

Register Sept 11th 07

CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC.

To the Editor.

Sir—Concerning the article in The Register of September 10 on the memorial to the University by the Music Teachers' Association, I do not think the "generous benefactor" intended the fees to be so exorbitant that talented and musical students who are not in circumstances to pay such high fees should be debarred from entering such an institution and from receiving such a thorough musical education as they would obtain from the excellent staff of teachers at the Conservatorium. Many of those studying there have a difficulty to meet the required fees without those fees being again increased. The association states also that the staff of the Conservatorium should not partake in any public engagements. This I consider to be ridiculous. With a few exceptions on the staff of the Conservatorium the students have no opportunities of hearing others from whom they can learn. The most educational and musical concerts that are given here are by the staff and students of the Conservatorium.

I am, Sir, &c., JUSTICE.

To the Editor.

Sir—With reference to the article in The Register of September 10 on "The Conservatorium of Music," I beg to mention certain facts concerning the statement:—"The reasonableness of the argument that the regular University staff should not accept outside professional engagement is too obvious to require elaboration." Some months ago I received an offer to act as adjudicator (as specialist) at the Ballarat competitions in October next. A few weeks ago I received the information that, as Mr. F. Bevan, of "the Adelaide University" had been appointed, the committee regretted not to be able to avail themselves of my services, although, as the secretary adds—"My committee are satisfied that you are in every way suited for the position."

I am, Sir, &c., LUDWIG HOPF, R.C.M.L.

To the Editor.

Sir—Regarding my previous assertion that it comes within the province of a conservatorium to teach all grades of pupils, this (as I then said) is done almost universally in all European institutions. The functions of a university and those of a conservatorium are in existent circumstances separate. No one can claim unprejudicially that the external musical education in Australia is on a par with education in other particular branches of culture. The two subjects are non-comparable. Secondary education is in an advanced state here; musical education is not. It becomes an easy matter, with the preponderance of splendid preparatory institutions, to draft students, well equipped, into the University. It is not such a simple defensible argument when musical training comes into consideration. The time is not ripe here when the conservatorium can exist solely for the promulgation of higher interests. It will be doing a greater salutary good by giving tutelage education of a comprehensive character than by limiting its sphere of activity into an inevitably narrow groove. The alleged difference of opinion between Professor Peterson and myself is one of practicality rather than of principle. The professor strongly emphasizes the necessity of sound preliminary training, and in his own words urges "the establishment of an institution or institutions like the University High School or other secondary college served by a staff familiar with university requirements." This would be feasible enough, perhaps, in a large community; but Adelaide is much too small a place to support and ensure life to two institutions having similar designs and purposes, even though they should be bound together by ties of affinity. One institution is sufficient for all present purposes; and, inasmuch as correct early training is universally acknowledged to be of such paramount importance, it becomes necessary in the interest of the public generally that such education should be attainable at the Conservatorium. On referring to the University Calendar I find that the Elder Conservatorium was "established for the purpose of providing a complete system of instruction in the art and science of music, at a moderate cost to the student." This, I take it, may be accepted as authentically refuting the idea that it was primarily founded in order that it might promote "advanced musical culture and supply a training which was beyond the scope of private enterprise." The intention was to give all persons a thorough training, whatever the degree of pupilage at the period of entering. Regarding the monetary outlay on the part of the student, it would be quite a Utopian idea to abolish fees altogether; but institutions are not usually

run on such a philanthropic basis. The suggestion to increase the fees is quite arbitrary, as it would affect many to whom the Conservatorium is meant to make its strongest appeal. Prohibitive terms would preclude many a talented person cherishing any hope of admittance. I think I am right in contending that the fees charged at present are as high as and in many cases higher than the fees extolled by teachers outside the institution. If the collective yearly fees of the latter seem higher it is because in many cases they crowd four terms into a year, whereas we have only three. For instance, a teacher charging (say) four guineas a term, would in four terms aggregate sixteen guineas. This would, as a bare amount, appear higher, but proportionately and relatively it is not. The subject of registration is too vast to dilate upon hurriedly, but I hope the timely remarks of The Register concerning it will have a speedy legislative effect. No other art suffers so much as music from the untutored efforts of the unskilled artisan. Australia, like many another country, is filled with incompetent teachers. It rests with the individual, at present, to expose inadequacy. If we all did our duty in this respect the community would benefit materially.

I am, Sir, &c., BRYCESON TREHARNE.

Register Sept. 11th 07

MUSICAL PROFESSORS.

In the Assembly on Tuesday Mr. Mitchell gave notice that on September 17 he would ask the Premier—"1. Do the professors or teachers at the Elder Conservatorium accept fees on engagements as adjudicators in musical competitions not connected with the Conservatorium? 2. As the civil servants in every position are debarred from competing in business with others outside the service, can the Government do anything to prevent the professors and teachers of the subsidized institution known as the Elder Conservatorium from competing with others by acting as adjudicators at musical competitions both in and out of this State, and not connected with the Conservatorium?"

Register Sept. 12th 07

THE CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC.

To the Editor.

Sir—Perhaps we, as parents of students studying at the Conservatorium of Music, have too long held our peace in the face of the opposition now being so actively advanced by certain members of the outside musical profession against the institution. But when that opposition takes the form of urging the University Council to bring into force prohibitive fees, which shall shut our children out of the Conservatorium, surely it is time, in our own interests, to awake to a sense of our responsibility. By what right do these agitators dictate to such an august body as the Council of the University what fees it shall deem proper to be charged to students of music who desire to take advantage of the highest tuition here provided? And what is their object in so doing? The latter is not difficult of solution. Is it not true that certain members of the Music Teachers' Association have openly expressed their determination to shut up the institution within two years, and for this purpose are they not encroaching steadily upon the rights and privileges which every public institution must with dignity maintain? If they shall achieve their object, what will be the result? A return to the low standards and doubtful efficiency. Every person of unbiased judgment who has resided in this State for any length of time must be fully aware of the impetus given to the study of the divine art by the establishment of the Conservatorium, and the brilliant and successful students who have passed from it to larger spheres speak eloquently of the value of its work. Visitors from an older world and from the larger cities of Australia have acknowledged with surprise the high standard achieved by its pupils. To shut out our own young people from participating in its advantages, and to leave them to the mercies of the heterogeneous collection of individuals who make up the Music Teachers' Association, would, to my mind, be betraying the trust of the benefactor, whose object was to bring the best within reach, not only of the rich, but also of the middle-class student, whose musical education is only attained by the self-denial of A PARENT.

Advertiser Sept. 14th 07

CONSERVATORIUM CONCERT.

The second staff concert of the session is announced for Monday evening, 23rd inst., when a programme of much interest will be presented. The numbers to be given are St. Saens' variations for two pianos, Grieg's sonata for violoncello and piano, and Arensky's second trio. The vocal items will include songs by Mallinson, Harty, and Brewster Jones (MSS.). The performers will be Professor Ennis and Mr. Bryceson Treharne (piano), Mr. H. Heinicke (violin), Mr. Harold S. Parsons (cello), and Miss Gull Hack (vocalist). Tickets may be obtained at the office of the University.