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MUSIC AT THE UNIVERSITY.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR IVES.

[BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.]

Professor Ives, who is the occupant of the Chair of Music at the Adelaide University, arrived in Christchurch yesterday *en route* for Dunedin. As considerable interest is felt here in the matter of the establishment of a Chair of Music in connection with Canterbury College, a member of the PRESS staff had an interview with the Professor yesterday. It will be remembered that some little time ago a request was sent in to the Board of Governors of Canterbury College that a Chair of Music should be established. This, however, was not acceded to. Returning to the interview with Professor Ives, the first point towards which the conversation turned was the system in force in Adelaide. "Well," said the Professor, "The chair of music in connection with the University was founded in 1885. There is a four years' course and the attendance on lectures is for three terms in each year, and the students are expected to pass each examination set for the respective years, which of course in each case increases in difficulty. The students are examined in compositions for string orchestra and voices, and the papers are sent to England for examination by a professor in music selected by the University. There is also an examination in harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation, and form in composition. We have now some twenty-six students connected with the classes, and we are, I may say, second in point of attendance in the University. At present we only confer the Degree of Bachelor of Music, although we have the power to give that of Doctor. With a view of utilising the services of the Professor outside the University, a system of what may be called local examinations has been arranged for, leading up through the elementary course to the highest point necessary to obtain a degree. This is done by a series of certificates, ranging from those for elementary musical knowledge up to the commencement of the degree course. So you will see that the pupils who go through this course of local examination graduate, so to speak, up to the degree, &c., So that the practice of music, which

some people consider of value, should not be neglected we have an examination in pianoforte playing, singing and playing of orchestral music, which latter is intended to foster the formation of orchestras. These are divided into senior and junior divisions, the former being intended for those who desire to fit themselves to be public teachers. The local examinations are held in this way. There are local centres appointed under the supervision of Honorary Secretaries. To these printed examination papers are forwarded, and on a day fixed they are opened by the local Secretaries in the presence of the candidates, and after being worked are returned to the University and there examined. As results, certificates of the first and second-class are issued. This, of course, applies to the theoretical part of the examinations. As for those in practical subjects, the candidates have to come to Adelaide and play or sing, as the case may be, in the presence of the examiners. So important has this system of local examination become, that though it has only been established about three years, it has risen from forty-two students in the first to nearly three hundred in the third; and I may here say that there has been an increase of about ninety this year as compared with last year. There is, therefore, every probability of a most successful career before the scheme. Now as to the establishment of a chair of music in connection with your University here. The difficulty I see is the sparseness of population. For instance, you tell me your population in Christchurch is about 37,000 or 40,000. Well, in Adelaide we have a population of 100,000. You see, I gather from what I have learnt of your circumstances here that each centre would require a Chair of Music for its affiliated College, and the difficulty would be to find pupils with your small population. If you could manage to have one Chair in connection with your University, as

we have in Adelaide, then you might succeed. I regret exceedingly that I have arrived here when it is a period of recess, not only with your State schools, but also the musical societies generally. Though I am travelling for pleasure and for health I am seeking for knowledge and information with regard to musical matters in this colony, and I hope to have an opportunity before I leave of hearing some of your musical organisations. In our State schools I regret to say music is not recognised as yet, but I am endeavoring to get this altered. In this respect, as I understand it, your schools are ahead of ours, as music is taught in them. I intend to pay a visit to the Dunedin Exhibition, as I hear that the orchestra and choir are well organised, and play and sing well."

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THE UNIVERSITY.

The University Calendar is growing in bulk. A few years ago one might have put it in his pocket. It is now a responsible tome of more than 450 pages. And, what is more, the Calendar is growing in interest. It is a fair and judicious record of the doings of the University in the year with which it deals, and the casual visitor—that gifted person who sees everything in a moment and describes it in a book—would be surprised, if he had the originality to be surprised, at the amount of miscellaneous information which the work contains. Such a casual visitor would possibly be at a loss to understand one part of the information given—that part covering four pages—which explains the financial position of the University. But this is just the part which he would leave unnoticed, and wisely so; for it is just the part which no human being who does not belong to the Council of the University or who is not employed by that body can understand. Capable accountants audit the balance-sheets and find them correct year after year. Nobody else outside the charmed circle is in their happy position. To the general public the accounts are as difficult of comprehension as Volapük would be to an Australian aborigine of average intelligence.

The report of the Council fully bears out what we have again and again said—that the University devotes its energies mainly to examining, and that it may rightly be regarded as a “Pill and Brief Factory.” It is really disheartening to notice the poor results of the Art School. In 1888 four students commenced the course for the B.A. degree, five completed the first, two the second, and nine the third year’s course. This was the fat year of the Art School. In 1889 two students commenced the course for the B.A. degree, two completed the first, two the second, and one the third year’s course. What has become of the first and second years’ students of 1888? We notice with pleasure that the number of persons who attend lectures without any intention of graduating is increasing, or, at least, that it has increased during the past year. But really lovers of education *per se* must regret that there is so great a falling-off—one would not have been so much grieved if the number of students had remained stationary—in the classes for the training of the mind after the manner pursued with so