the tunes are being pointed on the modulator.

In an older class—*e.g.*, Class II—where it is desired to introduce at least elementary notation, the tunes may be written on the black-board at first without accent marks, but giving the dash or line of continuation, and placing half-beats close together with a single dot, at the same time telling the class that the notes with a dot between are to be sung quickly, *e.g.*, No. 9 (p. 34):—



The teacher will point to each beat as she sings, taking care not to point according to the rhythm (as she must do on the modulator), but tapping only once where half-beats occur, letting the pointer fall on the dot as she says or sings the two m's, while she must not hold no

the pointer for two beats at the last m, but tap once at the m and again at the dash. By this means the children never learn to depend on the teacher for the time, but the eye is trained to look for it independently. It also makes it a very easy stage from the pointing on the board—very valuable in the early stages as a means of securing attention and impressing the eye—to beating time, where the same regular beats occur, and not a succession of jerky movements.

N.B.—The pointing or tapping is not to be audible, but merely to direct the eye, except occasionally to draw attention to the strong accent, when that may be necessary.

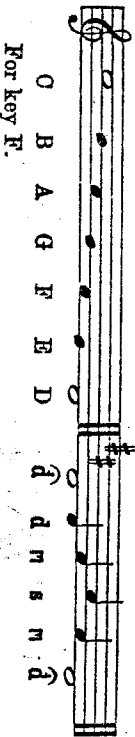
In the first two or three tunes, where the range is limited to a fifth, the exact pitch does not matter much, but the teacher (not the children) should soon learn how to pitch a tune from the C¹ tuning-fork or pitch-pipe.

Strike C¹, then sing down the alphabet names instead of the Sol-fa names until the required letter is reached. Call that *doh*. Sing d m s in the new key to establish the relation of the notes. It is easy to remember that B A G is *bag*, and F E D is *fed*, with a C above and below.

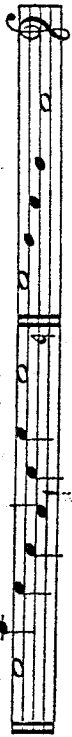
If key C is wanted, call C¹ d¹, and sing d¹ s m d.



For key D—



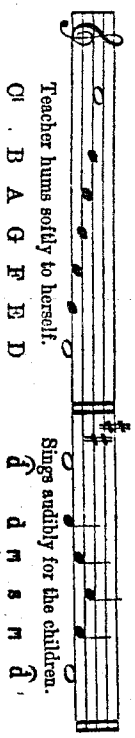
For key F.



After singing the tonic chord—d m s—it is well to sing the first note of the tune, which the children should imitate, and then we are ready to commence the tune.

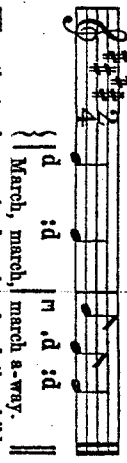
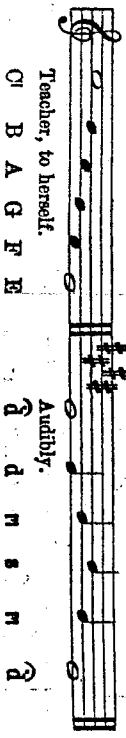
When a tune has been learnt the teacher may get the starting children to commence in any of the following ways.

A TUNE (a) The teacher sings the first two or three notes to the words, giving a signal with her hand as she sings. She then repeats the signal without singing, when the class will commence by themselves, and go on with the song.



Hand drops at "Come"
 Come a - - way, ba - - by.
 Teacher immediately drops her hand again, and the children sing "Come away, baby," &c.

When the teacher is not accustomed to pitch the key, the flat may be omitted in keys E flat, A flat, B flat, or the letter below taken instead (i.e., D, G, A). Thus in No. 13, key E flat, either take D as above, or E as follows:—



When the teacher again drops her hand the children sing, "March, march, march away," &c.
 (b) Teacher gives the key-note, chord, and first note of the song, the children imitating. She then tells them what beat the tune commences on, beats a bar or part of a bar, counting the beats aloud, and the class commences on the proper beat like any other singing class, the teacher beating time throughout, thus:—

No. 6. Key as above.

down right up
 ↓ 1 — 2 ↗ 3

Teacher sings and children repeat.
 ḋ ḋ ṁ ṡ ṅ ḋ

Teacher counts aloud.
 1 2 3

Class begins without pause.
 } ḋ :ḋ :ḋ :ḋ | ṁ :— :ṁ :ṁ
 } Come a way, ba by, &c. ||

No. 13. Key found as above.

Teacher sings and children repeat.
 ḋ ḋ ṁ ṡ ṁ ḋ

Teacher counts aloud.
 1 2

down up
 ↓ 1 ↑ 2

Children at once commence.
 } ḋ :ḋ :ḋ | ṁ .ḋ :ḋ :ḋ
 } March, march, march a-way, &c. ||

(c) Teacher gives the key-note and first note, which the children repeat. She then holds up her hand or cane or baton before her until all eyes are fixed on it, and then goes off on the beat at once as in (b), omitting the silent bar.

(d) When action songs have been thoroughly learnt, and the children start promptly in one of the previous ways, the teacher may at once give the opening action (after the key-note or first phrase has been sung), and the class at once commences song and action together. It is well for the children to learn to sing the songs without the teacher either beating time or giving the actions, after they have been learnt, as it induces independence and self-reliance.

When a tune begins on the unaccented or weak pulse an upward motion should be given before the hand comes down, e.g.,

No. 11. Key E.
 Teacher, to herself.
 O B A G F E

Ambly.
 ḋ ḋ ṁ ṡ

Oh, jack-daw, Oh, jack-daw.
 } :ṡ | ḋ :ḋ :ṡ :ṡ | ḋ :ḋ :ḋ :ḋ ||

As the teacher raises her hand the second time the children sing "Oh, jackdaw, oh, jackdaw," &c.

In beating time, only count two, the children commencing on the third beat.

Key E as above
 down right up
 ↓ ↗ 1 — 2 ↘ 1 — 2 ↘

Teacher sings.
 ḋ ṁ ṡ

Counts (not 3, as the class begins on that beat.)
 } :ṡ :ṡ | ḋ :ḋ :ṡ :ṡ | ḋ :ḋ :ḋ :ḋ ||

1 2 Oh, jack-daw, Oh, jackdaw, &c. ||

In two-pulse measure—2 time—it is well to count a whole bar and then the strong accent again, thus—

No. 22. Key G.

Teacher, to herself.
O B A G

Auntly. Class repeat, and then teacher

counts. 1 2 1

Class. Now march we gai - ly for - ward.

In four-pulse measure— $\frac{4}{4}$ time—count three before starting.

No. 16. Key D (as above).

Teacher. Class repeats, and then teacher counts.
d n s m d n

mer-ry lik - the jock - daw - gry.

The teacher must not beat or tap the half-beats, TAPPING THE but go steadily up and down like a metronome, once for each beat, seeing that the class attends to the RHYTHM.

half-beats, and making them TATTAI if necessary. She should also avoid tapping audibly on the desk, or stamping with her foot, or beating her dress, or calling out, by getting the eye trained to take the time from her signal. If there is any dragging from inattention, one or two smart taps at the down beat should restore the

attention and time, but the habit of waiting for the audible beat should not be formed. Rather the class should be stopped, and a bright crisp pattern given.

The children should always be trained to watch WATCHING THE for any signal from the teacher's hand. The right TEACHER. hand may start them or beat time, the left hand should govern the expression. At the end of each

verse the open left hand should be held up decisively, and the beating stopped for a moment to give breathing time, and, if necessary, to remind the class of the words of the next verse. If the tune is not very well known the teacher may start it again, singing the first words of each verse; but when it is thoroughly learnt this is quite unnecessary—merely a momentary pause should be made to divide the verses and see that all are looking and ready to begin together. If the singing is rather loud the left hand should be held out warningly, and moved up and down gently as a signal to subdue the force. If a little louder singing is wanted both hands may beat time with longer beats and more vigorous action.

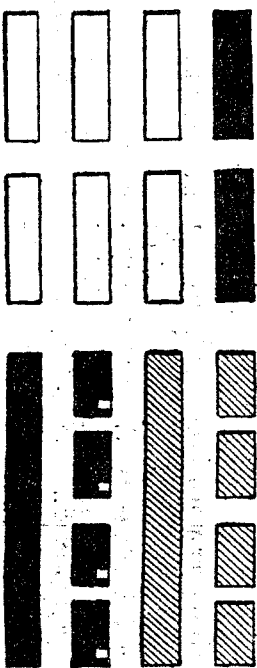
It may be necessary to warn some teachers against LOW PITCH. giving children songs at a low pitch under the impression that low or soft tone necessarily accompanies low or deep pitch; or that what is easy and natural for her—perhaps with a low also voice—is also easy for them. Children in these classes should not, as a rule, sing below D, but use their upper, light, flute-like registers, which may easily go to E \flat or F \flat without any straining if soft singing is really insisted on (not merely talked about), especially with such exercises as those given above sung to *koo*. What is easy to a low adult alto is simply ruinous to tiny children's voices, and yet I have frequently heard these unfortunate children attempting to sing down to A, flat, G \flat , and F \flat below middle C.

It is also utterly absurd to expect all the children to strike the same note at a proper pitch without any key-note being given, as is constantly done, the teacher counting "1, 2, 3," and the class being supposed to go "off" on its own account with the correct note. Nor should the teacher say "1, 2, 3," and then begin to sing, for the class does not know what she will sing until she has begun, and consequently they do not begin at the first word, but drop in one by one after her.

If the teacher is unable to sing herself, a piano, NON-SINGING melodeon, or other instrument may be used to pattern TEACHERS. the notes or give the key as suggested above instead of the voice, but *not* as a crutch to lead the children through all their work.

Again, a pupil-teacher or a girl from the upper **OTHER PLANS.** classes who knows her notes and is able to sing may teach the songs at a regular lesson; then, when a song is wanted in her absence, one of the children with a light sweet voice, who is likely to pitch the tune naturally in a high key (not a forward sturdy boy or girl with strident voice, who will likely pitch it too low and give a bad pattern), should be asked to start the first line alone, and the class should follow as suggested above. It is well not always to ask the same child, and to choose those especially who have pleasant, sweet voices, rather than loud and leading voices.



Mr. Batchelor, of Philadelphia, has proposed a **KINDERGARTEN** plan which may be adopted in Kindergartens **DEVICES.** where a thorough musical training is desired. Oblong pieces of coloured cardboard are used to indicate the notes and their rhythm values. They may be arranged by the teacher in tune-forms on a slanting board, or arranged by the children themselves. Thus tune No. 9 would appear.



Key: Black **DOH** Green **SOH** Red **SOH**

The slips for the children's use might be half inch wide by two inches long for *one* beat; four inches long for *two* beats; one inch for *half* a beat; half an inch for a *quarter* beat. They could be kept in a box, and arranged in a grooved lid. The teacher's slips might be twice the above dimensions—one inch by four inches for the beat, &c.

One side of all notes might be black to give plenty of dots for use as rhythm exercises, and the children should be encouraged to invent fresh combinations of rhythms on the plan suggested for the teacher on p. 23.

A white mark at the right hand top would indicate upper doh (D¹); a black mark on any other colour the higher octave  and by reversing it the lower octave would be shown with the mark below at the left hand .

Although sight-singing is not the primary aim of these lessons, yet after a few weeks or months many of the children will become so familiar with association of bird, colour, syllable, and sound that they will readily sing at sight any easy tune given on the hand-signs, pointed on the modulator, or arranged in coloured slips.

Many of the songs after being learnt by all **ALTERNATING** together, should be taken in two-parts, the teacher at first taking one, and the children the other; later **SONGS.** the class may be divided, or individual children may

take the first part alternately. Such are 2, 7, 11, 14, 26, 33, 50.

Some of these may be also used for cultivating **EAR-TRAINING.** the ear, as the order of the phrases may be altered by the teacher, when the class will be expected to give the proper answering phrase.

By the addition of a common black ball of wool all **BALL SONGS.** the notes may be represented by the Kindergarten coloured balls, although the colours are not exactly those of the Bird Modulator, and useful ear-training may be given. (The upper octave may be a *small* black ball, or a black ball with a white thread.)

When singing No. 61 the children will have the four balls (black, red, and green) before them, and when any bird is mentioned will hold up the corresponding ball, replacing it and holding up the next in turn when it comes.

In No. 62 the children will throw up their balls together at each "Here he is," catching them as they fall, and taking care not to throw too high, as all the motions should be rhythmic. If any one fails to catch his ball he may drop out of the game, and the time may be quickened to make it more difficult until only one child is left as conqueror.

In No. 63 as the children name the notes they will hold up the corresponding ball. The order of the notes may then be changed, and those who guess rightly get a credit mark, or those who fail drop out of the game.

The teacher may also ask the class or individuals from time to time, "Who can tell what bird I am singing?" or "What note is this?" giving the tonic chord and then singing d, m, s, or d' to *ah* or *oo*. Again, the teacher may sing a short phrase of three or four notes, and ask "Which is d? m? s?" This ear-training, however, should not take up much time, and if the children have difficulty in answering it should be left until they have had more practical acquaintance with the various notes by song-singing and modulator work.

Practical kindergartners will easily follow up the above suggestions, inventing new games and rhymes for birds and balls. Dr. McBurney will be glad to receive any which have been found useful or interesting.

It sometimes happens that a class after correctly imitating two short phrases separately will sing them incorrectly as a whole, or when they take the words.

In either case one of the following plans may be adopted.

CORRECTING ERRORS. Point the part where the error occurs alone on the modulator. Point the beginning of the phrase, and then suddenly remove the pointer for a moment of silence—to make the class think—and then point the faulty phrase. Repeat this several times, shortening the pause until the phrase becomes one again.

Or, make the class sing the part where the error creeps in by itself once or twice. Then let the teacher sing the first part, the class follow immediately as she points to what they have just been singing previously. Repeat several times alternately in this way; then when the new habit of ear has conquered the old faulty phrase, let the class sing the whole phrase.

Thus after singing the two last phrases of No. 8 correctly children frequently sing

Lovebirds singing, Old black crow.

Make them sing d . d : d then point m . m : s . m, make a pause or silence and point d . d : d

Or, point and make them sing d . d : d then sing m . m : s . m yourself, and point d . d : d for them immediately, without any pause between your phrase and theirs.

The object is to break some old habit of ear or phrase running in the memory, and to set up a new and correct habit in its place.

SYSTEMATIC. If the teacher wishes to give systematic lessons on rhythm the following plan may be adopted:—

STRONG AND WEAK ACCENTS. After two or three lessons on tune have been given without any written exercise, or with such an exercise as on page 9, the teacher writes four doh's on the blackboard thus

d d d d

She then says to the class "I wish you to listen carefully while I sing these doh's and tell me if they are all the same." [She sings, accenting the first and third strongly.] Some may answer "No difference," meaning that they were all the same note, or all the same length, when notice should be taken of the fact that they are the same length, and from their regularity they are called *pulses* (or beats). Some may say "One was louder," in which case the teacher will ask "Which?" and repeat the four notes carefully.

Possibly no one will notice these points, and it may be necessary to ask, Are they all the same length? * Are they all the same loudness? * Which was louder? "The first." Is there any other loud one? "The third." Then we will put a *long line* before the loud, or as we call them, the *strong* doh's. [Teacher does so.] Which were the soft or *weak* ones? "The second and fourth." We will put two dots before them. The exercise now appears as follows with a *double bar* to show the end.

}} d :d |d :d ||

Listen while I sing them again. * Now you sing as I point. * Very possibly the teacher will have to say, You sang them all the right length, but you did not make the weak ones soft enough. Listen, and then try again. *

Now whenever we have a note that is one pulse, **TIME-NAMES** either strong or weak, we call it TAA. I think I might write TAA under each doh. It is spelt in a funny way. Can any of you spell "Baa, baa, black sheep?" * Well we spell TAA with two a's, just like baa, b-a-a. Here it is:—

}} d :d |d :d ||

[Staff equivalent, not to be written.]

Listen, and then sing as I point. * Now sing to doh. * Now TAA again. * I want you to tell me if I am singing it rightly. Sings.

}} d :d |d :— ||

