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## COLONIAL MUSICIANS AND THE PROGRESS OF THEIR ART.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—By the last mail I have received from Sir George Macfarren, Professor of Music at Cambridge University and Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, London, a letter, or manifesto (for it partakes much of the character of such), which is of the utmost interest and importance to all who are serving in the cause of musical education in Australia. I feel it a special help to myself to receive so much earnest counsel and advice from one who is so worthily regarded as the leader of musical thought and work in England, and to find my own views on certain matters connected with the development of music in these colonies so cordially and so earnestly endorsed by the highest authority. And I trust all musicians who are striving to do what is best in musical matters rather than what is merely politic—who are trying to foster a taste for what is good in music rather than pandering to a desire for what is merely pleasing and popular—will ponder well the comments made upon some of the musicians mentioned in Professor Macfarren's letter, and receive therefrom much stimulation and encouragement in their work. I shall be very pleased to hear from musicians upon the various points to which the letter refers.

I am, Sir, &c.,

J. IVES,

Professor of Music in the University  
of Adelaide.

My Dear Professor—I have thought much and earnestly on the subject to which last spring you drew my attention, namely, the greater or less desirability of establishing a University musical professorship or a musical academy in a colony adjacent to that wherein you are discharging the functions of the musical chair. The result of this thinking is a conviction of the high importance of the question—importance to art, importance to England, and importance to that filial regard of Australia for the mother country, which was so nobly evinced in Mr. Dalley's tender of participation in England's perils through the late Egyptian war, and is reported to have had many an utterance which, if necessarily less practical than this, has been no less genial. I am no politician, so will venture no further consideration of aspects of the matter that may have political bearing; but I have had such musical experience as perhaps may justify the expression of an opinion formed upon it that may strengthen your own views or even be offered to the judgment of others.

You have well proved your knowledge of the history of music in England—of the high rank among the musicians of the world that was held by the masters of the art in this country until the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty—and alas, of the decline of the study, the practice, and the esteem of this practical element among us from that date until within the memory of men now living. It is curious that when music was here at its zenith, the kindred art of painting had none but foreign representations.

but foreign representatives in England, and that with the daybreak of native pictorial genius came the sunset of music. The fact that Holbein, Rubens, Vandyke, and even Kneller and Lely practised here with success commensurate with their deserts (or probably, in the last cases beyond them) is no proof of the want of pictorial power in the English mind, because after time has shown the indigenous existence of the germ which has ripened into richest fruition under the climatic influences of public confidence and opportune encouragement. The fact of Handel's sojourn here, and of his legacy to mankind of masterpieces, I might say miracles, which owe, if not their existence certainly the forms in which that existence has its being, to the circumstances and feelings by which he was here surrounded—this fact, I say, annuls not our glorious past, nor has the coincident establishment in London of the now extinct Italian opera prevented our promising present. Our musical sun sank in glory, for Pelham Humphrey and Henry Purcell were its latest radiations, William Croft may be regarded as the evening star that shone in their after-glow, and the subsequent night was partially illumined by Greene and Boyce and Arne. I myself have witnessed the careers of a line of musicians whose monumental works well perpetuate their names.

Some of the chief of these names I will mention rather in alphabetical than chronological order, or order of merit, because genius is of no time, and to distinguish its degrees would be equally invidious and arbitrary.

Attwood, who was Mozart's pupil and friend, introduced the modern elements of melody and harmony into our Church music, and this branch of our art as now represented owes its origin to him; while the many successes of Balfe have carried the English name into every European country, and to every colony of the parent realm. Of a totally different character was the graceful music of Sterndale Bennett, and in far different way did he regard the divine art—not as the light companion of the fleeting moment, but as the goddess of his worship, to whom his highest aspirations were ever faithful. Bishop, who in spite of the sacrifice of his better powers to the unformed public taste

which he might have educated, has still left such generous fruits of his facility, as gladden singers and listeners alike; Cooke—one must cail him as all the world did, Tom Cooke, or he will not be recognised—gained prize after prize for glees marked by terseness and vigour, and wrote some songs that are not to be forgotten; J. B. Cramer—I fear he was a month old when brought to England, where he was wholly instructed, and whence spread his reputation—had he produced nothing but his pianoforte studies, would have gained and will hold the regard of all musicians; Crotch, in spite of his miserly reserve of his works, had due credit for his two oratorios, and wrought much for the musical culture by his University lectures and his theoretical books prepared for the use of the Royal Academy of Music; Goss, whose Church music is more frequently performed than that of any other composer for the English sanctuary; C. E. Horsley, who must be remembered in Australia from his sojourn there, proved his power to the colonists by his oratorios, cantatas, and his instrumental chamber music; William Horsley, father of the last-named, wrote in a different style from Charles, perhaps with greater likelihood of permanency; Hullah, the apostle of sight-singing among the people, worked well for the regeneration of practical musicianship; E. J. Loder invested his opera "The Night Dancers" in futurity, which will pay interest to his memory; Ciprian Potter is honoured for his orchestral compositions and pianoforte works, but is still more endeared to native art by his services as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, and by the most powerful effect he had on all who came under his care; Henry Smart, whose part songs and organ music are the delight of Choral Societies, and the stock-in-trade of organists; Wallace, who visited Australia as an executant, but did not make his stand as a composer until he had girdled the world in that other capacity, and then made ample amends for his delay. These names constitute a tierce of consecutive fifths, each unit in which represents as near an approximation to perfectness as was within the range of human weakness to make each quintain. The number best beloved of nature comprises a handful of workers, who, striving for their own honour, redounded to that of their art and their nation. These men have all been and ceased to be active within the span of a single life; to have known them and to have been encouraged by their examples was a privilege, a pleasure, and a profit.

The names of other deceased musicians might be added to the list, and would be were the present writing a history and not a letter, but enough are here adduced to evidence the healthy revival of music in England by the last generation.

Let me turn from the dead to the living, and cite with pride an octave of the foremost of our contemporaries who deserve and who now have the world's regard. These again shall be strung in alphabetical order:—

The veteran John Barnett, in his opera "The Mountain Sylph," raised the character of our lyric drama to a standard which it had not previously approached, and which has been emulated in all subsequent productions for the theatre. His nephew, John F.

Barnett, with his instrumental works, his oratorios, and especially his setting of "The Ancient Mariner," has added fresh laurels to the family crown. Walter Macfarren writes successfully for the choir, for the pianoforte, and for the orchestra, besides contributing with advantage to musical literature. Mackenzie, after a long lapse between his studentship in the Royal Academy and his entrance on public life, brought his light from under the bushel, and gleams now upon the world in full acknowledgment. Stanford found time in the midst of his University schooling so to develop his power as an artist that he now fully commands the suffrages that are freely granted him. Stewart is working with his compositions and lectures in that sister island where in earliest times it held sovereign ascendancy. Sullivan enchants millions with his brilliant trifles, and gratifies the earnest with his serious writings; and Goring Thomas has taken a stand as an operatic composer which is not to be shaken. The influence of the German Georges and the Italian itinerants is now passing away, and we find that the musical faculty is, as of yore, indigenous in Englishmen, among whom are claimed some born in North Britain and some in Ireland, and some who, drawing their first breath in Australia, are not to the mother country more aliens than they in blood, in heart, and in intellect.

Australia has produced statesmen, heroes (in spirit, though opportunity fail them), architects, mechanics, and manufacturers; but as yet, except as executants, that