

XLVIII. THE MOZART MUSICAL CLUB.

On the evening of September 13, 1898, twenty ladies of Plymouth met at the home of Mrs. James McDonald to organize a class in vocal music.

For a number of years the vocal chorus music of Plymouth had been in rather backward shape and the various church choirs felt the effect in a marked degree. A number of ladies had talked the matter over and this meeting was held with a view to organize a society with the object of

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HISTORY OF MARSHALL COUNTY.

Creating a sentiment in the city that would encourage music of a high class and take the place of the so-called "rag time" trash that was rooting out all classical music.

The Mozart Musical Club was a success from the start. Mrs. Stella Drummond was the first president, serving until her removal to South Bend. Mrs. Olive Soice then served a term of years, and Mrs. Eva L. Underwood has since been at the head of the society. Mrs. James McDonald was the first director, and since then they have had Prof. Franks, of South Bend, and Prof. McHenry, and now Prof. H. W. Owens, of Chicago, has just commenced his fourth year with this club.

Each year since the organization the club has given one or two concerts, which have been well received by those who heard them. No attempt has been made to amass money by these performances, the object only being to give the public an exhibition of the progress made and to bring in noted soloists who could be heard here in no other way. When San Francisco was destroyed by earthquake this club sent the entire proceeds of one concert to the relief of the sufferers.

During these years this club has given, among others, the "Holy City," by Gaul; "Rose Maiden," by Cowen; "Messiah," by Handel; and this year the work is "Creation," by Haydn. That this club, started by a small company of ladies who were simply bent on self improvement and an earnest desire to elevate the taste of the community for the highest class of music, should successfully give Handel's "Messiah," which is acknowledged to be one of the very best and most difficult of the standard oratorios, speaks well for the individual membership and the directors they have had. Prof. Owens, who drills the club once each week, has lately returned from England, where he went the past summer to get what was new and useful for his work, and under his supervision the work on "Creation" is being enthusiastically pushed, and when the club is ready to give this oratorio it is expected to be the finest musical production the club has ever given.

For several years this club was composed entirely of ladies, but now the gentlemen are taken into full membership, and the future of the club looks very bright.