

bold ✓

Registered 11.6.23

(bold) ✓

Registered

and founders of English poetry. Homer, Virgil, and Shakespeare remained alive after hundreds or thousands of years, and maintained their uplifting and enlarging influence, speaking directly to the people of to-day, and interpreting actual life as much as each. To each generation and to each individual reader they gave fresh revelations of the beauty of the world, and the wonder of the human soul. It was no paradox to go further and say they might actually mean more to each successive age. Appreciation of Virgil in the present day must be incomplete, because it was impossible to regain his environment or live in the world in which he lived, and which in his poetry he transfigured and interpreted. On the other hand, the sharp freshness of the work as it reached the world from the writer's own hand, had in the intervening centuries taken on a mellow glow, and many things which probably would not appeal so much to the contemporary reader were brought out.

It was possible now to appreciate the genius of Shakespeare better than was the case with his Elizabethan audiences, to whom he was one only of a number of popular dramatists. In the same way it was possible to appreciate Virgil more than he was appreciated even in his own day. Not only was Virgil the foremost figure in the group of great Latin writers, but he combined in himself in a unique way the racial and literary elements out of which Latin civilisation was compounded. The chief exponent and interpreter of the aims and ideals of his age, he looked, as few had done, before and after. In his hands Italy and Rome became sacred names. When he had finished his work, and not until then, according to a belief of the early church, was the time come for the incarnation of Christ.

Virgil's genius developed slowly. He wrote with difficulty, and was never satisfied with what he wrote. For many years his work was experimental, tentative, and immature, yet from the first he impressed his contemporaries with the wonderful promise of being the voice of a new age.

The lecturer dealt in turn with the special features of the Eclogues, the Georgics, and the Aeneid. Here and there in the work of Keats and Milton it was possible to approach nearest to the Virgilian splendor and magic; but perhaps no poetry had ever been written which combined with such perfection richness of color with purity of language. No translation could convey the variety or give more than a faint idea of Virgilian color and tone. Virgil was the representative poet of the imperial ideal of Latin civilisation. He was no less, but even more, the poet in whom mankind had found the most perfect expression of human longings, questionings, and aspirations, and he still occupied his place among the supreme poets of the world, not merely for his insight into mind and nature and the melodious perfection of his verse, but as the creator of a great national ideal which was at once political, social, and religious. (Applause.)

Dr. MacKail's concluding lecture, to be delivered on Tuesday next, will be of Tennyson.

ENGLAND'S MUSICAL OUTLOOK.

Mr. Gerald Walenn's Impressions.

Mr. Gerald Walenn, violin professor at the Elder Conservatorium, recently spent several months in London, and made good use of the time in musical circles. In company with Mrs. Walenn, he returned by the Orsova last week, and, to a representative of The Register, spoke of some of his interesting experiences. One happy discovery was made at home, and that was that Australia is no longer unknown in the centre of the Empire. Mr. Walenn met many prominent musicians in London, such as Sir Henry Wood, Gustav Holst, Vaughan Williams, and Eugene Goossens; and, with them, many helpful and pleasant hours were spent. At the Royal College of Music, there was a distinct trend back to the Early English school of composers. The work of Holst and Vaughan Williams was having an important effect, and was backed up by Kitson, who is bringing out a new textbook on harmony which should trend was to go back to Byrd, Gibbons, and others associated with the Early English school—as a basis for modern development. The influence of foreign nations, which had been so exert great influence on musical training, marked for the last century—dating from the time of Handel—was now more or less at an end.



MR. GERALD WALENN.

In reply to a question, Mr. Walenn said, "One of the most enjoyable concerts that I attended was at the Royal Albert Hall, when Sir Edward Elgar's 'Gerontius' was performed; and also a choral work, 'The Hymn of Jesus,' by Holst. Speaking of the latter, great effects were obtained by the use of a hidden choir. In addition to the usual choir, Holst's composition was keenly interesting, for, though using many of the devices of the old English writers, it was extremely modern in its treatment. It left its listeners with a distinct feeling of both the old and the new. Modern was the treatment of the orchestration and full of brilliant tone colour. A large orchestra was required for the work. Probably Holst's most advanced work is 'The Planets,' written for an unusually large orchestra, which, although being performed during my stay in London, I missed hearing. Mr. Holst most kindly arranged for me to hear it on two pianos, and I had the score to go over."

A Helpful Form of Study.

Mr. Walenn said that Vaughan Williams's "London Symphony" had been well received, and it was a splendidly representative example of the Modern English school of composition. During his visit, he lunched many times with the musical staff of the Royal College of Music, whose cordial hospitality had been of the most fraternal nature. Many enquiries were made in reference to Australian musical life, and the guest took every opportunity to interest the gatherings in that

subject. Sir Hugo Allen, the present director of the R. C. M., is particularly strong upon Bach; but, at the same time he is greatly in favour also of British composers working out their musical salvation from the purely English school. Mr. Walenn was invited to attend a class held by Mr. H. C. Colles, upon "Musical criticism," in which Sir Hugo Allen is most interested. He was keenly impressed with all he heard, and found that in that unique class, the result achieved was a comprehensive outlook on music. Each student was required to supply a criticism or an article upon some particular subject connected with music—on a performance or a subject—and the professor criticised both the literary and the musical point of view. Among the subjects brought up were:—"The value, or otherwise, of transcribing music (from one instrument to another)" and "the use of English words in German lieder and Wagner opera." Mr. Walenn said he could quite see the immense educational value of a class dealing, on the broadest lines possible with such subjects. It enabled students to gain a far larger outlook on music, and therefore was a most valuable addition to the ordinary curriculum. Both at the Royal College of Music and at the Royal Academy of Music there were attendances already tending to overcrowding; and what was to be done in the near future was a great problem—particularly as a splendid work is being done. Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" was heard by the visitor, at one of the Philharmonic concerts, and was conducted by Eugene Goossens, one of the most brilliant of our young conductors. The work had only been performed in London two or three times previously, and the demands made on the performers is very great. Although there had been only two rehearsals; a remarkable performance was given of probably one of the most difficult works written. Mr. Walenn felt that the "Rite of Spring" should not be given without the ballet, although a second ballet was written after the music was finished. The effect on the audience was interesting to observe, for, at the end, a section hissed loudly. On the other hand, the majority drowned the adverse demonstration with their immense enthusiasm. Talking the work over with several other composers, it was found that very divided opinion existed. One well-known man remarked, "I never will hear it again!"

Among the Violins.

Discussing his own particular branch of study, Mr. Walenn considered that Fritz Kreisler still held prestige in the world of violin playing. Eugene Ysaie gave a recital in London which the speaker could not attend, but, according to the reports, that artist was not playing as well as he did 20 years ago. "That is natural," commented Mr. Walenn, "but there is only one Ysaie." Pleasant recollections were summarized of a performance of "New Violins versus Old," at the Aeolian Hall. Albert Sammons played on a Stradivarius, and immediately afterwards performed on a new violin. It was almost impossible to say which was the old and which was the new. Mr. Walenn's opinion was that every artist produced his own particular tone on a violin, and with Sammons this was much marked. Similar trials had taken place in Paris with the same result, apparently. "With all that I heard," observed Mr. Walenn, "I still hold the opinion that you cannot make a new violin sound like an old one. All the same, due credit is due to Mr. Cobbett for thus encouraging the art of violin making in Great Britain."

Personalities.

Mr. Walenn was induced to give a recital in the Aeolian Hall, which was very well attended. It was an opportunity to play in public while in London, and his hearers gave him a cordial reception. Asked of Madame Clara Serena, Mr. Walenn said she had started well in London, and should go far to achieve marked success. Madame Ada Crossley had rendered much assistance to her countrywoman. A recital at Wigmore Hall there was a crowded attendance, and at the close several familiar cries of "Coo-ee!" resounded, showing that Australians were represented in the throng.

ANOTHER NOTABLE SUCCESS.
The elements on Saturday evening might well have been made an excuse for sparse audiences; but no excuse was necessary in the case of the audience which filled Adelaide Town Hall, even to the organ galleries, on the occasion of the second concert for the season of the South Australian Orchestra. Lady Bridges was present, and a large number of prominent musicians. Mr. W. H. Foote and the talented body of instrumentalists presented a programme, the performance of which any orchestra might feel justly proud, although the inclusion of a selection from "The Gondoliers" may have seemed to some a bit incongruous with Tchaicovsky's Pathetic Symphony. Such marked differences in type may widen the appeal; but do not add to the artistic effect of the programme as a whole. Despite this fact, however, the placing of the numbers at the commencement fitted in harmoniously with the general arrangement of the programme, which was planned to lead the emotional interest from its lightness, through almost every other phase to the final lament of hopelessness which marks the conclusion of the Symphony. Individually each of the four numbers performed made a distinct appeal, which fact was demonstrated by the audience in no uncertain manner. The conductor had at all times the readiest sympathy of the musicians, who, under the leadership of Miss Sylvia Whittington, responded not only in precision and attack, but also in every slightest variation in expression. If there was a weak spot in the ensemble, it showed in the wood-wind and brass, where at times an inclination to hesitate, particularly in leads, was discernable.

Of the four numbers, unquestionably the most noteworthy was the crowning achievement of Tchaicovsky, the No. 6 Symphony in B minor ("Pathetic") which seems to echo all the agony of mind which the great composer, with his peculiarly hypersensitive nature, must have suffered. The work is divided into four movements, the first of which is in two parts. An opening adagio introduces, amid varying emotions, the principle subject of the allegro, the despairing mood of which was well expressed. The strings announce a second subject which commences andante, but grows more impassioned as it proceeds. It is repeated with more emphasis, and the quietening coda with which it is followed is disturbed by a fortissimo return to the first motif, developing in phrases suggesting breathless strenuousness, which gradually subsides towards the close of the movement. The unusual rhythm of five beats in the bar characterizes the second movement, rendered with peculiar grace, though a sinister suggestion is imparted as the subject develops. The restless anxiety of coming action is suggested in the sotto voce opening of the third movement, which intensifies with tremendous energy into a passage of almost unequalled excitement. This thrilling effect is followed by a triumphant march theme, played by the full power of the orchestra. By vivid contrast, the finale suggests the utterance of the most poignant grief and anguish, which works up into a passionate and frenzied protest. This is followed to its conclusion by a passage expressing the numbness of despair. The performance was accepted with sustained plaudits of admiration.

Another work of much distinction was the Saint Saens No. 4 Concerto in C minor, for pianoforte and orchestra, the soloist being Mr. William Silver. This concerto is in three movements, the last two being connected. Beginning allegro moderato, the subject is announced by the strings, and repeated with varied rhythm, harmony and scoring. An andante for wood-wind is accompanied by arpeggio passages on the solo instrument, after which a pianissimo chorale is introduced. This is followed by a highly expressive pianoforte melody, accompanied by muted strings. The allegro vivace commences with the theme for the preceding movement, and is succeeded by the opening subject of the allegro with a showy pianoforte accompaniment. A new theme in 6/8 time is then elaborated, and changes to a return of the chorale theme. In the cadenza this is modified by a change in time, and leads to the final allegro, the work ending with a further allusion to the hymn-like melody. The audience showed their appreciation with enthusiasm, and the soloist was warmly thanked by the conductor. Mr. Silver supplemented the performance with a musicianly rendering of Mendelssohn's Caprice in E minor.

The ballet music for the third act of Goldmark's opera, "Queen of Sheba," is the accompaniment to a scene described as a gorgeously illuminated banquet hall, filled with harem women, and the dance theme concerns a girl who is driving away a bee. The bee becomes entangled in her garment, but is ultimately released, and the finale takes the form of a Basch-anian orgy.

The comprehensive excerpt from the Gondoliers was chosen as the opening number, and the well-known melodies were presented with a charm and lightness which so pleased the audience that a repetition of a portion was demanded.

POEMS & RHYMES.

AUSTRALIA TO ENGLAND.

By Professor Archibald T. Strong in "The Oxford Book of Australian Verse."
By all the deeds to Thy dear glory done,
By all the life-blood spilt to serve Thy need,
By all the fettered lives Thy touch hath freed,
By all the dream in us anew begun;
By all the garland English sire to son
Hath given of highest vision, kindest deed,
By all Thine agony, of God decreed
For trial and strength, our fate with Thine is one.
Still dwells Thy spirit in our hearts and lips,
Honour and love we hold from none but Thee
And if we live Thy pensioners no more,
But seek a nation's might of men and ships,
'Tis but that when the world is black with war
Thy sons may stand beside Thee strong and free.

Mr. John Bishop.

On Wednesday evening, June 27, in the Town Hall, a farewell complimentary concert will be given to Mr. John Bishop who leaves Adelaide to study the piano forte at the Royal College of Music, London. He is the fortunate student who has been awarded the Elder overseas scholarship. The artists who will contribute to the programme are Miss Maude Puddy, Mus. Bac., Miss Hilda Gill, A.M.U.A., Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A., Mr. William Silver, Mr. I. Reinmann, Mr. Gerald Walenn, Mr. Harold Wyde, F.R.C.O., Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac., and Mr. George Pearce, Piano at Carthage's.

Registered 9.6.23