

TRADITION IN MUSIC

Right Training of Musicians

VIEWS OF MR. W. H. FOOTE

(By "Nuance.")

The training of young players and the inculcation of genuine orchestral traditions are the objects of Mr. W. H. Foote, A.R.C.M. (conductor of the South Australian Orchestra). The concert to be given by this musical combination on May 15 will virtually open the seventh year of its activities.

In an interview today Mr. Foote said that he had been connected with the orchestra ever since his arrival in Adelaide five years ago, although he did not immediately take over the conductorship.

By orchestral traditions Mr. Foote said that he meant those gained by experience in the work of classical repertoire, as it was generally known. He had spent the whole of his life in London under the finest conductors in the world, including the great Nikisch, Dr. Richter, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Henry Wood, Sir Landon Ronald, Bodansky, Debussy, Saint Saens, Stravinsky, Dr. Richard Strauss, Glazounoff, and many others.



Mr. W. H. Foote, A.R.C.M.
Conductor of the South Australian Orchestra.

As a natural result he had absorbed the traditions of those giants of the musical world, although he presumed to be only a medium to convey those traditions to others.

200 Students Graduate.

Mr. Foote said that he formed a student orchestra at the Conservatorium on his arrival in Adelaide, and to date some 200 students had passed through his hands, some had graduated from it into the South Australian Orchestra, and thence into other professional work. It might seem rapid progress, but the demand of a young country forced it. Once the student was competent, remunerative employment was quickly obtained. They had many orchestral players of experience and much promise.

The taking up of an orchestral instrument was probably the quickest way to monetary competency by the young musician. There were more than 60 experienced players discharged from the Tramways Band, who had been carefully trained in orchestral work.

To bring these resources into effective use financial aid was the great hope for the future. In this respect Mr. Arundel Orchard, of the New South Wales Conservatorium had shown the way. Having secured from the Government a grant of £3,000 a year, he had established 11 sub-professorships and over 50 scholarships, which ensured definite permanence in the personnel of the orchestra. By paying stated salaries he was able to choose his quality and secure day rehearsals three times a week. This was most essential for the best work, and ensured a permanent orchestral school.

Under the Verbrugghen regime the Government granted £40,000 in five years, which enabled the conductor to employ a large number of the best players and to give comprehensive series of orchestral concerts, but no endeavor was made to build up an orchestral school to teach and train students.

Great Possibilities.

The policy in South Australia, so far as funds would permit, embraced this important contributing factor.

"Possibilities in South Australia are as great as elsewhere," said Mr. Foote, emphatically. "Under such a scheme as that of Mr. Orchard success would be assured. We cannot be sure of keeping our players, for we can offer them only temporary engagements, as we are able to give only about six concerts in the season on account of expense.

"Naturally they pass out into theatre and picture orchestras, which can offer permanent engagements, so that our personnel is always in a state of flux."

"Has the present method been found successful?" Mr. Foote was asked.

"Yes, extraordinarily so, up to a certain limit," replied Mr. Foote, "when it is remembered that only the generosity of the patrons who form the executive of the orchestra has made it possible to present such concerts as we have given at such a reasonable tariff.

"We are not exempt from anything, and our expenses are heavy, but we have been able to give six concerts a year, of a quality and variety to which our printed syllabus amply testifies. With financial aid, such as Mr. Orchard has secured, the scope of our work could be extended enormously.

"I have been happy in my work," added Mr. Foote, "and I should be still more pleased if its scope could be much more widely extended. In this connection I would like to express my warm appreciation of the cordial help and support given to me by Prof. E. Harold Davies, to whose powers of initiative and selfless labors we owe the foundation of the orchestra."

REG. 8.5.26

INTO THE INTERIOR.

Important New Expedition.

Promise of Great Mineral Wealth.

A portion of the vast spaces of northern Australia, which is said to contain promise of enormous mineral wealth will be the goal of a scientific expedition, which will leave Adelaide this month. The party is being equipped by Mr. Donald Mackay, of Sydney, and Dr. Herbert Basedow will be the organizer and leader.

The expedition will leave Adelaide by the Oodnadatta train on May 20. The expedition is to take the form of a geographical and scientific investigation of an area extending northwards from the south-western corner of the Northern Territory towards the head of the Victoria River. This tract of country is comparatively unknown, although several eminent men like Ernest Giles, W. C. Goss, W. H. Tietkens, Maurice and W. R. Murray, have left available data in connection



DR. HERBERT BASEDOW.

with their journeys across certain portions of it. From those records, however, the opinion has been formed that this country holds enormous mineral wealth, and reports confirming that view have been received from natives in that locality who have from time to time brought in samples. Indeed several expeditions have actually visited the area in search of the promised El Dorado, but in most instances the members of the party came into conflict with the aboriginal tribes, and a number of men have been spared. In 1903 the South Australian Government equipped such an expedition with a view to exploiting the country. The party was in charge of Mr. L. A. Wells, and favourable indications were found of an auriferous belt extending into the Northern Territory, but owing to the lateness of the season the expedition was compelled to return to Adelaide. In the following year, acting on the advice of the leader, another expedition was dispatched to continue the work northwards, under the leadership of Mr. F. R. George, but trouble with the natives was encountered, and two mem-

bers of the party were spared, necessitating a hasty retreat to Alice Springs, where Mr. George died. Since then no systematic investigation of this area has taken place.

Scientific Possibilities.

The promise of scientific fruits within the area is amply substantiated by the reports of the expeditions equipped by the late Sir Thomas Elder, and the late Mr. W. A. Horn, in 1891 and 1896, respectively, and Mr. Donald Mackay is now emulating the good example of these pioneers of scientific exploration at his own expense. The organization and the leadership have been entrusted to Dr. Herbert Basedow, whose knowledge of the neighbouring tribes will be of especial value, and the party will consist of five Europeans, and four natives. Transport will be effected by a caravan of 25 camels, and no expense has been spared in the purchase of up-to-date scientific instruments. The principal fields of research will be geography, anthropology, and geology. The native tribes living in that area are practically unknown to science, although two of the nearer tribes are known as Wonga Piteha and Ngali. The tribes farther north and west of these have seen few white men, although accounts have frequently been received that their numbers are great. Zoological and botanical collections will also be made, and afterwards handed to specialists for determination. Studies will also be made in economic geology, and any likely areas will be prospected for gold and other valuable minerals. The party will make west from Charlotte Waters, and no settlement will be encountered during the journey until they reappear somewhere along the telegraph line in the Northern Territory.

The party will be absent for an indefinite period, but will keep in touch with civilization by means of wireless. Longitude will also be ascertained by the same means.

MAIL 15.5.26

MUSICAL MOMENTS

(By "Staccato")

Lady Stonehaven is deeply interested in the musical affairs of Adelaide. She has kindly recollections of the old College of Music, which formed the nucleus of the Conservatorium of Music, when Mr. Heinicke was chief violin master and Herr Vollmar swayed the bow of the viola. Her Excellency was herself a student of the viola, and did some enthusiastic work.

On Friday, May 7, the Conservatorium String Quartet, under the leadership of Mr. Charles Schilsky, played at Government House by command, Miss Maude Puddy acting as solo pianist. For this purpose the Steinway piano which formerly belonged to the late Professor Ennis, and was afterwards purchased by the Conservatorium, was taken to Government House for the special performance.

Students Overseas

Mr. Clive Carey has had a letter from Miss Helene Taylor on the subject of her studies, which she is pursuing under the direction of Mr. Clay. Madame Ada Crossley's coach. Miss Taylor is enthusiastic as to her teacher, who, judging by reports, expects great things from her later. Miss Taylor has secured some engagements for recording, through the kindly offices of Mr. Gus Cawthorne, the honorary secretary of the Helene Taylor Fund. Mr. Cliff Lathlean, the young Adelaide basso-cantata, is also studying under Mr. Clay, and finds himself making rapid progress and fulfilling many engagements.

Speaking of Miss Taylor's wish to take a stage name, Mr. Carey explains that there are already two artists in London with the same name, which might in time lead to confusion.

Speaking of scholars generally, and of his discovery of Miss Eileen Joyce in Western Australia in particular, Mr. Charles Schilsky is never tired of emphasizing the fact that it is worse than useless to send young students to London with barely enough money to last them through their student days. "It is a waiting game," he says, "no matter how good they are they must wait their chance." Meantime, waiting means proper food and lodging, and the means to dress well, for clothes often make the man and the woman, when it comes to a professional engagement. To give a student a fair chance only means a little further effort on the part of those who send them, and makes all the difference between success and disillusionment and disappointments.

Halos Wanted

"The Australian Musical News," replying to Dr. Harold Davies' wish that another Thomas Elder would arise and give a trifling £25,000 to music in Adelaide, says:—"No hope, Dr. Davies! Benefactors of that sort are 'off' in our Australia. They went out of fashion with broughams, belltopper hats, side whiskers, hospitality, and politeness. A hundred pounds to a musical purpose in our days generally has to mean £150 worth of well-polished hair for its

PRICKLY PEAR.

Scientific Eradication.

The prickly pear in Queensland and the upper portion of New South Wales has ruined hundreds of square miles of rich land, and the scourge is still spreading. Many methods of extermination have been tried ineffectively and all are watching with interest the results of the scientific investigations and the observations now being made by Mr. H. Kingsley Lewcock, of Adelaide, who as Commonwealth



MR. H. KINGSLEY LEWCOCK.

Travelling Research Mycologist, was sent to the Western Hemisphere to study parasites of the optunia tribe. A cable message yesterday reported the results of his observations and intimated that a new parasite had been found destructive to prickly pear. Thus it might be possible for disease to supersede the insect.

Prickly Pear in South Australia.

The prickly pear has long been a serious menace in the warm soils of Queensland, and it has been spread over very many thousands of acres. The extraordinary feature of the plant is its longevity and the fact that prickly leaves broken off maintain vitality for a long period under what are ordinarily uncongenial conditions—surviving for months even if tossed upon the wire of a fence. Allowed to get out of hand the prickly pear might easily become "a ravaging pest" if there were fertile soils blessed with continuous good seasons in the north of this State. In the south it spreads no dread. For at least 40 years—probably 60—prickly pear hedges have been grown on the Adelaide plains and in the Yankalilla and Strathalbyn districts; but the growth has not spread into the fields. Certainly the plant has proved a nuisance to many, but not a menace. However, even here where the prickly pear is allowed to establish itself beside streams, eradication becomes difficult, even although the risk from rapid spread is small. Kept in check many prickly pear fences could be seen in the Strathalbyn district during the last 25 years, but they have gradually disappeared and been replaced with modern fences. The lopping of trunks and leaves of the pear was an arduous task; and removal, when the plants had spread inconveniently, necessitated much more work. An easy and cheap method of killing the prickly pear would probably be appreciated in the settled districts of South Australia; for once it has gained a footing, it is a fighter. When a boy the writer assisted in the destruction of a hedge at Yankalilla, 12 ft. high and 15 ft. wide. The "cuttings"—nearly all water and spines—were buried in a gravel pit and covered with earth, well tramped. That was the end of them. Patrons of the S.A. Coursing Club have frequently noticed hedges in the Strathalbyn district that in a period of 40 years have not advanced into the fields unless there has been serious neglect; and where this has happened the advance has been only over a distance of a few yards. The task of removing prickly pear by hand or machinery is dirty and dangerous, even if killed by spray. To summarize:—In Queensland the spread of the prickly pear has been phenomenal; but in South Australia at present there is no menace at all—only need for vigilance.

NEWS. 19.5.26

Professor A. T. Ewart, of the Melbourne University, has been appointed by the University of Birmingham to attend the Adelaide University Jubilee celebrations in August as its delegate. Professor Ewart was formerly deputy professor of botany at Birmingham University.