

Adv. 11-4-32

CHANCE FOR OBSERVATORY

Premiers To Reopen Question

REPORT NOT SEEN

Because the last Premiers' Conference was under a misapprehension when it agreed to reduce the number of observatories in Australia from five to two, it is probable that the matter will be reconsidered at the conference in Melbourne this week.

When the conference first considered the matter it was decided to obtain the opinions of investigating officers of each State. Before the conclusion of the conference in February, the Commonwealth investigating officer (Mr. J. S. Duncan) made a report to the Premiers, who, evidently believing it to have been considered by all State authorities, acted upon it to the extent of resolving:—

1. That the number of observatories be reduced from five to two.
2. That the instruments and equipment of the abolished institutions should be made available to the observatories retained.
3. That a committee should advise the Governments concerning which observatories should be retained, the cost of maintaining them, and the disposal of equipment.

Costly For University

It was upon the receipt of this report that this week's Premiers' Conference would have acted, but on Saturday the Premier (Mr. Hill) discovered that State officers had not been given an opportunity to see Mr. Duncan's report, or to advise their respective Governments upon its effects. The South Australian Public Service Commissioner (Mr. L. C. Hunkin), who is this State's representative on the committee appointed to enquire into overlapping and duplication of Government services, has not even yet seen Mr. Duncan's report, and has had no opportunity of referring it to the Director of Education, the Government Astronomer, and the University Observatory Committee.

The development is of great interest to South Australia, because if the conference decision to reduce the number of observatories to two was adhered to those retained probably would have been the Commonwealth Solar Observatory at Canberra, and the State Observatory at Perth, and the Adelaide Observatory would have been among those abolished.

Professor Kerr Grant and Professor Chapman have informed the Premier that even if the Adelaide Observatory were abolished as a Government institution, it has become so much a part of the University study that at least part of its work would have to be carried on by, and at the cost of, the University, which would strenuously oppose, for one thing, any suggestion to remove to another State the valuable library at the Adelaide Observatory.

News 11-4-32

Book Tax Problems

MELBOURNE, Today.

The Minister of Customs (Mr. Gullett) said today that the Government regretted the present duty on educational books. If a satisfactory definition of what was meant by "educational books" could be found, he thought it safe to say the Government would remove the duty on these books.

Mr. Gullett was commenting on a speech by Emeritus Professor T. G. Tucker at the University on Saturday, in which he denounced the tax on books.

The Government, said Mr. Gullett, had invited the Universities to submit a suitable definition of educational books. The Government could not remove the tax on all books, and the term "educational" might be taken to refer to a large proportion of books. Volumes of verse and a large proportion of novels might be claimed to be educational.

Adv. 14-4-32

ADELAIDE OBSERVATORY SERVES MANY PURPOSES

To The Editor

Sir—In "The Advertiser" on April 11 it is stated, under the heading, Chance for Observatory, "that the last Premiers' Conference was under a misapprehension when it agreed to reduce the number of Observatories in Australia from five to two." I desire to state that the Observatory at Adelaide, as a Government institution, was founded for many useful purposes. It is not only a part of the University study; it is also a very important and essential part in the trigonometrical survey of South Australia. The base of the triangulation is the Adelaide Observatory, from which the positions of the trigonometrical stations have been determined. It is reported that Professors Kerr Grant and Chapman have informed the Premier that, even if the Adelaide Observatory were abolished, part of the work would have to be carried on at the cost of the University, which would strenuously oppose, for one thing, any suggestion to remove to another State the valuable library at the Adelaide Observatory. The late Sir Charles Todd and the present Government Astronomer, Mr. Dodwell, have co-operated with the Surveyors-General of this State in establishing the true position of the trigonometrical stations. Their work is invaluable, and to destroy the means of continuing this work by abolishing the Adelaide Observatory would mean the loss of valuable data as to latitude and longitude established by observation from the Observatory; also, the basis upon which the extensive triangulation survey depends would cease to exist.—I am, Sir, &c.,

ARTHUR DAY, 6, Second avenue, Joslin.

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WINTHROP HALL OPENED

Dignified Ceremony In Perth

Perth, April 13.

Marking an important stage in Western Australia's cultural development and an epoch in University life, the Winthrop Hall, centre of the stately pile of buildings at Crawley, costing £195,000, made possible by the generous benefaction of the late Sir Winthrop Hackett, was officially opened by the Chancellor of the University (Sir Walter James) today.

A notable feature of the dignified ceremony was the address delivered by Miss Patricia Hackett, daughter of the benefactor, who represented her mother, Lady Moulden, of Adelaide, who did not come to Perth because of the death of her husband (Sir Frank Moulden). Miss Hackett exhorted the students to seek wisdom and, in the seeking, to find greater understanding. The heads of churches, the judiciary, and the Legislature, naval and military leaders and other prominent citizens occupied the dais of the hall.

Felicitations from the sister universities of Australia, two of which were represented personally—by Sir Elliott Lewis, Chancellor of the Tasmanian University, and Sir William Mitchell, Vice-Chancellor of the Adelaide University—were read.

Adv. 14-4-32

S.A. ORCHESTRA CONCERTS START NEXT MONTH

Attractive and Worth While Programmes

There is no ground for the impression that the South Australian Orchestra has ceased to exist, according to a statement made by Professor Harold Davies yesterday.

"Nothing could be farther from the truth," he said. "Not only is the orchestra in the most active state, but this year its personnel is stronger and more efficient than ever before. We have a splendid lot of players, and their enthusiasm is unbounded.

"Five concerts at least are to be given, and it is possible that these may be supplemented by a short session of popular promenades. The first series will begin in the Town Hall on Saturday, May 7, and concerts will be given on the first Saturday of

each of the months following.

"The programmes will contain works of great variety and attractiveness, from well known classics to the lighter types of music in the classical vein. For example, the first programme contains a Brandenburg Concerto by Bach, the beautiful E flat Symphony of Haydn (whose bicentenary we celebrate this year), Mozart's splendid "Don Giovanni" overture, and the attractive Spanish Dances of Granados, besides several other works of equal interest and beauty. At every concert a vocalist will appear, Miss Hilda Gill having been engaged for the first."



Prof. E. H. Davies

Honorary Conductors

Asked whether Mr. Foote's position as conductor had been filled, the Professor said that the executive had been fortunate in one respect. The splendid spirit of co-operation shown by the members of the orchestra both last year and this year, had been rivalled by the willingness of Mr. Peter Bornstein, Mr. Brewster Jones, and Mr. Harold Parsons, to act as honorary conductors for the present season. Negotiations had also been on foot to obtain a distinguished guest conductor—probably Professor Bernard Heinze, for the July concert.

Everyone regretted Mr. Foote's departure, and one could not over-estimate the extent, as well as the value, of the work he did here during ten years, particularly in the teaching and training of wood-wind players. But there were certain advantages in a diversity of conductors, and Professor Davies had no doubt that the orchestra would profit by the new experience.

Question Of Finance

Although people apparently had little money to spare for music, Professor Davies thought there was a genuine love for orchestral work, and the majority of folk enjoyed it, even in the attenuated forms that were still occasionally heard in picture theatres. There was something attractive and colorful in the very sound of a fine orchestra.

Last year, owing to the depression, the audiences were much smaller than normally, he said, and consequently finance was still more difficult. But through the willing co-operation of the players, they weathered the storm and there was still the permanent fund in hand. Indeed, this had been augmented by the ceaseless efforts of Mrs. Brailsford Robertson, who, as secretary of the women's auxiliary, did great service. The founders of the orchestra, too, had never failed them, and many of them from time to time had given further donations. Already this year one generous subscription had come to hand, and he did not doubt that there would be others.

"What we want most of all," concluded Professor Davies, "is the enthusiastic support and interest of the public in attendances at the concerts. I should like to think that this year the Town Hall will be too small to hold our audiences. For our part, I can promise that all the programmes will be thoroughly attractive and musically satisfactory. The tariff, too, is easy, so it will not be a costly luxury to attend all five of the concerts."

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MIDDAY ORGAN MUSIC

For Mr. John Horner's organ recital, the Elder Hall was well filled during the lunch hour yesterday. Rheinberger's C major sonata was by far the most effective item. In the first movement the mellow diapasons and richly resonant reeds of his fine old instrument were cleverly used by the organist to heighten the impressiveness of a noble composition. In striking contrast, Couperin's "Rondeau Soeur Monique," felicitously phrased, followed.

Dr. Eaglefield Hull's pretentious, yet futile, arrangement of the Volga Boatmen's Song affords little scope to the player, and less satisfaction to the listener.

Miss Jean Sinclair sang in clear, melodious fashion "The Sandman" (Brahms) and "The Wild Rose" (Schubert), to Mr. Horner's pianoforte accompaniment.

With a brilliant rendering of the Bach "St. Anne" prelude and fugue, the recital ended. On April 21, Mr. Horner's programme will include two allegro movements from Tschalkowsky's "Symphonie Pathetique."

ADELAIDE OBSERVATORY

Astronomical Society Urges Its Retention

At a meeting of the Astronomical Society a resolution was unanimously adopted urging the retention of the Adelaide Observatory.

Mr. Cooke, M.L.C., traced the history of the observatory from its origin. He said that before the meteorological departments of the various States were taken over by the Commonwealth the cost of weather services to the combined States was approximately £6,000, where at the present time under the Federal arrangements the cost was £32,000. As the Adelaide Observatory at present involved only an expenditure of approximately £2,000, they would be well advised not to pass it over to the Commonwealth, as they would almost certainly be called on to pay a levy to the department, which would probably be more than the present expenditure.

The resolution, which was moved by Mr. Cooke, follows:—"That, having regard to the comparatively low cost of maintaining the Adelaide Observatory, and to the great value to the Commonwealth as well as to the State of the scientific work carried out by that institution, the Astronomical Society expresses the hope that ways and means may be found to retain the observatory so that astronomical scientific research may be continued in this State."

It was seconded by Professor Chapman, who stated that the matter had received consideration from the University authorities.

Adv. 19-4-32

CHAMBER MUSIC RECITAL

First Of 1932 Series

By ALEX BURNARD

The first of the Conservatorium concert series for 1932 opened auspiciously last night before a large audience. The string quartet, comprising Peter Bornstein, Kathleen Meegan, Sylvia Whittington, and Harold Parsons, was heard in Smetana's highly individual E minor quartet. Each of the four movements has a definite programme to unfold, and each was entirely successful in this regard. The Largo Sostenuto, all tenderness and simple beauty of line and harmony, was felt perfectly—tone, ensemble, intonation faultless. The lighthearted gaiety of the peasantry pervaded the fourth movement, which came eventually to rest on a strangely wistful note.

Miss Hilda Gill, with Mr. George Pearce at the piano, was in excellent voice for her German group of songs—"A Night in May" (Brahms), "Love's Sanctuary" and "Rosemary" (Franz), and "Bliss" (Schubert). "Desolate" is a word prominent in the first, and Miss Gill achieved a beautiful quality of sadness in depicting it. The last two had all the charm of simplicity.

Schubert's "Trout" quintet for piano (Maude Puddy), violin (Peter Bornstein), viola (Sylvia Whittington), cello (Harold Parsons), and double bass (A. E. Birmingham) was performed as a tribute to the memory of their late friend and colleague, Mr. I. G. Reimann, as it had been a special favorite of his. Well might it be, for the whole thing is an irradiation of Mr. Reimann's own genial spirit.

Throughout the entire work ran the direct, irresponsible, humor of the most personally lovable of all composers. Specially delicious was the "back-talk" between the piano and the four others in the Scherzo. In the variations, Schubert gives a naive melodic treatment to his own song (from which the quintet takes its name), each instrument in turn being heard in the old lilted air. The last Allegro was full of good-tempered banter, rapid passage work from the piano, and clean-cut phrasing featuring prominently. The grateful work for each instrument was, in fact, so wonderfully taken, individually and as an ensemble, that any distinction would be quite invidious.

Professor Davies announced that a series of nine chamber music recitals will be given by the Conservatorium String Quartet. The concerts will be given each Tuesday afternoon at 4.30, beginning on May 3. This year being the bi-centenary of the birth of Haydn, each concert will include one of that master's quartets, supplemented each week by one from the pen of Mozart and Beethoven (in alternation). This departure is of great interest, and should be well supported by music lovers.