

University Examinations

PIANOFORTE RECITAL AT THE CONSERVATORIUM.

In reply to an article on "Teaching of English" by "Contributor" which appeared in "The Mail" last week, "Observer" (Adelaide) writes:-

It is astounding that anyone who claims an interest in educational matters should be so hopelessly blind to the good work that is being done by our university examiners in refusing to grant a certificate in English to candidates possessing but a slovenly and inadequate knowledge of the subject.

If students are not sufficiently interested in the work set out in the syllabus, to be able to write intelligent examination papers, it is a very grave reflection upon those who are responsible for their training, and the strongest argument in favor of raising the standard for those persons desirous of possessing university diplomas. How many Australians have felt, and are still feeling, the effect of a slovenly training in English when they have come into contact with a wider culture than at present exists in this country?

Lack of knowledge in other subjects may be successfully camouflaged, but not to possess the hallmark of a standard English training is to have been deprived of our just birthright. So much of the richness and beauty of our language and literature, which we only acquire in later years by hard reading and attending evening lectures, might have been enjoyed from our youth if those who instructed us had been better equipped for their work.

It will be nothing short of a national calamity should English be ruled out as a compulsory subject in the public examinations. There are many teachers who realise that, properly handled, the present English course may be made a very attractive one to the student.

It is greatly to be desired that those who have proved themselves worthy to sit in high places will endeavor to raise the status of English teaching in our schools and universities until it befits an English-speaking people.

The fifth of the concerts arranged by the Elder Conservatorium of Music for the season was held last night, when Mr. John Horner, the staff organist, gave his first pianoforte recital. There was a large audience, and the soloist was warmly received. The programme was largely classical, the modern works being reserved for the last of the five groups. Mr. Horner proved himself to be a scholarly musician, albeit without the fire which his virile organ playing suggested. His renderings were thoroughly artistic, and full of beauty, with a touch of the reverse of heavy-handed. At the conclusion of the programme he was recalled to submit an entonations of its age. The first period was, roughly, the century and a half between the death of Chaucer and the rise of the "Kreutzer Sonata" for piano and the violin (Beethoven). In four movements, the andante sostenuto and the presto were given without intermission, the reflective opening giving place to the warmth of the presto. The whole of the movements were played with restraint and understanding co-operation between the instrumentalists. The andante con variazionia gave opportunities to the violinist for melodious entries, and they were taken with satisfying effect. The finale was given at a lively tempo, and provided a fitting climax to the famous work.

Mrs. Horner opened the programme with a suite from "Partita No. 4 in D Major" (Bach). It was composed of allurante, aria, sarabande, minuet and gigue. No passionate playing was demanded, and the variety was provided in changing moods and tempi. The aria was daintily tuneful and or limpid clarity, the minuet was comely in its stateliness, and the gigue fresh and sparkling. The audience had warmed to greater responsiveness by the time the Chopin group was played. Each of the five numbers—Prelude in E-flat Minor, Berceuse, Trois Ecossaises, and Etude in C Minor—was short, and happy treatment was given by Mr. Horner. The moods passed from scintillation, through flowing volumes of sound, to the tender and crooning of the cradle song. Then came the sparkling Scottish three, and the brilliant closing number. The group was probably the most popular of the evening. Schumann was represented by novelette in E Major, "Abend musik" (evening music), and "Aufschwung" (soaring). Good contrasts of tone color were obtained from the instrumental style. The modern group was closed with the Brahms Rhapsodie in E-flat and its well-defined rhythm brought the concert to an end on a vigorous note. "Reigen," opus 36 (Max Regen) was tuneful and rhythmic, and the Folk Song in terzetto by Palmgren was sonorous. Capriccio No. 1 (Frank Bridge) was marked on that account. Mr. Horner showed himself to be a thorough musician of whom the Conservatorium staff have every reason to be proud.

ral Government, two by the Chancellor of the University, with the Federal Director-General of Public Health as chairman. This would place the control of the school in the hands of the Federal Government, but the committee was unanimous that it would be satisfactory.

life than for the reaction of a not very distinguished mind to trivial matters. Luckily, there were still a few poets in England to-day besides the modernists.

REG. 13. 6. 27

VICTORIANISM AND MODERNISM.

Lecture by Sir Archibald Strong.

In the Prince of Wales Theatre at the University on Tuesday evening, Professor Sir Archibald Strong gave an interesting lecture on "Victorianism and Modernism in English Poetry." There were two remarkable periods in the history of English poetry," he said. In one inspiration was almost entirely driven underground, in the other it was above ground, but working in fetters imposed by the formal conventions of its age. The first period was, roughly, the century and a half between the death of Chaucer and the rise of the death of Chaucer and the rise of the "Kreutzer Sonata" for piano and the violin (Beethoven). In four movements, the andante sostenuto and the presto were given without intermission, the reflective opening giving place to the warmth of the presto. The whole of the movements were played with restraint and understanding co-operation between the instrumentalists. The andante con variazionia gave opportunities to the violinist for melodious entries, and they were taken with satisfying effect. The finale was given at a lively tempo, and provided a fitting climax to the famous work.

ADV. 21. 6. 28

ENGLISH POETRY.

VICTORIANS AND MODERNISTS.

LECTURE BY SIR ARCHIBALD STRONG.

The Victorian and modernist poets were compared by Sir Archibald Strong, at the University on Tuesday night, in the first of a series of three extension lectures on English poetry.

The lecturer said it seemed to him that by far the greatest amount of interesting work in England to-day was being done in the form of the novel and not of drama or poetry. There was perhaps nothing of the first order being produced, but there was a great deal of brilliant and interesting work being put in the novel form. That was a good thing. The predominance of the novel and the appeal which it exercised were caused perhaps because a great deal of the poetry to-day was hardly worth reading. They were not living in that decade of the last century, when it was possible for any lover of poetry to look forward to a volume once a year by a great poet. There was a dearth of poetry to-day, but although they had no poet living in England to-day of the first order, they had a number who were worth reading. He wanted to deal with some who seemed to him not to be on the right track. Thomas Hardy was one of the greatest of the Victorians. He was not only Victorian owing to the time of his living and production, but he was Victorian in many ways in spirit and in respect of his poetic form. He seemed to be more closely in touch with their age to-day than perhaps any other of the great Victorians. There had been two remarkable periods in the history of English poetry, which seem to have a bearing on English poetry to-day. The first was the century and a half between the death of Chaucer and the rise of Spenser. The second was the 18th century. During those times there was an absence of any great poets and inspiration.

Sir Archibald said the Victorian period had manifold weaknesses. There were frigidities, sentimentalism, and a good deal of smugness, and the wrong kind of contentment with the existing order. However, there were several outstanding features. One was ethical fervor. In Browning it linked itself with Christianity, and resulted in ardent and almost inhuman optimism. In Tennyson it found its expression in aspiration, but was none the less intense and passionate. The aspiration of Tennyson was that of the evolutionist. In Meredith they had again the evolutionist, and one who was definitely hostile to orthodox belief; yet in him that fervor was dominant. In Swinburne's paganism they had the fervor which encompassed liberty. Despite their differences those men were all fired with intense spiritual earnestness. That seemed necessary for poetic greatness. Another feature was their preoccupation with religion and politics. Closely allied with all those qualities was the emotional fault in mid-Victorian poetry. With respect to thought and spirit these qualities were amongst the mightiest and most distinctive of the Victorian period. He wanted to contrast the mid-Victorian ideals with the extreme tenets of modern thought, which indicated spiritual weakness and uncertainty. No great poetry could be the outcome of those things. The range of mid-Victorian poetic form was as wide as its poetic idea and emotion. On the extreme left they had the formal conservatives, chief of whom were Rossetti, Matthew Arnold, and Tennyson. They were the inventors of splendid new rhythms, but their inventions implied extension and variation of the original form, and not defiance of it. On the other hand they had Swinburne, Browning, and Meredith. The modernists stated that they were not concerned with the thought of dying for the freedom of a small nation. Yet William Watson, who was still living, but who was Victorian in all essentials of form, had written some of his best lyrics in that direction. He was also responsible for excellent work in literary criticism in lyric form. He was a great virtuoso, and a prodigal creator of new forms. He could also achieve splendid terseness. Let them compare with some of the work of Watson, the Yodelling song of Gertrude Stein, a modernist, with its babyish rhymes and absence of thought and imagery. It read like something less than that of a kindergarten moron. The work of Miss Edith Sitwell and her two brothers was also far from being true poetry. It lacked imagination, and was disjointed. The same applied to the acknowledged leader of the modernists, T. S. Eliot. They seemed to be concerned not with the creation of poetry, but with its disintegration. Their works were understood only by themselves and their own coterie of adherents. They claimed that like Keats and Shelley they were

DISCOVERY OF FOSSILS

British Scientists Interested

NEW EPOCH IN GEOLOGY

(SPECIAL TO "THE NEWS")

LONDON, June 8.

Dr. G. Elliot Smith (Professor of Anatomy at University College London) was most excited when he heard of the discoveries of pre-Cambrian fossils by Sir Edgeworth David in the Adelaide Hills.

"It is safe to prophesy that this will open a new epoch in geology," declared Dr. Smith. "We have long been aware that Cambrian fossils were not the earliest, but we lacked concrete proof. What Sir Edgeworth has found will open up amazing vistas in research, dating back to the birth of life, beyond the wildest conjectures of geologists."

Becoming more enthusiastic, Dr. Smith informed Dr. J. P. Hill (Professor of Physiology at the University of London), who was equally excited.

"I am most impressed at the reported exquisite colorings of the fossils found by Sir Edgeworth David," he declared.

Dr. Smith suggested that this was a secondary characteristic analogous to opalescence.

"I do not agree with Sir Edgeworth David that scientists will rush to Australia immediately," he said. "It is most probable that members of the British Association, who will meet in Africa this year, will go to Australia."

Referring to his election as a Fellow of the New South Wales Royal Society, Dr. Smith said that he was surprised and gratified. It was the first honor that an Australian scientific body had conferred on him.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

PROPOSED SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION.

RECOMMENDATION TO GOVERNMENT.

Canberra, June 11.

The report of the Federal Public Works Committee, which was tabled in the House of Representatives to-day, recommends the erection of a school of public health in the grounds of the Sydney University, at an estimated cost of £30,000. The cost of maintenance is estimated to be £9,000 yearly. It had been erroneously assumed, states the report, that the school was purely one for medical research. Actually it was to be a teaching school, at which little research would be carried out. As the school had to be associated with a university, Sydney was considered to be most appropriate, as it was the senior medical school in Australia, and had for many years given much attention to developing its public health course of instruction. Sydney, as a seaport for the island and Oriental trade, and having a large population, presented more general problems in preventive medicine. Control would be vested in an advisory council of five, two nominated by the Fed-

erated Government, two by the Chancellor of the University, with the Federal Director-General of Public Health as chairman. This would place the control of the school in the hands of the Federal Government, but the committee was unanimous that it would be satisfactory.