

ELGAR'S MASTERPIECE.

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS.

Adelaide is promised a musical treat next week, when the Bach Society, assisted by the South Australian Orchestra, under the direction of Professor Harold Davies, Mus. Bac., will give two performances of Sir Edward Elgar's masterpiece, "The Dream of Gerontius."

Strangely enough, German composers were the first to recognise the genius of Elgar, and it was their renderings of his work that finally stamped the musical hall mark upon "Gerontius." Shortly before his death Johannes Brahms astonished the musical world by declaring that for the "future of music eyes must be turned to England." This prediction was triumphantly justified at the Dusseldorf festival in May, 1902, when, after a magnificent performance of "The Dream of Gerontius," no less a person than Richard Strauss raised his glass in tribute to the "great English master," Edward Elgar. This performance aroused extraordinary enthusiasm, mingled with astonishment, among German critics, but it remained for the most eminent Teutonic composer of the day, Strauss himself, to set the final

seal of musical approbation upon Elgar's work. It was this storm of enthusiasm for his compositions that convinced the English people that in Elgar they possessed a musical genius of the highest order.

The poem upon which the work is based was composed by the late Cardinal Newman, and touches upon those questionings regarding death and the hereafter common to all mankind. With a reverence inspired by the teachings and faith of his church, the author attempts to lift the veil and to follow the soul into the regions of the infinite, where, under the guidance of an angel, the spirit of Gerontius passes step by step into the awe-inspiring presence of the Most High.

The work opens with an orchestral prelude embodying passages descriptive of all the emotions, judgment, fear, hope, despair, &c., which create a fitting atmosphere and prepare the mind of the hearer for what follows. Gerontius then begins his soliloquy, "Jesu, Maria, I am near to death," and all the emotions which a sensitive soul could experience in such circumstances are traversed in turn by the author. Fear, hope, an exalted confession of faith, and lastly the whispered "Into Thy hands," fall in turn from the lips of the dying man. Alternating with these, the voice of the church is heard in Kyrie, Litany, and Miserere, and, in impressive tones, the priest chants the proficiscene, "Go forth," which is taken up by the chorus to the accompaniment of orchestral strains symbolical of the pomp and splendor of the most gorgeous ritual. Thus in full faith, and tended by all the ministrations of the church, the soul of Gerontius passes from earth into the unknown.

Part II. opens with a short prelude for muted strings only, suggestive of the flight of the soul of Gerontius through space, followed by its awakening from the sleep of death, and the mutings. "How still it is, I hear no more the busy beat of time." Presently the angel who is to guide him appears, and together they set out on their journey. Soon the soul addresses the angel with a start of fear—"But hark! Upon my sense comes a fierce hubbub, which would make me fear, could I be frightened." The angel makes answer—"We are now arrived close to the judgment court. That sullen howl is from the demons who assemble there, hungry and wild to claim their property, and gather

souls for hell." Then the amazing "Demon Choruses" burst on the audience. In these, Elgar has used every known device to depict the wild frenzies of the lost spirits, who, jealous of the accession of earth-born spirits to the rights they have forfeited, taunt them with the "extra grace" and "new-birth" which alone have enabled them to aspire to such heights.

Leaving this pandemonium behind, the soul and its guide speed forward. They hear in the distance the strains of the heavenly choir, which, as they approach, grow louder until at last they burst upon them with the sublime glory of the chorus, "Praise to the holiest in the height." Then in a sudden hush the angel announces, "Thy judgment is now near, for we are come into the veiled presence of our God." Gerontius, who up to this point has advanced in perfect confidence, is suddenly stricken with fear, and gives utterance to the anguished cry, "Take me away, and in the lowest depths there let me lie." Upon this are heard the words of the 90th Psalm, chanted in a deep undertone by the souls in purgatory, "Lord, Thou hast been our refuge," though which presently steals the farewell song of the angel guide. A holy peace seems to pervade the atmosphere, as the distant echoes of the celestial hymn, "Praise to the holiest," gradually die away. It is in this atmosphere of peace and in final lingering cadences of "Amen" that the work concludes.

Even those who are not musically inclined cannot listen to this production unmoved, and those who are in some measure trained to perceive the inner meaning of what they hear, cannot fail to realise with what insight Sir Edward Elgar has interpreted the poem. His devout spirit has been deeply moved and inspired by an obvious sympathy with the theme, which has resulted in a passionate and spontaneous outpouring of his genius.

For its fullest appreciation one hearing of "The Dream of Gerontius" is almost inadequate. For this reason alone the decision of the Bach Society to give two performances will undoubtedly meet with approval, and many of those who attend at the Town Hall on Thursday evening next will doubtless be constrained to hear "The Dream of Gerontius" again on the following Saturday.



Dr. Davies.

Other maps were prepared by drawing contour lines through all bores of equal total salinity, and through all bores of equal chlorine-content per gallon. These contour lines show close parallelism over the same areas and emphasise the variable quality of the water, both in different parts of the basin and the intake, also the variations in the water by the different intake beds. The Queensland water is by far the best, but it gradually becomes more saline as it travels south westward. The flow from the Goyder and Finke is the best water absorbed along the western intake, and, as it makes its way underground towards its outlet springs to the west of the Denison Ranges, it gradually becomes more saline, partly no doubt from contact with the material it traverses, but mainly by admixture with the poorer quality water taken in south of the Alberga. Both of these latter waters make for the same outlets.

The examination of the plotted salinities shows that there is a feeder of poor quality, though still useful, water from the heads of Warriner and North Creeks that was not hitherto suspected. There is also a probability that there is a feeder on the north end of the Flinders Range, which affords the main supply to the bed above the main water-bearing sands containing the poor quality water yielded by the bores at Lake Crossing and Yerilla. The varying salinity indicates by the existence of belts of better water leading from the direction of the intake to the mound springs, that the springs have been long in existence to enable water of the same type as that now present in the more stagnant portions of the basin to be replaced by the less saline moving water.

The mound springs, together with an outlet reaching the Gulf of Carpentaria, constitute the escape vents for the water entering the artesian water beds. The conclusions drawn are that owing to the lowering of pressure by the excess of water being drawn off the natural escape vents will become less active, and that there will be a slightly greater amount of absorption into the under-drained porous outcrops. Ultimately there must come a state of balance when the water lost by the submarine escape, the mound springs, and bore flows will only equal the annual intake. Then a large proportion of the bores in the basin will only yield by pumping from them what water is actually required.

The artesian bores of South Australia being the lowest, they will be last and least affected, but meanwhile the rigid control of water to avoid waste should be practised, to defer as long as possible exhaustion of the accumulation of stored water, and the increase in deep, widespread and expensive pumping which will be necessary when only the annual average income of water is available.

The Artesian Basin. NEED FOR RIGID CONTROL. Mr. R. Lockhart Jack, B.E., Deputy Government Geologist, read a paper before the Royal Society, on Thursday evening, on the economic possibilities of the vast artesian country in the Far North. Mr. Jack referred to the gradually increasing store of information about the salts contained in that portion of the Great Australian Artesian Basin, which occupies the north-eastern quarter of South Australia, and on which the successful utilisation of that region depends. He exhibited maps on which were indicated the variation in the types of water according to their saline constituents. One map gave the elevations above sea-level to which water will rise in any part of the basin. From this map the direction of flow and consequently the sources of supply can be determined, and it was shown that, while the bulk of the basin is fed by water absorbed in Queensland and northern New South Wales close to the range dividing the inland plains from the coastal drainage systems, there are very important local intakes on the western margin of the basin in South Australia and the Northern Territory. These intake beds are fed by the waters of the Upper Finke, Goyder, and Alberga and other minor streams. The country of the western intake, where crossed by the Arkaringa and other minor streams as far south as Stuart's Range, absorbs much less water and that of a poorer quality.

The lecturer also made clear by the aid of several maps the modifications of the water pressure effected by the mound spring vents. The critical examination by analyses of the water taken from the Great Artesian Basin shows that the portion absorbed by the western intake beds contains sulphates, while the eastern intake water coming from Queensland and New South Wales contains carbonates as their characteristic salts. The mapping of these types quantitatively defined closely the respective areas occupied by them, and again proved that the mound springs near Lake Eyre are the vents towards which both types of water travel.

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Professor Wood Jones was recently offered the professorship of anatomy in the University of London at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School. Sir Joseph Verco, who received his training at Barts., went to London to be present at its eight-hundredth anniversary celebrations. The offered appointment was a high honor to Professor Wood Jones, but the profession, as well as the students in Adelaide, will be glad to learn that he has decided to remain in South Australia to complete his work on Australian fauna.

GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION.

INTER-UNIVERSITY DEBATES.

A series of Inter-University debates will be held in the Institute Hall, North-terrace, on the undermentioned dates. The students' committee are arranging these debates and the hon. treasurer is Miss Wait.

The programme is as follows and the affirmative side is taken by the first-named team.

August 23.—Queensland v. Adelaide—"Should the Northern Territory be handed to Japan in return for payment of our National debt?"

August 25.—Melbourne v. Sydney—"Are governments justified in engaging in private enterprise?"

August 27.—The losers of the first two debates—"Is the influence of modern journalism pernicious?"

August 28.—The winners of the first two debates—"Is the action of the French in the Ruhr justifiable?"

COMPULSORY DENTAL TREATMENT.

SAFEGUARDING THE PUBLIC.

Civilisation has hopelessly outgrown its teeth, in the opinion of Mr. Alexander Swann, who considers that school dental clinics, with compulsory treatment for children, should be instituted without delay. He also favors the establishment of a training school for dental nurses.

Mr. Swann is the editor of the remarkably fine record of the proceedings of the fourth Australian Dental Congress, of which he was general secretary, held at Adelaide in 1921. The work of consolidating the various reports delivered by experts on this occasion, and tracing the progress of dentistry exemplified therein, has occupied his spare time for the last two years. Mr. Swann has also done much to assist the Government to safeguard the public and members of the dental profession by various suggestions for the improvement of the Dentists Act Amending Acts.

In conversation with a representative of "The Advertiser," he admitted that the State certainly possessed splendid legislation but said consolidation would be a great convenience. The Dental Board, as it is at present constituted, consists of three Government nominees, with three members of the dental profession. Mr. Wallace Bruce is an ideal chairman of this body, in his opinion. "The time is bound to come, however, when the board will consist of dentists only," said Mr. Swann. "The respective Governments have been very considerate of the profession since dentistry came under legislative control. It has been my pleasure to report on dental interests to the Government several times in an honorary capacity, and I have, in fact, interviewed every Chief Secretary on the subject for the last 10 or 20 years. The wards of the State under the State Children's Department have been possessed of a dental clinic for many years, and a year or so ago the Education Department instituted a country dental school clinic, both of which are doing splendid work, but we are far behind countries yet in this direction. Queensland has a splendid system of dental clinics."



Mr. A. Swann.

It is useless, however, in Mr. Swann's opinion, to institute a dental school clinic unless treatment on the lines of the report furnished regarding each child is made compulsory. "Public health demands that healthy children should not be classed with those suffering from mouth troubles, which are often highly infectious," he said. "The fact that our soldiers were so free from typhus during the Great War may be largely attributed to the fact that they were forced to have their mouths put in a healthy condition." Regarding dental prefixes, Mr. Swann smiled reminiscently. "We generally found that the man who labelled himself 'Professor' in the old days was anything but a professional in the best sense of the word. Since the dental colleges of America have become affiliated with the universities the value of the prefix of doctor has become firmly established." He paid a tribute to the work of Sir Joseph Verco, Adelaide's veteran physician. "The school