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DEATH OF EUGENE ALDERMAN.

A LOSS TO AUSTRALIAN MUSIC.

The heaviest and saddest task that the writer of these notes has had imposed upon him is to record the untimely death of Mr. Eugene Alderman. It is safe to say that no musical personality in the city found a readier response or made a more general appeal than did the dead violinist. His death came so suddenly that the whole community was shocked and pained. By the loss of Eugene Alderman the profession of Australia has lost one of its brightest ornaments. Adelaide particularly will miss him, for no standard musical entertainment was complete without the inclusion of his name among the performers. As a comrade and citizen he was loved by all, and he came as near justifying the term "public idol" as any local musician we know, and although but 32 years of age he had already completed a full and useful career.

From his mother he inherited his striking musical talents. It was at her knee that he first learnt to hold the bow. Six years of practice and diligent lessons qualified him for entrance to the Elder Conservatorium, where he started under Mr. Heinicke. A three years' scholarship soon followed, with a further extension of two years. In 1905 he proceeded to Stuttgart, and there studied under Edmund Singer, a noted teacher of the day. Thence he went to Italy, and later proceeded to Brussels, where he studied under Caesar Thomson, a famous teacher of that city. A journey across to England completed education abroad, and he came back to Adelaide most fully equipped to adorn his profession and take the leading position as soloist of the State. He has acted as examiner to the Melbourne University on several occasions.

One of his most cherished associations was that with Mr. William Silver, of this city. The two friends were inseparable, and his loss will be a poignant experience for his old comrade. It was only a few days before his death that Mr. Alderman was in the writer's room in "The Mail" Office full of life, vitality, and enthusiasm for his new patriotic orchestra, which he launched so successfully, but with which, alas! he was destined only to officiate once as conductor. While we mourn his loss his closer connections may well be proud that he has left behind him a record of musical worth, enthusiastic love of his art, and the affectionate memory and esteem of all who were privileged to know him. The funeral eloquently spoke public testimony of the deep grief felt, and it was an impressive sight. Over 500 people were present, which included practically every professor, teacher, and professional of the musical community of Adelaide. At the residence the floral tributes covered a space many yards long and wide. Scores of wreaths were sent from private friends, and included among same were the following tri-

The late Eugene Alderman, taken with Harold Bauer (left) and A. J. Chapman (right) during the visit of the famous pianist to Adelaide.

butes:—Patriotic Orchestra, Woman's Choral Society, organist and choristers of St. Peter's, students at Conservatorium, University, musical profession, Lyric Club, Tramway Band, Elder Conservatorium staff, Conservatorium String Orchestra, Greater Wondergraph Orchestra, Theatre Royal Orchestra, Broken Hill Quartet Club, members of Bach Society, staff of Allan's, Limited. Notable ones were from the flower stall sellers of Rundle street and the waitresses of Balfour, Bicknell's Cafe. A very impressive service was performed by the Church of England clergyman, Rev. J. Lamsdon. The funeral stretched over a mile and a half.

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BOOM OF THE BIG GUN.

Call to the Nation.

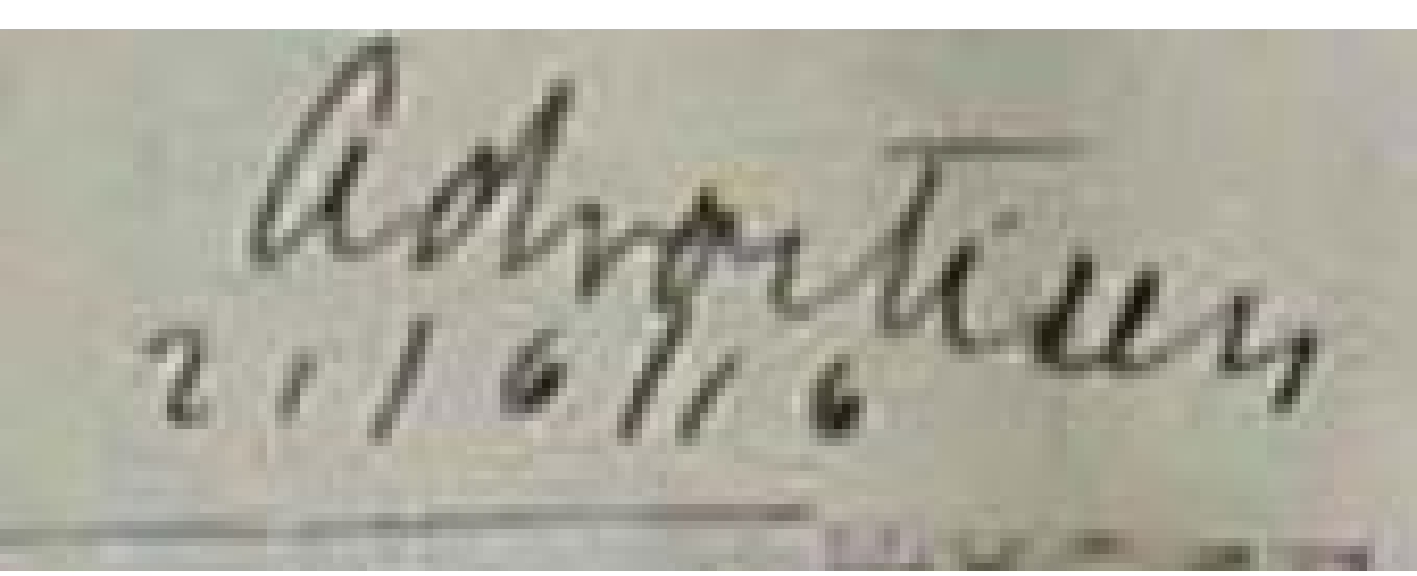
Professor Chapman, of the Elder Chair of Mathematics and Mechanics at the Adelaide University, concluded on Tuesday evening a series of three lectures on "Big guns: their modern development." He said that it had been acclaimed by a Frenchman, speaking of the gun known as the "75," of which the French were so proud, that "not the most sordid surroundings, not the most futurist impressions with grotesque scene-painting, will make them appear anything but what they are—gentlemen, and the weapons of gentlemen. Thus are the souls of men reflected in the weapons they use." That patriot might be allowed his feelings of pride, for the gun of which he spoke had proved itself a magnificent weapon, wielded by brave and honourable men. Britons were proud of their Allies, and of what they had accomplished. But if the spirit of the French nation might be considered to be reflected in the skill, the industry, and the high intelligence that had evolved the perfect mechanism of the famous "75," might not they take the great guns (with which he had dealt in his lectures), British in design and type, as representative of the energy of their race?

—An Electrical Stimulus.—

There was a well-known electrical experiment in which a fine jet of water was made to issue under pressure from a nozzle. It issued as a continuous jet for some distance, and then broke up into a number of separate jets, each pursuing its own individual path, unaffected and uninfluenced by its neighbours. But place near to it an electrified rod and the various separate jets all joined together, and became one continuous stream from end to end. And so the British Empire before the war seemed to outsiders to consist of a number of separate individual States, distinct and apart, sometimes pursuing divergent and even antagonistic paths, with very little common interest. But the boom of the big gun was heard, and under its electric stimulus the different units were welded into one common stream in a way that had been the wonder and pride of all of them.

—Another Requisite.—

For the experiment he had quoted to succeed the water must be pure. It would not answer with dirty water. And so the boom of the gun would never have had a welding influence upon the separate units of the British Empire had they not been nourished in the pure air of British freedom. That was what those big guns stood for—for the nation. Not that they typified the might of the British Empire and its power to enforce its will upon other nations; but they typified its determination to uphold, at whatever cost, those traditions of freedom and justice that were the glory of the British flag.



QUICK-FIRING ARTILLERY.

ANCIENT AND MODERN METHODS CONTRASTED.

The concluding lecture of Professor Chapman's series on modern guns at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Adelaide University, on Tuesday, was mainly devoted to tracing the evolution of modern quick-firing artillery. The lecturer remarked that, according to one historian, the cannon used by Charles VIII., when he invaded Italy in 1494, to conquer the Kingdom of Naples, were so unwieldy and their rate of firing was so slow that the damage caused by one shot could be repaired before the next shot could be fired. Even in the 17th century there must have been a considerable interval between shots when the loading had to be done by putting the gunpowder down the muzzle with a ladle. Early in the 19th century matters in connection with gun construction had advanced to such a stage that the British Navy prided itself on possessing ships capable of firing a round with ball cartridge every minute, as against the French gunners' three minutes for the same operation. In recent years the need for more rapid firing became vital. At the time of the advent of the torpedo boat the large muzzle-loading guns on warships were being superseded by breechloaders; but even these took from three to five minutes to load and fire, and the swift torpedo boats had a chance to escape. At this time Hotchkiss revolving guns of small calibre were in use, but although they had a high speed of fire their penetrating power was not sufficient to disable a torpedo boat except at short range. In a test organised by the British Admiralty, and in which nine torpedo boats from the Isle of Guernsey attacked a fleet of 24 warships anchored inside the breakwater at Plymouth, the result was that three battleships and one cruiser, valued at 2½ millions sterling, and with 2,300 men on board, were, technically speaking, destroyed. Assuming that all the torpedo boats were destroyed, the loss to the other side amounted to only 163 men, and boats valued at £180,000. It was small wonder, therefore, that the naval authorities of the world sought eagerly for some more effective means of defence against torpedo boats. Both the French and British Admiralty invited designs for such guns, and Hotchkiss was the successful competitor, with a gun firing a shell of 6 lb. at the rate of 20 shots per minute.

One of the great difficulties to be overcome with quick-firing guns, remarked the lecturer, was due to the recoil. The larger the shell projected the greater the energy of the recoil: and this movement of the gun meant that it had to be re-sighted every time unless some special provision was made. This was the great difficulty that presented itself in the application of quick-firing to field guns. The French, with their design of the now famous 75 mm. gun, brought out in 1898, were the first to overcome the defect. In the case of the "seventy-five" the gun recoils on its carriage for a distance of 4 ft., and runs back so exactly into its former position that no second laying is necessary. The regulating apparatus by which this was effected consisted of a recoil cylinder containing compressed air and springs, but the exact nature of the mechanism had been kept secret. A new fuse-adjusting apparatus made the gun easily capable of 25 aimed shots per minute. After this the French set to work to improve the range of the gun. They gave it a length of over 8 ft., and thereby succeeded in evolving a field gun capable of projecting a shrapnel shell weighing 16 lb., with a velocity of 1,750 ft. per second—features that placed the weapon far in advance of any other field gun then in existence. It was possible with a 75 mm. gun successively to pound a number of adjoining areas with shrapnel bullets at an almost incredible rate. At the word of command the gun would fire off a string of eight shells in about 2 seconds, and somewhere about two miles away a patch of earth about half the size of Victoria-square was so pounded by shrapnel bullets, flying almost horizontally, that scarcely any unprotected living thing could escape.

Other field guns were referred to, including the British 18-pounder, the new American field gun, and some of the larger artillery. The lecturer then went on to describe and illustrate by lantern slides the improvements that have been made in the rapidity with which the giant guns of the modern battleships are loaded. The construction of the great British wire-wound guns was described from the steel ingot stage through all the processes to the completed gun; but it was rather disappointing as a result of the immense work, trouble, and expense involved, that the gun, measured by the time during which projectiles were actually passing along its bore, should have a life of not more than three seconds. The lecture concluded with a comparison of the great guns of H.M.S. Benbow, launched in 1888, and fitted with two 111 ton 16½ in. guns, with those of the latest giant battleship Queen Elizabeth, carrying eight 15 in. guns. The guns of the former only lasted 38 rounds, whereas those of the Queen Elizabeth would probably last three times as long, although the energy of the [illegible] was not great, [illegible]