

MUSIC TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

The Inaugural Session.

Music teachers from all parts of the State attended the inaugural session of a week's conference at the Elder Conservatorium of the University of Adelaide, on Monday afternoon. The primary object of this conference was to give music teachers, throughout South Australia, an opportunity to meet together and discuss the numerous problems connected with the profession. The meetings will be held daily, and a programme has been arranged for certain evenings during the week. The proceedings will be concluded on Saturday morning. In 1921 the first conference of this nature was instituted through the instrumentality of the Director of the Conservatorium (Dr. E. Harold Davies). Dr. Davies delivered the inaugural address yesterday afternoon upon "Musical education," and in the evening a chamber music concert was given. This morning Mr. L. G. Reimann will address the gathering upon the subject of "The music teacher," in the afternoon Mr. Frederick Bevan will lecture on "The art of singing," and at 4 p.m. Mr. William Silver will give a pianoforte recital. Later in the week Dr. Davies will speak upon "Form in music," and the Rev. Brian Wibberley will lecture upon "Musical aesthetics." Mr. Clive Carey upon "Folk songs," Mr. W. H. Foote upon "Orchestral instruments," and Mr. F. L. Grattan upon "Music in schools." Musical programmes will be interspersed with the addresses. The concerts and recitals are open to the public, but the lectures and discussions will be reserved for members of the conference.

An Enthusiastic Opening.

There was a widely representative assemblage of metropolitan and country teachers in the Elder Hall on Monday afternoon. At 3 o'clock a reception was held. Professor Mitchell, in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor of the University, the Director of the Conservatorium (Dr. Davies), and the Registrar of the University (Mr. F. W. Eardley), welcomed the visitors, who were announced by Mr. Othams (secretary of the conference).

The Vice-Chancellor said that all the resources of the University would be at the delegates' disposal during conference week. He then paid a tribute to music, "the universal language of emotion," from a psychological point of view music was a very interesting study, because, where one person could take it all in, and find it simple, to another it would be extremely difficult—as in his own case. The professor said he understood that a conductor heard all the instruments playing in his company; and that was another wonderful matter to those who did not thus grasp that combination of sounds. In conclusion, he extended a hearty welcome to the gathering, and trusted that the conference would prove enjoyable and profitable. (Applause.)

Dr. Davies, in supporting Professor Mitchell's remarks, expressed his pleasure that they were all to have an opportunity of meeting together. He trusted that they would feel they were indeed coming to form of culture. But he would like them to their own University, and would regard it all to believe that music was more, much as their Alma Mater. All were at more than Browning's words—"Tis all triumphant some of the difficulties that were to be art, but art in obedience to law"—the law met with. He warmly welcomed the gathering, and trusted that they would had the wholly right view—that music not only enjoy the lectures, but also the rentals which were given as a labour of love by all the performers concerned. (Applause.)

The lecture on "Musical education" was then given, and, subsequently, an adjournment was made to the north and south halls where afternoon tea and social chat concluded the first session.

"MUSICAL EDUCATION."

The Director (Dr. Davies) in the course of a deeply interesting and practical address, said he wished to speak to them for a little while on the important subject of musical education—though not in any dogmatic fashion, for, if they would allow him to say so, there was never a time in his life when he felt himself to be more of a learner than at this moment. After all, they were only just upon the threshold of music. It was the youngest of all the arts—barely 300 years old—and the last few decades had seen such a wonderful growth in the power of the human ear to appreciate sounds, that they simply dare not assign a limit to future developments, as they must needs be infinite, and content to play a very modest, though anxious, part in advancing what they all held to be a great and growing cause. For, the speaker said, he truly believed that music was destined to be more and more influential for good in the world.

Dr. Davies suggested that for students let them take the attitude of students together, discussing and questioning the best ways to train the children entrusted to them, that these pupils might first of all learn to love and appreciate music, and then perhaps seek to make it—either as

performers, or creators. There were three directions in which musical education might move. It might aim at the training of performers, either players or singers—that is, along more or less technical lines. They were familiar with the process; its fruits were various, but mostly mediocre. Indeed, they might think with some dismay of the thousands of students who were undergoing it, of whom only the very smallest percentage reached a high level of attainment.

Then musical education might be directed towards the actual making of music—that is, along creative lines. The lecturer said he did not suggest for one moment that great composers could be made by any purely educative means; but it was certain that children could be taught to compose delightful little tunes, as easily as they could be taught to improvise little stories. In the schools of Wales, at the present moment, thousands of original melodies were being written by the children, who, in their sheer joy and zest of creative activity, were learning to love and understand music for what it really was—a perfectly natural form of utterance. They could only imagine what sort of a race those young enthusiasts would presently breed.

Training the Listener.

The third direction musical education might take was in the way of training listeners, who might or might not be performers—that was, to develop the power of perception, observed the speaker. He would ask them to think what would happen if everybody were able to listen to music intelligently, and with something approaching a true sense of values. Different performances, which were now applauded to the echo by ignorant hearers, would no longer be tolerated; and rubbishy compositions which to-day sold by hundreds and thousands, would go where they belonged—to the wastepaper-basket.

There was a familiar Scriptural injunction which said, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." The best possible text they could take for a talk on musical education would be an inversion of that injunction:—"Be ye hearers of the word and not doers only"—and that, as they would presently discover, was the very crux of the whole matter—learning to hear. But, in order to get a clear idea of their subject, it would be well first to decide what music really was; then to think what education meant; and, putting two together, it was comparatively easy to form a right conclusion as to the meaning of musical education. There were three views about music, of which one was wholly wrong, one partially right, and one wholly right. The wholly wrong view was that it was just a clever and ingenious trick of combining sounds, so that they would give a pleasurable sensation to the hearer. There were, as they all knew, innumerable sounds of varying quality and duration. It did not need much imagination to conceive the possibility of arranging them artificially so as to make an infinite variety of sound effects. This was the lowest view, and the people who took it told the very wisely, that there was no special utility in music, that its highest office was to amuse or divert, and moreover, that those who followed it were a rather unreliable folk, who wore their hair long, and often forgot to wash themselves, who ran into debt, and did not keep their appointments—in short, a somewhat crazy crowd.

"The Mother Tongue of All."

Then there was the partially right view (continued Dr. Davies) that music was one of the fine arts—perhaps the greatest of all the arts—subject to aesthetic laws of symmetry, unity, and variety was elevating and refining, and its pursuit a most desirable end. He trusted that they would feel they were indeed coming to form of culture. But he would like them to their own University, and would regard it all to believe that music was more, much as their Alma Mater. All were at more than Browning's words—"Tis all triumphant some of the difficulties that were to be art, but art in obedience to law"—the law met with. He warmly welcomed the gathering, and trusted that they would had the wholly right view—that music

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The Value of Preparation.

And, having spoken of most of the things that were essential, though by no means exhaustively (concluded the lecturer) he could imagine them asking what earthly hope there was of covering such an extensive field of training, including the development of technique, in the limited space of a half-hour—or even two half-hours—weekly lesson. It was certainly a problem which called for deep reflection, and probably a good deal of reorganizing of existing methods as well. The poor, and often underpaid, teacher, however well qualified and anxious to do good work, must necessarily set a limit to his efforts. Time and means were stern facts, of which no sentiment could dispose. Still, as teachers, they must not shelter behind these obvious disabilities. It should be their constant endeavour to avoid waste of time, and in the giving of lessons the speaker felt they often sat inert, and listened, nay, even sometimes forgot to listen, to their pupils dully and aimlessly practising work that should have been fully prepared. Their chief responsibility was to create and maintain a live musical interest, and, above all, to constantly prepare their lessons. Dr. Davies remarked that this was brought home to him one day in conversation with one of their most earnest and successful teachers of aural and rhythm culture. She said, very simply and wisely, "It is not the time that the class takes, but the

preparation I must undergo each week before I meet my class." And he assured them that the brilliant and astonishing achievements of her children were a constant testimony to the value of that self-imposed preparation. It was not for him to weary them with maxims (added the lecturer), but, as intelligent people, they would, he was sure, find the way to constantly improve their methods. And remembering always that education was not merely instruction, but the development of faculty, they would seek, in each lesson they gave, to awaken some sense that was lying dormant in their pupil. (Applause.)

To-day's private sessions commence at 10.30 and 2.30 respectively. At 4 there will be a public pianoforte recital.

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT.

The Elder Hall was well attended on Monday night when the first of the evening entertainments was given before a deeply interested audience. The members of the Elder Conservatorium String Quartet repeated the splendid programme given at the beginning of last month, and were responsible for a similarly enjoyable presentation.

The instrumentalists comprised:—Violins, Mr. Charles Schilsky (leader) and Miss Kathleen Meegan; viola, Miss Sylvia Whitington; cello, Mr. Harold Parsons. The repetition of the whole programme was a wise proceeding, for it was impossible to assimilate the beauty of each composition and all its tonal richness at a first hearing. The old masters were represented by Mozart's lovely "Quartet in D major," which reflected the composer's facility to create melodic themes of sparkling freshness and graceful rhythm. Each of the four movements revealed the sympathy and unanimity of purpose that existed between the members of the quartet. The allegro was given with spontaneity and due regard for the constant demands of light and shade; the menuetto was a delicate fabric of sound, the phrasing calling for a special word; in the Adagio all the contrasting harmonies were exquisitely interpreted; and the final Allegro, with its wealth of legato and staccato passages, brought the Mozart work to a satisfying conclusion. A portion of Tschakowsky's "Quartet in D" was subsequently rendered. The Andante Cantabile, frequently heard in string orchestras, is full of serenity of thought—a melodic gem—and its exquisite passages were thoughtfully played. As for the Scherzo, that brilliant bit of writing—typically Russian in its atmos-

sphere—made a splendid contrast to the preceding movement. It was interesting to hear the divergent music of Mozart, Tschakowsky, and Faure, all upon one programme, and each a masterpiece. Gabriel Faure was represented by the celebrated "Piano quartet in G minor," and the executants comprised Mr. Schilsky, Miss Whitington, and Mr. Parsons, with Mr. Harold Wyld at the piano. This classic theme was given a memorable interpretation upon its former presentation, but last night's repetition was considerably finer owing to the more amenable qualities of the pianoforte.

To hear the famous work given as it was upon this occasion, with its tireless flow of inspirational rhythms, was a matter for great congratulation. Faure, who was the favourite pupil of the great Saussaens, was one of the most gifted composers of the modern French school. Each of the four movements seemed to excel the other in its spiritually exalted mood, and highly intellectual charm. The instrumentalists were kept constantly at full tension, for the whole quartet is a maze of technical difficulties. The tonal colouring and its balance were uniformly good, and the listeners expressed their delight at the exhilarating climax in the finale. Mr. Wyld achieved a triumph at the keyboard, for great perception is necessary as well as facile technique, and the pianist's delicacy of touch was never more effectively indicated. Throughout the entire composition, with its ever-growing ecstasy, the strings and piano maintained an enviable oneness of thought and purpose with fully justified confidence.

ADVERTISER 10.7.25

THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

MID-DAY ORGAN RECITAL.

The attendance at the organ recitals, held at the Elder Conservatorium, becomes better each week. On Thursday the large hall was filled with spectators each week. The poor, and often underpaid, teacher, however well qualified and anxious to do good work, must necessarily set a limit to his efforts. Time and means were stern facts, of which no sentiment could dispose. Still, as teachers, they must not shelter behind these obvious disabilities. It should be their constant endeavour to avoid waste of time, and in the giving of lessons the speaker felt they often sat inert, and listened, nay, even sometimes forgot to listen, to their pupils dully and aimlessly practising work that should have been fully prepared. Their chief responsibility was to create and maintain a live musical interest, and, above all, to constantly prepare their lessons. Dr. Davies remarked that this was brought home to him one day in conversation with one of their most earnest and successful teachers of aural and rhythm culture. She said, very simply and wisely, "It is not the time that the class takes, but the

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On Monday week, July 20, in the Elder Hall, a chamber music recital will be held. The programme includes Beethoven's string quartet opus 18, and the magnificent piano quartet by Joseph Jongen, with Mr. George Pearce at the piano, together with songs by Mr. Clive Carey, Mus. Bac. Regret has been expressed that the date of this concert clashes with the second of the Kreisler performances. It has, however, been found impossible to make any other arrangement. The dates of the Conservatorium concerts are fixed at the beginning of the year and cannot easily be altered. Plan tomorrow at S. Marshall & Sons, Gawler-place.

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REGISTER 10.7.25

ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.
NEW FORESTRY METHODS.

Mr. L. C. Hunkin, M.P., secretary of the Public Service Association, returned recently from a tour of the South-East with Messrs. E. Julius (Conservator of Forests), and W. J. Wainwright. The party inspected the plantations at Penola, Blanche Forest, Mount Burr, Caroline, and Cave Ranges. They noted the improved methods of planting and the great reduction in cost. In one week the men at Penola planted 16,000 trees.