

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

In order to consider a circular that has been forwarded to local teachers of music by the Adelaide University, a representative meeting of the leaders of the musical profession was held at Messrs. Howells, Young, & Co.'s music-rooms on Monday afternoon. The circular read as follows:—

"The question of the working of the public examinations in music has engaged the attention of the Board of Musical Studies for some time past, and, with a view to ascertaining, and as far as possible meeting, the views of the musical profession on points relating thereto, the Board have decided to ask teachers of music to meet them in private conference and discuss the whole subject. The conference will be held at the University on Tuesday, July 3, at 7.30."

After considerable discussion, during which several grievances were ventilated and various reforms suggested, the meeting unanimously agreed to a certain scheme of improvements in the whole of the University system of musical examinations, which will be presented by their representatives for the consideration of the University authorities this evening. Great interest was manifested throughout the meeting, and a general desire was manifested to work in harmony with the University if possible.

"Reg" 3rd July, 1900.

HARMONY AND DISCORD.

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

A LARGE MEETING AND A WARM DISCUSSION.

In a room once devoted to the teaching of harmony there was on Tuesday evening considerable discord. The gathering came together in response to an invitation issued by the University authorities. There was a large attendance of the local music-teachers, who conferred with the Board of Musical Studies on the examination question. The chair was taken by Sir Samuel Way, the Chancellor of the University, and the proceedings were opened by the reading of the circular addressed to the local profession, the text of which appeared in "The Register" of Monday. Mr. C. R. Hodge, the Registrar of the University, then read apologies from the following teachers, who were unable to attend:—Messrs. von Reyher, W. R. Fybus, E. H. Wallace Parker, E. H. Davies, Mus. Bac., and J. M. Dunn, and Misses Ethel Lohmann, Sheridan, and Amy Barr, and St. Joseph's Convent, Port Adelaide. In response to the request of the Chairman, Mr. C. J. Stevens opened the case for the teachers, by reading the first of the resolutions agreed to by the members of the local profession, who met at Messrs. Howells, Young, & Co.'s music warehouse on Monday afternoon, which is as follows:—

"Both examiners in practice of music should be non-residents of South Australia, and should have exclusive charge of the examination." Mr. Stevens explained that this was the one principal reform desired by the profession, and that unless it were conceded it was scarcely worth while considering the other improvements desired. A long and warm discussion ensued, chiefly between the Chairman and Mr. Stevens, in which the procedure of the Associated Board and other examining bodies in the old country was mentioned, although no one appeared to be quite certain what the procedure of these institutions is in regard to the examination of their own and other professors' students. The Chairman proved a doughty champion for the University, and advanced many reasons why Professor Ives should still continue to examine Conservatorium students, as well as those of the outside teachers. A great many statements were brought forth to show that Professor Ives did not know his own students, and, indeed, had not the remotest interest in them, which drew an enquiry as to what his duties as Director of the Elder Conservatorium really were. Notwithstanding all arguments to the contrary, Mr. Stevens remained sceptical, and ventured the opinion that if the Director was not thoroughly acquainted with the names of every student of the Conservatorium, and also of their progress, he ought to be. Mr. E. E. Mitchell also spoke strongly in support of the teachers' cause, and Professor Bragg and Dr. Paton advanced arguments in support of the University, the former instancing the examiners appointed for the Senior and Junior Arts tests. It was, however, asserted that there was no analogy between a theoretical examination and a practical musical examination. Professor Ives, in replying, affirmed that he had never in any way been influenced by his acquaintance with candidates or the fact that they were Conservatorium students, and had always acted fairly and impartially, a statement that was not questioned. He considered that the present agitation was brought by a small clique of teachers, who were suffering from the rivalry of the Elder Conservatorium, a remark that brought forth warm expressions of dissent from those teachers who were taking a leading part in the proceedings. He expressed the opinion, however, that if the teachers would go along quietly and work in harmony with the Conservatorium matters would speedily right themselves, and instanced the increase in the primary examinations. Mr. Stevens said that he was convinced that with very few exceptions all the teachers of South Australia were of one opinion on this matter, and urged that a ballot of those present should be taken, which was not done. The opinion was at length elicited that if the examiner of the Associated Board "alone" tested the practical candidates it would be agreeable to the majority of the teachers. The remaining resolutions of the musical profession were then read by Mr. Stevens and Mr. Mitchell as follows:—

"2. The examiners in singing and violin should have a technical knowledge of their subjects. 3. In view of the limited time at the disposal of students who are being generally educated, especially those at schools, the teachers suggest that three studies and three pieces are an excessive requirement. They would recommend that in future two studies and two pieces selected from the Associated Board's lists should be sufficient for a first-class certificate, and that a honours section be established for those who satisfy the examiners in the whole contents of the book. 4. In reference to the theoretical examinations we suggest that a detailed and comprehensive syllabus be issued. That for the Senior Theoretical Examination candidates be requested to satisfy the examiners in harmony and counterpoint only, and that the present history questions be eliminated and made a separate paper, constituting an honours section. In support of this suggestion, we beg to point out that at present no history is required for the Mus. Bac. degree. 5. We should like to know the intention of the Council with regard to the locale of future practical examinations, and suggest that they be held on common ground. 6. While recognising that the present conference has been called to consider the examination question only, the teachers would again request that the pass certificate of the Junior Examination should be made the entrance test of the Conservatorium, so as to do away with the present primary instruction that is being given there."

Mr. Mitchell also mentioned that it was the wish of some of the teachers that the outside profession should be represented on the Board of Musical Studies.

His Honor the Chief Justice, in closing the meeting, promised that the University authorities would give the suggestions of the teachers full consideration, and expressed himself as pleased to have met them in this conference.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

A private conference between the board of musical studies of the University of Adelaide and the local music teachers was held at the University on Tuesday evening. Sir Samuel Way (Chancellor) presided over a large attendance. Mr. C. J. Stevens, on behalf of the local teachers, read the following resolutions, which had been passed by them at a meeting held the previous evening:—

1. Both examiners in practice of music should be non-residents of South Australia, and should have exclusive charge of the examination.
2. The examiners in singing and violin should have a technical knowledge of their subjects.
3. In view of the limited time at the disposal of students who are being generally educated, especially those at schools, the teachers suggest that three studies and three pieces are an excessive requirement. They would recommend that in future two studies and two pieces selected from the Associated Board's lists should be sufficient for a first-class certificate, and that an honours section be established for those who satisfy the examiners in the whole contents of the book.
4. In reference to the theoretical examinations, we suggest that a detailed and comprehensive syllabus be issued. That for the senior theoretical examination candidates be requested to satisfy the examiners in harmony and counterpoint only, and that the present history questions be eliminated and made a separate paper, constituting an honours section. In support of this suggestion, we beg to point out that at present no history is required for the Mus. Bac. degree.
5. We should like to know the intention of the Council with regard to the locale of future practical examinations, and suggest that they be held on common ground.
6. While recognising that the present conference has been called to consider the examination question only, the teachers would again request that the pass certificate of the Junior Examination should be made the entrance test of the Conservatorium, so as to do away with the present primary instruction that is being given there.

These resolutions were offered as suggestions to the board of musical studies, and Mr. Mitchell said he thought it was the opinion of the local teachers that they should have a representative on that board. The Chancellor promised to give the matter consideration.

"Reg" 5th July, 1900.

THE UNIVERSITY AND MUSIC.

"Better late than never." The University authorities have decided to confer with members of the local musical profession this evening regarding the vexed question of musical examinations. Ever since their inception the requirements and the general mode of conducting these tests have been adversely criticised, often with good reason; though in many respects a steady improvement has been made. The grounds of complaint were, however, greatly increased with the opening of the Elder Conservatorium in 1898, and many of the complications which have since arisen were foreshadowed in "The Register" when the scheme of a Conservatorium was first mooted. That was the proper time to have conferred with the local profession, if the University Council wished to secure their cordial co-operation; but this was not done. The result is a muddle, one of the serious aspects of which is a heavy loss in the annual income of the musical branch of the University. Now the authorities wish to extricate themselves by some means or other from their difficulties; but still some of the Council find it hard to realize that one institution cannot fairly do all the teaching as well as all the examination work of the colony; and while the Elder Conservatorium continues to take pupils in elementary stages it is only natural that local teachers will support a rival examining body. If the Council were to give the Conservatorium a true University status—the only way in which they can render real service to musical art—the examination difficulty would disappear. If, however, they are determined to have a mere school of music, at least two great improvements should be made in the University musical tests. Another examiner ought to take the place of Professor Ives, whose dual position—no matter how able he may be—is unfair to him and all else concerned, particularly to the outside teachers; and some musicians possessing reasonable claims as experts in violin playing and singing should act as co-examiners. Until these things shall be done the University certificates of competency in the departments mentioned will be discounted. At present, speaking generally, the granting of certificates and diplomas, apart from the University, bears too commercial an aspect; and one may question whether the real value of the awards issued by various institutions is always commensurate with the examination-fee. In one of these two guineas is charged for about twenty minutes of an examiner's time. This means an income of about £50 a day—surely a fine payment for even the most distinguished musician. The University certainly provides two examiners, and at a lower fee; but even here the charge might be reduced. An ideal musical examination should be conducted by a body of experts, who would grant certificates at a purely nominal fee covering the actual expenses. Then the present-day high percentage of passes might disappear in some directions, and with it the examination craze.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor.

Sir—In your report of last night's meeting I see the question was raised whether the professors of the R.A.M. and R.C.M. participate in the examination of their own and other students at the same time. I think I can say without fear of contradiction they do not; but, even if they do, would it weaken the contention of our local teachers? Two wrongs will never make a right, and we emphatically assert that Professor Ives, who is human like the rest of us, should not as a matter of principle assist in examining students of the Conservatorium and outside students as well. If, as was stated, the Professor does not know his own students, and is not interested in them, all one can say is that as Director of the Conservatorium he ought to. And as touching this principle for which we are contending, one last question—"Would our learned Chief Justice, who eloquently upheld the present usage, himself adjudicate in any case in which he had even the remotest official or personal interest?"

I am, Sir, &c.,
E. HAROLD DAVIES, Mus. Bac.
Adelaide, July 4.

"Advertiser" 6th July, 1900.

The following is a list of persons who died in the Destitute Asylum from January 1 to June 30, 1900, who had no relatives in the colony, as far as known. In each case the age and date of death is stated:—Charles Roughan, 70, January 1; Mary Ann Williams, 65, January 1; Josiah Thomas Smith, 77, January 2; Louis Schmidt, 78, January 2; Francis D. McCoy, 53, January 4; Humphrey Broadstock, 72, January 15; Carl Anderson, 71, January 27; Edward Moriarty, 77, February 10; John Elliott, 69, February 17; John Lynch, 64, March 28; David North, 61, April 7; Samuel Weeks, 80, April 20; George Barnwell Reed, 70, May 7; Thomas Birch, 61, May 29; Ludwig Chaffer, 93, June 8.