

### THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

The Elder Conservatorium of Music, a lasting memento of one of South Australia's benefactors, has been completed, and on Friday evening what is known as the opening concert took place. It was in April, 1898, that the University Council accepted the tender of Mr. W. C. Torode to build the Conservatorium, which is situated on a block of land to the east of the University, a space of about 60 ft. separating the two structures. There is no denying the fact that the new building is not as elaborate as that of the older building, but now that it is finished every one will admit that it is in keeping with what has for years been regarded as one of the ornaments in the architectural display on North-terrace. The building has a frontage of 60 ft., with a depth of about 170 ft. The rooms are 12 ft. high, and include six teaching apartments, ranging in size from 12 ft. x 10 ft. 6 in. to 20 ft. x 19 ft. 6 in. It is here that the Director's Office and the Professors' common room are provided. At the north end of the basement is a concert-room and large classroom—49 x 24, and 15 ft. high, and at the other end is a handsome room of similar dimensions. There is seating accommodation for 150 persons in the concert-room, and the lavatories are conveniently arranged. At the far end of the building space has been provided for the engine necessary to supply wind to the organ. There are hollow brick walls dividing the rooms and double doors, and by this means it is hoped to render them sound-proof. The space which separates the floor of the large concert hall and the ceiling of the basement has been treated in such a way that it will not only be fire-proof, but impervious to sound from above or below. Of course, the chief feature is the handsome concert hall, which occupies the whole of the main floor, the dimensions being 132 ft. x 50 ft., with a height of 60 ft. to the apex of the open timbered roof, the walls being 35 ft. high. Cathedral chairs supply the seating accommodation, and there is room for 1,020 persons to make themselves comfortable. The stage will be sufficient for 150 performers, and at the rear is an alcove, which provides space for a large organ. There is a dressing-room on each side of the stage, and the entrance is flanked by cloakrooms and lavatories. The lobby has an open timbered roof, and the floor is of encaustic tiles. The means of ingress are ample, for the concert hall has no fewer than three doors, but those on the sides are hardly likely to be used except in case of a panic. Internally the hall is ornamented with a panelled dado of Sydney cedar, and plenty of light is given through the windows at the sides. Special pains have been taken to make the acoustic properties perfect, and the architect confidently states that he has been successful on this very important point. Ventilation, so necessary on hot nights, has not been overlooked, and by opening sashes, which slide upwards in the wall, the audience will catch almost all the pure air obtainable; but to better this the ceiling has been fitted with tubes, through which the heated air escapes by means of a main pipe to the ornamental fleche in the centre of the roof. Freestone from Stirling has been used for the main walls, while the dressings, quoins, and turrets are principally in Mount Gambier freestone. Mr. F. J. Nash has been the architect, Mr. W. C. Torode the builder, and Mr. W. J. Martin clerk of works, and under these gentlemen not a single accident has happened. To Messrs. F. W. Gray & Co. was entrusted the task of lighting the place, and the installation of the Welshbach incandescent gas-burners as supplied by them is a decided success. The spacious, lofty hall is beautifully illuminated with a soft white light, free from shadows of any kind. There are no centre chandeliers to throw unnecessary light on the faces of the performers, dazzle the eyes of the audience, or spoil the splendid acoustic properties. There are twelve metal T pendants, with ornamenting scrolls, fitted with eight incandescent Maryport gas-burners and Albert globes. Each pendant has a separate tap, so that any number may be turned off if not required. There is a separate gas supply and pilot service carried down the stems, and connected with fine tubes to each burner, so that the whole ninety-six burners can be turned up or down instantly from the platform with the ease and certainty of electricity. The platform is lighted by four ornamental iron brackets, with pilot burners and coloured globes. The pendants are hung from the hammer-beams, about 9 ft. from the walls, thus evenly distributing the light throughout. The total number of burners in the hall is equal to 7,000 candlepower, subdued considerably by the opal globes. The consumption of gas, including pilots, does not exceed 400 cubic feet per hour, and at 5s. 11d. per thousand would be less than 2s. 4d. per hour. All

the other rooms, halls, and passages are supplied with pendants, two incandescent burners, and opal shades, or iron bracket with incandescent burner and opal globe, with pilot attachments, the whole building being thoroughly and economically lighted. The main entrance is to be lighted by two octagon Bray lamps on ornamental iron columns, each lamp to have a cluster of four burners, with pilot attachment.

#### THE OPENING CONCERT.

The Elder Conservatorium was crowded by a representative and fashionable audience on Friday evening, when the opening concert was given with signally successful results. A well-selected programme of classical music was presented by the principal leaders of the Conservatorium, and their efforts were in every instance received with great warmth, encores being the order of the evening. It is gratifying to find that there are so many lovers of good music in Adelaide, for it is estimated that over 1,000 persons were present, and it would seem from last night's experience that the order of things was entirely changed since Miss Adela Verne, Mlle. Trebell, and Herr Friedenthal appeared to empty benches. Yet this all happened within the last two years. Cynically disposed persons may unkindly point to the fact that the Conservatorium concert was free, but this could scarcely carry any weight in "musical Adelaide." No doubt, the principal interest in the opening concert was centred in the new hall and its acoustic properties. For its purpose it has been splendidly designed, and is commodious, comfortable, and well lighted. The acoustic properties, both in vocal and instrumental music, appeared to be excellent, and not a note of the softest passages was lost. In addition there is an entire absence of that echo which is so distressing in some large concert halls. So far as this portion of the Conservatorium is concerned there is little doubt that a complete success has been attained, on which Professor Ives and the others associated with him in the general scheme of the institution may be cordially congratulated. When the new three-manual organ which is now being constructed is placed in its special position at the end of the hall the Conservatorium will possess the most complete accessories for concerts of all descriptions to be found in Adelaide.

The programme was opened with a somewhat novel arrangement of the National Anthem by Mr. Frederic Bevan, in which some solo portions in the third verse were effectively treated by Miss Guli Hack, A.R.C.M., and repeated by a full chorus. Miss Maude Puddy presided at the piano efficiently. Mr. Bryceson Treharne, A.R.C.M., the new pianoforte master of the institution, repeated the success which he achieved at his opening recital, in his two selections. The first of these, a Brahms's "Rhapsodie," played on the former occasion, was given with splendid technical power and finish, and the performer appeared to be in thorough sympathy with the work. Though, perhaps, a little too demonstrative to suit the tastes of some, there can be little doubt that in all other respects Mr. Treharne's performance was a very fine one, and he richly deserved the enthusiastic recall that followed it. His next contribution, the same writer's effective "Scherzo," Op. 4, was likewise played con amore, and invested with great brilliancy and artistic finish. Miss Guli Hack was in excellent voice, and her first selection, Handel's recit. "Ne triomfa d' Alessandro," and aria "Lusinghe piu core," proved thoroughly enjoyable. Her technique left little to be desired, the florid passages were executed with fluency and ease, and an excellent trill was manifested. The soprano also gave a good performance of Florence Aylward's declamatory writing, "A song of praise," which was loudly applauded. Mr. G. Reimann and Mr. H. Kugelberg were associated in Chopin's "Polonaise brillante," for piano and cello, which abounds in striking and effective passages for both instruments, and did full justice to the many poetic beauties of the work. Mr. Kugelberg also gave a scholarly and clever interpretation of three Bach numbers—"Prelude," "Sarabanda," and "Giga," which must have given keen pleasure to the musical cognoscenti present. Mr. H. Heinicke, the violinist of the institution, who is heard too rarely in public nowadays, scored the chief success of the evening by his playing of Meyerbeer's familiar "Coronation march," from "Le Prophete." This is cleverly arranged for violin without pianoforte accompaniment, and might almost be regarded as a study in chord-playing. Its many difficulties were overcome with remarkable ease and certainty, and Mr. Heinicke's rendering of the melodious trio and its accompaniment was distinctly happy. After several times bowing his acknowledgments the violinist finally returned to the platform and repeated the last portion of the march. Mr. Frederick Bevan was heard in a satisfactory performance of the recit. "I rage, I melt, I burn," and aria "O, ruddier than the cherry," from Handel's "Acis

and Galatea," in which his command of vocal technique was manifested, and also sang with equally good results "Maid of Athens" (Gounod). The programme came to a successful conclusion with Mendelssohn's trio in D minor, played by Messrs. Reimann (piano), Heinicke (violin), and Kugelberg (cello), who did full justice to Mendelssohn's graceful and melodious music. Mr. Treharne accompanied the vocal items with sympathy and brilliancy, and by his performance afforded a valuable lesson to the too-numerous accompanists who appear to think that the principal virtue in accompanying is not to be heard.

The Conservatorium will be thrown open for public inspection from 3 until 5.30 on Thursday, May 3.

#### CONSERVATORIUM CONCERT.

Though the formal opening of the Elder Conservatorium of Music will not take place for a few weeks yet, the first concert was given at the Elder Hall on Friday evening in the presence of a crowded and fashionable audience. The new concert hall is a magnificent structure, which has scarcely an equal of its class in Australia. It has a seating capacity for over 1,000 persons, a spacious stage, and, what is most desired for a place of entertainment, the acoustics are well nigh perfect. The pupils of the Conservatorium were ranged upon the platform, and under the conductorship of Mr. Bevan lustily sang the National Anthem, Miss Guli Hack taking the solo parts. The remainder of the programme was carried out by the professional staff of the Conservatorium, and from an artistic point of view the concert was a splendid success. Herren Reimann and Kugelberg contributed Chopin's "Polonaise brillante," for piano and cello. The instruments blended well, and the interpretation of the Polish master's fascinating music evidently found favor with the audience. Later on Herr Kugelberg executed Bach's "Prelude, sarabanda, and giga," to the accompaniment of Mr. T. H. Jones. Though Mr. Bryceson Treharne had given a pianoforte recital at one of the Conservatorium rooms before, it was only in the presence of a small audience, and he did not really make his public appearance till Friday evening. The reception accorded the young and clever professor was most flattering, and he fully justified his reputation. Mr. Treharne's performance was a genuinely artistic one. His first number was Brahms's "Rhapsodie," and though somewhat extravagant in his gestures Mr. Treharne's interpretation of the music was exquisite, his technique, expressive manipulation, and facility of execution eliciting the warmest admiration. Mr. Treharne had to submit to an imperative recall. In his second solo, "Scherzo," Op. 4, Mr. Treharne again had ample opportunity of displaying to the full his powers as a clever executant, and his rendering of the work was conscientious and clever. Herr Heinicke made his re-appearance on the platform after a lengthy absence, and he received an undeniably warm welcome. He played Meyerbeer's "Coronation march," from "Le Prophete," as a violin solo, and the pure, rich tone of the instrument, as well as the exhibition of double stopping which he gave, gained for him an enthusiastic encore, to which he was obliged to respond with a partial repetition of the writing. Herr Heinicke was also associated with Herren Reimann (piano), and Kugelberg (cello) in a trio in D minor, op. 49—Andante con moto; Scherzo, Leggiero 6 vivace; and finale, Allegro assai appassionato. This was unquestionably one of the gems of the evening, the balance of tone being beautifully managed, while in the pianissimo passages of this lovely work the effects were well accentuated. Miss Guli Hack and Mr. F. Bevan were the soloists of the evening. The former gave Handel's recitative "Ne triomfa d' Alessandro," followed by the aria "Lusinghe piu core." Miss Hack, however, was fully equal to the demands made upon her, and she scored a triumphal success. Miss Hack also gave a sympathetic interpretation of Florence Aylward's fine song "A world of praise." Mr. Bevan's two numbers were the recitative and aria "I rage, I melt, I burn," and aria "O ruddier than the cherry," from Handel (Acis and Galatea), and "Maid of Athens" (Gounod), and to both his "tonso cantanto" voice (as described by Dr. Stainer) was well suited.

Critic 3rd May 1900.

How the Adelaide people should thank the Almighty every day of their lives for creating Sir Thomas Elder, and giving him such a great big generous heart, with all his wealth. He is a pattern for many S.A. millionaires to follow. I could give a list of wealthy men here who ought to do more public good with their money, but I won't, it might hurt their feelings.

But entering that beautiful, beautiful ornament to North Terrace, the Elder Conservatorium, and seeing for the first time the magnificent concert-hall with its gleaming white walls, and beautifully carved dome roof of dark wood, brilliantly illuminated by incandescent burners, one could not help thinking that there ought to be a huge monument of Sir Thomas Elder right where people can see it. By the way, that is one of the disgraces of the new Art Gallery, never so much as a photo. of Sir Thomas on the walls.

The opening of the new Conservatorium took place on Friday evening, April 27th. The function took the form of a concert in the big concert-hall. It is said to hold twelve hundred, and I guess they were all there. I hoped that the large crowd showed that, at last this community was becoming classically educated, but a mere man suggested the attraction was a "free show."

A country dance, and an Adelaide concert, are equal in offering the most curious and Arkish creations in dress. As usual, on Friday night the feminine part of the audience was half hat and half second-best evening frock, or tasty little run-em-up muslin blouses, bought cheap at the summer sales, and worn with a stuff skirt. One lady who, I was told, was an M.P.'s wife, actually wore a brown cloth walking dress. Well, I'm sure the drapers won't support her husband at the next elections; she's no good for trade.