

numbers were given, one by Miss Gladys McBain, who ^{heard} was in an excellent violin solo, and the other being a duet by Mrs. Bonnot and Miss Hogan. The spirit of enthusiasm which prevailed the meeting was very marked, as the outlook for a successful and useful organization seemed very bright. A short talk by Mr. R.F. Kaiser echoed the sentiments of all those present. In his opinion the Society had made remarkable progress for an organization so young and the future as regards this Society could not be brighter. He spoke of the chorus which the Society is organizing and how important a good chorus would be to the Society itself. The Society intends to hold a big May Festival and preparations for this event are already under way. Anyone desiring to sing at the Festival is requested to call at Steinberg's Music Store or Kaiser's China Store and leave their names there."

The outlook from the beginning was most encouraging. In 1910 the organization was perfected and a constitution established. The activities of the Society in its first year were mainly in bringing outstanding musical attractions to Eau Claire and soliciting members for a chorus, the latter met with enthusiastic response and in 1911 the Society gave its first May Festival with a well-balanced chorus from all the various city church choirs and was a truly democratic organization. An ambitious effort was made to assemble an orchestra to accompany the May Festival chorus, and while it lacked the verve and finish of an orchestra under a professional conductor, it was adequate in support given the chorus. It should be remembered we were beginning an attempt to reach higher standards and any advance was most encouraging.

The first May Festival in 1911 gave "The Rose Maiden" by Cowen. The May Festival became an annual event continuing through 1917 with the "Creation" by Haydn, Handel's "Messiah", Mendelssohn's "Elijah", Elgar's "King Olaf" and a second performance of "Creation" and the "Holy City" by A.R. Gaul. The solo parts in the above works were taken by outside artists but our own local singers were heard as well and to fine advantage, Professor E.H. Miles baritone, and Helga Aanstad Selmer, contralto. These Festivals had the added attraction of a program given by the children of the city schools under the very capable direction of Mr. George Burt, supervisor of public school music.

These Festivals were given in the Opera House and were conducted by Mr. Edwin Howard who with his wife, Clara Hunt Howard, came to Eau Claire in 1910 and attracted a large class of voice students. Mr. Howard was ably assisted by Mrs. Bernice Skat who was the Society's accomplished and competent accompanist, while invaluable assistance was given by Professor W.E. Steinberg as concertmaster of the orchestra. Mr. Steinberg was a well-schooled orchestra violinist. No May Festivals were given in the years 1918-19 but in 1920 the "New Earth" by Hadley was given in the City Auditorium, Edwin Howard conducting and the chorus was accompanied by a string quartette from Minneapolis and Mrs. Midelfart, pianist. In 1921 "Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers" by Chadwick and "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" by Coleridge-Taylor ~~and~~ was given with violin, ^{and} cello and piano accompaniment was by Miss Ebba Noer. In 1922, "Hiawatha's Departure" by Coleridge-Taylor with string quartette accompaniment. The last May Festival given, in 1924, offered an abridged performance of "Elijah" by Mendelssohn in the First Congregational Church, Edwin Howard conducting to organ accompaniment by Franklin Glynn and piano accompaniment by Valborg Waller. The soloists were, E.H. Miles, Mrs. F.G. Anderson, Mrs. J.J. Selmer, Ivar Anderson, Rensselaer Meader, boy-soprano