

However, as a member of the League Australia had acquired a great privilege, but that not only conferred right on her; it also imposed obligations. It was necessary for Australians to realise that thoroughly. They had undertaken international obligations equally with other Powers in regard to matters in different parts of the world. Those who objected to centralised administration and insisted upon setting up house for themselves must pay the price, and sometimes the price was heavy, especially when one was in an isolated position and a misunderstanding with another. It would be a safeguard for the whole League for the British Commonwealth of Nations to remain united. (Applause.)

"My creed," continued Professor Philipson, "is a united Empire, friendship and alliance with the United States, modify the education and mind of the world so as to stimulate intellectual and spiritual interests, and, lastly, do not let the League fall to pieces. (Applause.) It must be tried and patience is necessary, because after all it took half a century to establish Federation in Australia. Public opinion must be educated and must demand the continuance of the League. There is no need to recall the dreadful cost of the war in blood and treasure. All that would have been avoided if there had been compulsory settlement of disputes by conference. The salvation of the world depends on the cultivation of the peace habit, and the peace habit will follow if a good international organisation exists, making arbitration compulsory. There is a conflict now in the world between satanism and sanity, between disintegration and association, between bondage and freedom, between brute force and idea, and idea is sure to triumph in the end, as it has done in the past, despite cups of hemlock, crucifixions, tortures, and the stake. Only now in our own day we must see that such high cost shall not be involved in making this idea of the League of Nations triumphant." (Applause.)

Advertiser 13/4/21

## MUSIC TEACHERS CONFERENCE

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIANO.

ADDRESS BY MR. J. G. REIMANN.

There was a large attendance at the morning session of the conference of music teachers on Tuesday at the Elder Conservatorium building. The subject under consideration was "The development of piano teaching." Probably few persons who play the popular household instrument have any idea of the evolution it has undergone to bring it to its present stage of efficiency or of the developments which have taken place in the methods of manipulation.

In an address on the subject Mr. J. G. Reimann outlined the different stages of the growth of the piano and the art of playing it, showing the contributions which a long list of musicians had made to the perfecting of the system of technique at present in use. Pianoforte playing, he said, had developed hand in hand with the development of the instrument and the music composed for it. The action of the evolutionary factors had been reciprocal. Mechanical elements



Mr. J. G. Reimann.

suggesting or compelling manner and limitation of performance, technical resources inviting or prohibiting the character of musical ideas, these, in turn, urged to improvement in mechanism and technical manipulation. The manufacturer, composer, and performer were thus fellow-agents in the evolution of pianoforte music. Very little was known about the methods of study pursued by the early clavier performers. The music of the English virginalists indicated that fleetness of finger was as essential in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth, and when they reflected on the system of fingering which prevailed up to the time of J. S. Bach, it was almost inconceivable how sufficient digital dexterity to play the music of the early virginalists and harpsichordists could be acquired. The rules of fingering generally in use to-day dated back only to C. P. E. Bach, 1714-1788. The earliest marked fingering of which they had any knowledge was given by Ammerbach in his "Orgel-Oder Instrument Tabulator" (1571). That, like all the fingering in use then, and for long afterwards was characterised by the almost complete avoidance of the use of the thumb and little finger, the former being only occasionally marked on the left hand, and the latter never employed except in the playing of intervals of not less than a fourth by the same hand. In Lorenzo Penna's "Li Primo Albori Musicale," published in Italy in 1656, it was set down that ascending scales were to be played by the middle and ring fingers alternately of the right hand and middle and index fingers alternatively of the left hand. A sparing use of the thumb was suggested by Purcell (1658-1695) in his "Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord" (1700), and also by Couperin in his "Di la Toucher le Clavier" (1717). The latter also advocated changing the fingers on repeated keys.

When J. S. Bach took up the matter he revolutionised it completely, as indeed he had to do to make his "System of Equal Temperament" and the free use of the modes practicable. Bach transformed the attitude of the hand at once. Before his time the three long fingers stretched out horizontally and the thumb and little finger would hang down below the level of the keyboard. Bach's three longer fingers were bent so that their tips rested perpendicularly on the keys. That brought the hand forward on the keyboard and raised the wrists. He also fixed the place of the thumb in the scales; and used it and the little finger freely in all positions. In his playing Bach cultivated evenness of touch by ending each application, not by lifting the finger from the key, but by drawing it inwardly toward the palm of the hand, with a caressing motion, which transferred the requisite amount of pressure to the next finger in passage-playing. It had been said that the movement of his fingers in playing was so slight as to be scarcely noticeable. The position of the hand remained unchanged, and he held the rest of the body motionless. The lecturer at this point gave an interesting account of a visit he had paid to the Bach Museum and Library, where were collected and arranged instruments of all kinds used by him or in connection with his work during his lifetime. These included organs and other types of instruments. There were also large numbers of manuscripts and quantities of literature. Handel, the great contemporary of Bach, who was also highly esteemed as a performer on the harpsichord, used the same hand position as Bach. Burney had said of him that his fingers seemed to grow to the keys; they were so curved and compact when he played that no motion, and scarcely the fingers themselves, could be discovered. C. P. E. Bach, while enforcing the need of a quiet movement of the hands, also in order to secure power permitted a lifting of the hands in the delivery of a blow. That, he said, was not an error, but good and necessary, so long as it could be done in a manner "not too suggestive of wood-chopping." (Laughter.)

Referring to the eighteenth century, Mr. Reimann said there were three pianoforte methods or treatises of outstanding importance—C. P. E. Bach's, Fr. W. Marburg's, and D. G. Turk's. The last, "Klavierschule," was the chief of the three. He gave an interesting explanation of the principal features of each of them, with illustrations on the piano. The transition period dated between 1798 and 1802, and belonged to the pianoforte school of the Paris Conservatoire, by Louis Adam. It dealt exclusively with instruments and hammer action, whereas the older schools had favored the earlier actions. Several systems were described and commented on. Carl Czerny's "Grosse Pianoforte Schule," in four parts, had for a long period been the most complete pianoforte school. It embraced the modern manipulations of virtuosity. Dealing with modern developments, Mr. Reimann said one of the boldest innovators was the famous Liszt pupil, C. Tausig, who unfortunately died young.

The modern psycho-physiological pianoforte playing was expounded, and he said a great drawback was that amongst the advocates and authors of these modern methods there were so few noted artists. On the other hand, there were too many theorists and too many medical men, psycho-physiologists, and anatomists, quite apart from the fact that the great virtuoso pupils who would demonstrate in practice the greater excellence of his method were still wanting. (Applause)

### Vocal Recital.

The afternoon session was devoted to demonstrations of the vocal art by Madame Clara Sacena, and bassoon playing by Mr. W. H. Foote, A.R.C.M. Madame Serena, who was accompanied on the piano by Mr. Roy Mellish, submitted a well-selected programme, which embraced examples of several schools of writing, and in each number her rich contralto voice, and her faultless phrasing won unmistakable admiration. Her vocalisation in such exacting numbers as "O don fatale," from "Don Carlo" (Verdi), and the recitative and air, "O ma lyre immortelle," from "Sappho" (Gounod) revealed at once the accomplished technician and the true artist. A beautiful rendering was given of "The young nun" (Schubert), which formed part of a bracket, which also included "In lonely fields" (Brahms) and "Lullaby" (Strauss), both of which were presented with admirable finish. In the melodie, "L'Invitation au voyage" (Duparc) fine expression was maintained. The final group—"Prelude" (Cyril Scott), "The sea" (MacDowell), "E'en as a lovely flower" (Frank Bridge), and "Four by the clock" (Malhison), the singer won golden opinions from the audience, and she had to supplement the number with a charming rendering of a negro song.

### A Bassoon Demonstration.

Mr. Foote fully justified his reputation as a master of the bassoon. It is only

when an exponent of the highest powers is heard that the general patron of concerts realises that this instrument is adapted to solo work. In the hands of a master like Mr. Foote there can be no doubt of its claim to stand on its own merit. The artist preceded his performance by mentioning that the bassoon really dated back to the 15th century, and had been developed from an older type of wood wind instrument, which was eight feet in length, and gave out rhythmic notes. It was largely used by soldiers on the march. An Italian cut it in halves and doubled a portion of the tube. Since then the present system of keys had replaced the series of holes which were covered and uncovered by the fingers. There must have been some remarkably skilful performers on it in its earlier form judging from the difficulty of some of the old-time music, which composers had written for their friends who played this particular instrument. Mr. Foote gave movements from several works, which served to illustrate the capabilities of the bassoon. In two movements from "Concerto in B flat" (Mozart), the range of expression from a faint whisper to forte passages was to many a revelation. Tone quality and clearness of enunciation, even in the most rapid parts, were particularly noticeable. In each of the other compositions from which excerpts were presented similar qualities were noticeable. The works included Andante and Rondo Opagrese in C minor (Weber), Sonata in F minor (Hurlstone), a modern English work, Adagio in F major and minor (I. Spohr), and Sonata in E flat (Gus. Schreck), from which two movements were played. Miss Loretta Foote made an excellent pianoforte accompanist.

### EVENING CONCERT.

Members of the Conference and their friends had an opportunity of hearing an educational and a highly enjoyable instrumental concert in the evening. There was a good attendance at the Elder Hall, and the programme was in the capable hands of Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac. (violin), Mr. Harold Wyde, F.R.C.O. (organ), and Mr. George Pearce (piano). The first movement of Beethoven's "Sonata in G minor," for piano and violin-cello, was presented with fine feeling, and the beautiful writing, thoroughly representative of the great composer, was invested with the poetic charm and intellectual breadth suggested by the development of the work. Two fantasies, the D flat and the E flat, by Saint-Saens, made enjoyable organ numbers, the brilliant pedal work being particularly meritorious. A bracket of compositions by Bonnet, and the "Martin Provencal," "Lamento," and "Rhapsodie Catalaine," gave Mr. Wyde a further opportunity to display his dexterity both in finger and pedal work, and won for him unstinted applause. Mr. Parsons has seldom been heard to better advantage than was in his several contributions. Three "violin-cello solos, with organ accompaniment, widely different in sentiment, were

given with artistic finish and refinement of expression. They were "Adagio" (Haydn), "Andante Expressive" (Goldmann), and "Hebrew Melody—Hamabdi" (Bantock). Mr. Pearce was in his best form, and gave a brilliant display of executive skill in the difficult "Concerto in C sharp minor" (Schytte). The reading was pleasing and convincing. Mr. Wyde presided at the second piano.

This morning Madame Agnes Larkcom will address the Conference on "The Singer's Art," and this afternoon a piano and violin recital will be given by Miss Maude Puddy, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Gerald Walenn.

Register 13/4/21

## MUSIC TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

### LECTURE BY MR. J. G. REIMANN.

The second day of the Music Teachers' Conference on Tuesday at once set the mark of high practical value on the gathering. The morning session was devoted to a lecture on "The development of piano teaching," by Mr. J. G. Reimann. The popularity of the subject and the lecturer was proved by the fact that there was not an empty seat in the southern lecture room when the lecturer took his place. And expectation was not disappointed. The lecturer dealt with the theory, history, and practice of pianoforte playing and the teaching thereof, with a wealth of detail and valuable and practical firsthand material likely to be of lasting utility to those present. Mr. Reimann said the art of pianoforte playing had been developed hand in hand with the instrument, and the music composed for it. The action of the evolutionary factors had been reciprocal, mechanical elements suggesting or compelling manner and limitation of performance, technical resources inviting or prohibiting the character of musical ideas, and these, in turn, urging to improvement in mechanism, and technical manipulation. Little was known of the methods of the early clavier performers, but the music of the English Virginalists indicated that fleetness of finger was as essential in the sixteenth century as it is in the twentieth century. Earliest systems of fingering were characterized by an almost complete avoidance of the use of the thumb and little finger. Modern methods might be said to date back to the eighteenth century.

Development of Fingering.—  
After a most interesting account of the gradual development of fingering in early times, the speaker showed what Bach had done in transforming the whole attitude of the hand, and how from the intensely restrained manner of holding the hand so that the fingers only were used, and those almost imperceptibly, by J. S. Bach and Handel, until later performers allowed even a lifting of the hand "if not too suggestive of wood chopping." Mr. Reimann proceeded to give what was practically a bibliography and history of methods and treatises on piano teaching from the early eighteenth century until the present year, noting passing changes and variations in treatment and rules. One early teacher urged that "the nerves (sinews) in playing should be held quite slack by young players, and the fingers should be left in such an attitude of freedom as though they had nothing to do with it."

To Pedal Or Not To Pedal.—  
Others prescribed the position in inches, and every movement on hard and fast lines. The transition period belonged to the pianoforte school of the Paris Conservatoire, by Louis Adam, between 1798 and 1802, which threw light on the qualities of the instruments in use, some of which possessed as many as five pedals, some none at all. Feeling among teachers, of the time ran high on the question of to pedal or not to pedal. Various "piano schools" and instructional studies were thoughtfully and carefully reviewed from Cramer, of some of whose studies Busoni has recently issued a superb edition. Other names worthy of mention were J. N. Hummel, Fr. Kalkbrenner, and Carl Czerny. Hummel took his stand on older traditions, deciding as a whole against the pedal use. He said:—"Mozart and Clementi did not require this device in order to attain the fame of being the most expressive piano players of their time. . . . Altogether, however, their employment cannot be dispensed with." So through stage after stage the lecturer traced the development of the art right up to the controversy of the present time, or rather mechanical technique against the "psycho-physiological."