

**CHAIR OF MUSIC.**

**History of University School.**

By C. R. Hodge.

In view of the fact that a conference of the Australian Music Examinations Board, attended by representatives of the Universities of Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia, and the State Conservatorium of New South Wales is being held at the University of Adelaide, some reference to the establishment and development of our School of Music will be of interest. The University itself will, this year, celebrate its jubilee. The Chair of Music has existed for over 40 years of that period.

**A Governor's Enterprise.**

At the University commemoration held on December 17, 1883, His Excellency the Governor (Sir William Robinson), in the course of an address, said:—"For some time past I have been endeavouring to collect subscriptions for the purpose of establishing, in this University, a Chair of Music. Your Chancellor has referred to this subject, and I for one attach very great importance to the establishment of this chair. I am sure it will tend to popularize the University and be a manifest advantage and a stimulant to the profession." Sir William was successful in obtaining subscriptions sufficient in amount to carry on the school for a period of five years, and in 1884 steps were taken for the appointment of a Professor of Music. Speaking in Melbourne on November 3, 1884, at a rehearsal of the Metropolitan Liedertafel, Sir William Robinson again referred to the establishment of a Chair of Music in Adelaide, and expressed the hope that the other universities would soon be enabled to follow in the wake of their younger sister. Joshua Ives, Mus. Bac., who came from England with high credentials, was the first professor, and the school entered upon its career in 1885. Regulations providing a course for the degree of Bachelor of Music only, appeared in the University Calendar for that year, together with the following intimation:—"As the Chair of Music is supported by voluntary contributions extending over a limited period, and not by a permanent endowment, the University does not guarantee the continuance of courses of lectures in music." This qualification might have had a deterrent effect upon prospective students, but there were teachers and others who hailed with satisfaction the opportunity of improving their musical education and of receiving the hallmark of University training by securing the Mus. Bac. degree, so that 25 students entered upon the course.

**Matriculation Question.**

When the chair was instituted the question of matriculation was freely discussed through the press, and it was pointed out that for some years Oxford and Cambridge granted the degree without requiring students to matriculate. Our University, however, decided to make it compulsory that students should pass in certain subjects of general education of the matriculation examination before they could have the degree conferred. As the course was only guaranteed for five years, it was practically impossible to exact matriculation prior to entry. The course covered three years of lectures and examinations, subsequent to which a candidate had to compose an original exercise on prescribed lines. The exercises had to be examined by experts in England, so that provided the student received no check, e.g. failure at an examination during the course, the whole period of five years was practically absorbed by degree work alone. The usual course was therefore reversed, viz., the degree course taken first, and the matriculation work afterwards, or possibly, concurrently. This leniency gave students the opportunity of completing the degree work, but many who did so were unable to go back to school work and take the compulsory subjects of the matriculation examination, and consequently never obtained the degree. In all other faculties it is compulsory to qualify for matriculation before entering upon the course for a degree. In these days eight out of every ten prospective students pass the leaving examination while at school, as a matter of course. It therefore appeals to one that the obvious policy of the School for Music is to fall into line with the other faculties. In the interest of the student himself it would be better to require matriculation before entry.

**Self-supporting.**

The creation of the School of Music had been heartily welcomed, and it seemed unthinkable that it should cease to exist at the end of five years, leaving a number of earnest students stranded; but Professor Ives had an inspiration, and, acting upon it, saved the position. He recommended the holding of public examinations in the theory and practice of music. The council approved of the scheme and it came into operation in 1887. These examinations at once found favour as they not only gave candidates an opportunity of having their work tested, and of receiving guidance in their studies, but assisted the finances to such an extent that the permanency of the chair was practically assured, and the school became self-

supporting when the subscriptions obtained by Sir William Robinson ceased to operate. The examinations were highly spoken of by the Adelaide press, and complimentary references were made when the annual results were published. They were inaugurated without Australian precedent, but on the basis of similar examinations in England, with which Professor Ives was familiar. Although the examinations scheme was working satisfactorily, it was felt that experience and advice of other institutions would be of material assistance—consequently when the Chancellor (the late Sir S. J. Way) and Professor Ives visited England in 1897 they took the opportunity of conferring with the Associated Board of the Royal College and Royal Academy of Music, with a view to ensuring an undoubted standard of efficiency. They recommended that the Associated Board should be invited to co-operate with the University, and to send out a highly qualified examiner to act with the Professor of Music in the annual examinations. This recommendation was approved by the council, and in 1898 the English board became associated with the University. The association continued for 10 years.

**Australian Scheme.**

In 1906, during the jubilee celebrations of the University of Melbourne, which had by then instituted a Chair of Music, the question of providing an Australian scheme of public examinations in music under the aegis of the universities was considered by representatives of Australian and New Zealand universities. It was unanimously agreed that such a scheme was highly desirable, and a beginning was made by Melbourne and Adelaide entering into co-operation in 1907. Subsequently the Universities of Tasmania, Western Australia, Queensland, and the State Conservatorium of New South Wales (instead of the University of Sydney) joined the federation and the Australian Music Examinations Board was created. Although in full sympathy with the scheme and its objects, New Zealand decided, owing to its isolation, that association with it was impracticable. This board which is composed of representatives from each of the abovementioned institutions, has been successfully operating throughout the whole of Australia for some years. Its standard is high, and its syllabus prepared with a view to an educational course and not a curriculum that simply encourages cramming with the sole object of getting through certain tests. Its objective is musical education, and a carefully graded pathway leading from the most elementary grade to a Licentiate examination. Provision is made whereby a candidate may obtain the Diploma of Licentiate in Music either as a teacher or an executant. The successful candidate is entitled to use the letters L.Mus.A. (Licentiate Music, Australia). That the examinations are rapidly growing in public favour is shown by the fact that nearly 15,000 candidates entered last year. This is as it should be, for the examinations are admittedly of higher standard than those of any similar organization operating in Australia, and the money received in fees, after payment of expenses, is retained in the several States and used in the further development of facilities for sound musical education. Moreover, there is no endowment behind the scheme, so that it has to be self-supporting. That it is, and its value is further enhanced by the fact that in the several States very valuable scholarships, bursaries, and prizes are offered annually in connection with the examinations. Some of the scholarships provide that candidates may proceed to a diploma or degree course, free of fees. It is possible, therefore, for a boy or girl to begin with the most elementary grade of the examinations, proceed through the several stages, win a scholarship, and graduate as a Bachelor of Music, at a cost only of the fees for the public examinations.

**The Conservatorium.**

In 1898 the scope of the School of Music was extended by the establishment of a Conservatorium. This was rendered possible by the munificent legacy of £20,000 in 1897 by Sir Thomas Elder, who had taken a keen interest in the project of a Chair of Music, and was a liberal subscriber to the fund inaugurated by Sir William Robinson. The Conservatorium by taking over the Adelaide College of Music, which had been successfully formed by Mr. I. G. Reimann, who became, and still is, a member of the teaching staff, but in 1900 the Elder Conservatorium buildings, adjoining the University, were completed, and the work transferred there. For some years this section of the school had to be carefully nursed, but under the direction of the late Dr. Mathew Eunis, who succeeded Professor Ives in 1902; and the present Director (Professor Harold Davies, Mus. Doc.), who was appointed in 1919, it has rapidly developed until it is now one of the largest organizations of its kind in the Commonwealth. Its staff comprises able and distinguished teachers, several of whom have come from the old world with great reputations and high credentials as artists. With a well-equipped school, an able and enthusiastic staff under an active, cultured, capable, far-sighted Director, as Dr. Davies has proved himself to be, the school, to use a colloquial term, has simply "hummed." There are 19 teachers in addition to the Director, and last year there were 632 students.

**Degrees.**

The University regulations provide for the Degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Music, and for the Diploma of Associate

in Music. The first Mus. Bac. degree was conferred upon Mr. T. H. Jones in 1880, and the first graduate to obtain the Doctorate was Professor Harold Davies in 1902. The total number of graduates in music, to date, is 23, two of whom obtained the Doctorate—Miss Ruby Davy being the second to obtain this distinction. The results may appear meagre after 40 years of work, but, bearing in mind that the course is somewhat strenuous, that after completing three years' academic work the student has to compose an original exercise, or pass another grueling examination as an executant, and that the demand for graduates in music in the world of affairs in no way approaches that for degrees in arts, science, medicine, law, engineering, or dentistry, the results are creditable. In addition, however, to those who graduated, some 120 obtained the Diploma of Associate in Music. To secure this distinction students are required to attend lectures for three years and pass an annual examination in specified subjects, so that after all the results compare favourably with those of other schools. Music is now recognised in the general scheme of education, and it ranks as two units for the B.A. degree in the Adelaide curriculum. It also ranks as a full unit in the intermediate and leaving examinations in all the Australian States. From the seed sown by Sir William Robinson, has germinated a school of musical culture of which, not only this State, but the Commonwealth may well be proud. Sir William's words uttered at the University commemoration in 1883, were prophetic, and could he and those who so generously supported him but witness the outcome of their vision and enthusiasm, they would be highly gratified with the development of this particular side of University activity.

ADV. 1.5.26

**STATE ORCHESTRAS.**

**MR. W. A. ORCHARD'S WORK IN SYDNEY.**

One of the delegates to the annual conference of Australian Music Examinations Board, which has been sitting at the University during the last two or three days, is Mr. W. Arundel Orchard, Mus. Bac. (Director of the State Conservatorium of Music of New South Wales).

In view of the coming season of the South Australian Orchestra, which opens in the Exhibition Building on May 15, a representative of "The Advertiser" interviewed Mr. Orchard on Friday, with regard to the progress of orchestral music in Sydney. The previous director (Mr. Henri Verbrugghen) formed an orchestra of professional musicians, which became known as the State Orchestra. After Mr. Verbrugghen's departure it was disbanded, and when Mr. Orchard assumed office as director he found himself without an orchestra.

Mr. Orchard, in reply to a question, said he realized that the existence of the State Orchestra under Mr. Verbrugghen did more to bring the Conservatorium under the eye of the public, not only in New South Wales, but the whole of Australia, than anything else could have done in so short a time.

"Realising also," said Mr. Orchard, "that a Conservatorium without an orchestra could not fulfil one of the most important of its functions, I set to work to see what could be done with the material at my disposal, which did not amount to very much. First of all, I had the important assistance of the principal teachers of the violin and one or two sections of the wind instruments at my disposal. To these I added advanced students, and qualified players from outside the Conservatorium anxious for orchestral experience, and for the remainder I engaged such professionals as were eligible, and were required from time to time. In this way we began our orchestral activities, and continued for some months.

"I soon found, however, that it was most unsatisfactory, mainly because the personnel of the orchestra varied from time to time, as many important players were frequently unable, after accepting an engagement, to attend the concerts, owing to their association with theatre or picture show orchestras, where they were permanently employed. This prevented any possibility of obtaining the high quality of performers that is so desirable. I felt that only by means of securing all my principal players permanently, could I obtain the efficiency desired. One way of doing this was to get a subsidy from the Government which would enable me to give to each of the necessary number of players an annual salary. I was, fortunately, able to interest the Government in my proposal, and convinced them of the importance of the orchestra. I was successful in obtaining a subsidy of £3,000 a year, which permitted me to secure the principal players in the wood wind and brass sections. These, together with the permanent players I already had within the Conservatorium, enabled me to form an orchestra, both permanent and with inherent ability. These principal players are also engaged permanently at

the Conservatorium as teachers. Mr. Orchard said two very important matters had arisen since the re-formation of his orchestra. First of all, he had been able to award 54 scholarships in the wood wind, brass, harp, and double bass sections. Further he had inaugurated a series of orchestral matinees, the programmes being especially designed for children who received preference of admission as well as special attention along educative lines. The general admission fee to these concerts was one shilling. Mr. Orchard gives not only explanatory addresses on the various pieces performed, but talks on instruments in the orchestra, selecting a different group at each concert. He shows the individual tone quality of the wood wind and brass section, and also lets the children share these instruments in group form. He remarked that these concerts had proved very successful.

"We are only in our second season," he said, "and at nearly every concert many people have been unable to obtain admission. It was considered that such concerts as these might materially affect my subscription concerts. I did not think they would, and events have justified my conclusion, for this year, we have an increase in subscription of nearly 50 per cent."

The performance of the orchestra enables Mr. Orchard to have two or three rehearsals a week if necessary. He always has the same players, and in that way they are able to prepare their work with reasonable rapidity and ease.

Not long after the re-formation of the orchestra, Mr. Kreisler, the famous violinist, visited Australia. During his season in Sydney he heard the State Orchestra and was so much impressed by it that on his return visit to Sydney a few weeks later he engaged the orchestra to accompany him at three concerts. At these concertos by Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn were played, and at the close of the last concert Mr. Kreisler told the audience he was greatly pleased with the accompaniments, and begged the public of Sydney to see that their orchestra became a permanent institution.

During his visit to Adelaide, Mr. Orchard has had an opportunity of listening to a rehearsal of the South Australia Orchestra under Mr. W. H. Foote, and was deeply impressed with the quality of the work as well as Mr. Foote's able conductorship.

In giving the account of his own activities in New South Wales in this direction, Mr. Orchard strongly expressed the opinion that the Government of South Australia should follow the example of the Government of New South Wales. In this way only could the ultimate prosperity of the South Australian Orchestra be secured.

ADV. 3.5.26

Mr. H. L. Russell, representing the International Education Board of the United States and Dean of Agriculture at the Agricultural College of the University of Wisconsin, has arrived at Fremantle, and



Mr. H. L. Russell.

is expected to reach Adelaide this week. Mr. Russell's mission is to consult the agricultural and University authorities in various countries in regard to scientific agricultural research work. In this connection he has already visited Japan, China, the Philippines, Siam, and the Dutch East Indies.

ADV. 3.5.26

The council of the University of Adelaide at its meeting on Friday received from Mr. Justice Angus Parsons an offer to present a bust of Sir Langdon Bonython to the University. The council accepted the offer on behalf of the University, and directed that its grateful thanks be forwarded to Mr. Justice Angus Parsons. The bust, which is of bronze, was exhibited in the Royal Academy Exhibition last year, and was executed by the eminent sculptor, Mr. Alfred Drury, R.A.