

THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—In replying to my letters on the above-named subject Mr. Newman has altogether departed from the question at issue. The virtual object of my first letter, in so far as it referred to Mr. Newman, was to show that Mr. Newman's diction was not marked by that purity which one might reasonably expect to find in the writings of an author of books on grammar and composition. And, by quoting *verbatim* a couple of faulty sentences from Mr. Newman's brief "Preface to No. 6," I succeeded in my purpose. I must confess that had Mr. Newman politely admitted his fallability and requested my real name at that stage with the object of securing my services for correcting his books, I should have revealed my identity without hesitation. Since, however, he has adopted another course I cannot at present help him to augment the funds of the Children's Hospital as he suggests. Under the circumstances it is very unfortunate for Mr. Newman that he deigned to notice my criticisms. In neither of his two letters does he advance, or even attempt to advance, a single refutation of my arguments. On the other hand, each of his epistles furnishes additional examples of that slipshod style of expression which so ill becomes an author. To prove the accuracy of this statement I shall select a few of the said examples from Mr. Newman's letters:—(1) Mr. Newman writes—"Being a true educator, his half-an-eye detected what was passed by myself and two other gentlemen." This makes the "half-an-hour" the "true educator." (2) Mr. Newman tells us that "every one admits the value of Dr. Mitchell's work at the University, and by giving candidates at the next preliminary examination an hour and a half at composition the standard of English composition in secondary schools will undoubtedly be raised." Let us all earnestly hope that it may be raised! Who intends "giving" the hour and a half? Mr. Newman's sentence does not make this clear. (3) Mr. Newman's assurance that "'Rusticus' is too well known to me to call for any lengthy comment on his last production, composed again, I perceive, at his suburban retreat" might have been expressed far more elegantly. "Rusticus" does not know Mr. Newman, nor will he "call" for any "lengthy comment." The "again" is also badly chosen; "also" would have suited the case far better; for my "last production" was only composed once and never "again." (4) "Could he not have helped him?"—a question asked by Mr. Newman—reminds me of another almost as indefinite—"When did who chase whom around the walls of what?" once asked by an examiner. This last might easily be extended, but it is already quite long enough to serve my purpose.

I am, Sir, &c.,

RUSTICUS.

Parkside, March 23.

THE CHAIR OF MUSIC.

Register

[By MUSICUS.]

13/3/97

Sir Thomas Elder's munificent gift of £20,000 to endow the Chair of Music at the University at once places the musical course, the existence of which really hung on the pecuniary results of the public examinations in music, out of danger, and there need now be no further anxiety as to whether the lectures will be maintained. Musical folk are doubtless aware that during 1884, through the efforts of some enthusiasts, a sufficient sum was collected to maintain a Professor of Music for five years, and that in March, 1885, Professor Ives arrived here and took up his duties at the University. All students, who then commenced the musical course, did so under the distinct understanding that the lectures might cease altogether at the end of 1890. However, the fates were kind to the followers of the "divine art," for the public examinations in music were in the meantime established, and at the end of that time, the fees were sufficient (or, we believe, nearly so) to meet the salary of the Professor of Music. At the present time the fees have increased so that at the last examination there was a sufficient sum to pay an additional Examiner as well, who was engaged in the person of Mr. W. H. Wale, Mus. Bac., F.R.C.O., of Sydney. From these two sources—the interest on Sir Thomas Elder's gift, and the fees from examinations—the University should now have about £1,500 a year to spend on music; and the question will naturally arise, "How can it be spent so as to do the best interests of the art in South Australia?" It may be stated here that the salary of the Professor of Music is £500 per annum, but that when Professor Ives was first engaged it was arranged that he should, in addition to this, receive £150 a year as City Organist, and be allowed to take six articulated pupils, which would bring his income up to nearly £1,000 a year. Seeing that most of the other University Professors receive more than £500, and that Professor Marshall Hall, of Melbourne, has £1,000, it seems that the University should now pay a salary sufficient to always command the entire services of a first-class man. A salary of £500 a year is certainly not fitting to offer the University Professor and head of the local profession when many in the ranks are earning more. If this were done there would still be a considerable surplus, which should undoubtedly be devoted to improving the status of the public examinations in music. A complete Board of at least two practical Examiners in addition to Professor Ives ought to be engaged. This would at once place our University certificates beyond the reach of all cavil. The need of a pianist of high standing, and a violinist with a good acquaintance of the technique of the principal orchestral instruments, to assist as co-Examiners, has long been felt by all connected with these examinations, and, indeed, by none more so than Professor Ives himself. With the funds now at their disposal the University could easily arrange this, or indeed perhaps for a larger Board of Examiners, which would considerably enhance the worth of our musical diplomas, and place their intrinsic value far beyond that of any similar certificates granted in the Australian Colonies. The increase of work that must necessarily follow such a course might enable the University authorities to reduce the present fees for examinations, which are certainly in some cases felt to be rather high. A reduction of the present two guineas and one guinea to say one guinea and half a guinea would be a very considerable factor in increasing their popularity, especially in the country districts and the other colonies. With regard to the *personnel* of the Board of Examiners, there seems at the present time an excellent opportunity of securing a first-class English musician at a comparatively small cost. The Associated Boards of the Royal College and Royal Academy of Music, London, a combination that is of the highest repute in the old country, are desirous, and indeed have already made some arrangements for sending