

## PROMISING YOUNG VIOLINIST

### Winner Of Alderman Scholarship

Edward John Peter Mathews, the 14-year-old winner of the Alderman scholarship, is titling him to these years free tuition at the



Elder Conservatorium, has just completed his second year at the Adelaide High School, and has for 18 months been the leader of Mr. Thomas Griggs's students' orchestra.

Peter began his musical studies at the age of 10 with Madame Ada Westover, and passed his grade V. (violin) examination

at the University with honors after 12 months tuition. The examiner's comment at the time was—"Decidedly musical talent; very promising." Eighteen months later he started with Mr. Thomas Grigg, who entered him for the intermediate examination nine months later. He passed this examination at the age of 12. He continued to study theory under Madame Westover, and is now doing harmony, having passed in intermediate theory.

Peter Mathews.

# Musical GENIUS And Its TRAINING

By E. HAROLD DAVIES

THERE is little doubt that young Australia is already showing very definite musical tendencies.

Even in our own community, recent examples of gifts, amounting almost to genius, have arrested public attention, and point to the existence of a latent artistry that may presently win for this country a real place in the world of music.

Phillip Hargrave, the 10-years-old genius of the piano, has already astonished a large audience; and Joy Warden, the talented pianist of nine, and Marie Sleigh, who, at 12, has won the Elder Scholarship with her violin playing—to mention but two of many promising children—may soon spring into equal prominence.

### What Of Their Future?

THE first impulse of a hearer in the presence of such precocity is boldly to predict a future of certain fame. But this is to neglect consideration of many other vital factors that belong partly to the general make-up of the child, and partly to its wise and comprehensive training.

What are these factors, and how do they count in the final issue?



Phillip Hargrave

## GIRL OF 12 ELDER SCHOLAR

Played From Memory Pieces Heard As Baby

### BRILLIANT CHILD



Miss Marie Sleigh

An amazing story of co-ordination of brain, ear, and hand lies behind the success of Marie Sleigh, a 12-year-old violinist who has been awarded the Elder Scholarship. Competitors must be not less than 12 and not more than 21 years of age, and Marie was easily the youngest candidate.

No orthodox method was adopted by Marie at the beginning of her studies. As a baby she lay in her cot in her mother's study in Sydney—her mother has been her sole musical teacher—and absorbed all the sounds in various studios in the same building. Eager to handle the instrument which had had such an appeal to her, Marie soon climbed over her cot and asked for her "great music." When her whim was gratified by her parents, she forthwith faultlessly played several of the pieces which she had heard in the adjoining studios.

When other music teachers in the neighborhood heard this infant virtuoso, they were impressed with the

In the first place, we should discriminate between two orders of musical genius—the creative and the executive. The former is of very rare occurrence. Great performers far outnumber great composers. Nor is the number great composers displayed in pure creative gift often displayed in tender years, although the infant Mozart thought and wrote music as soon as his tiny fingers could play the notes. Surely, such a miraculous power almost defies rational explanation! And because natural composers are so rare, there is no need to dwell here on their training. Indeed, they will seldom submit to the ordinary prescriptions of education.

### Artist's True End

THE performer genius—the artist—however, is in another category. For him there are many saving truths to be grasped; and, by very reason of his easy manipulative skill, he is the more likely to forget other essentials. A brilliant violin or piano technique is only of service, as it is used to reveal real musicianship. In a word, the power to penetrate, to apprehend, and actually to recreate the composer's thought, is the artist's true end. Mere digital dexterity belongs to the machine-man.

And what we call "musicianship"—an all-embracing term—demands many kinds of training, for which the most enlightened teaching is needed. Foremost among these comes the constant development of the ear combined with rhythmic exercises of progressive complexity. In its earlier stages ear-training involves the recognition of simple pitch-relations, proceeding by degrees to the grasp of chords and familiar harmony progressions. The rigorous practice, too, of musical dictation is a logical complement calculated to ensure that most real attainment of the musician—the ability mentally to hear all that his eye sees. Without this he is no musician.

### Many Developments

THEN must come the finest appreciation of tone-values, and all those innumerable shades of quality that give color and meaning to any performance of music. Indeed, every phase of aural perception and sensitivity is equally demanded.

And, concurrently with these successes, will go the development of eye and brain in ceaseless sight-reading and transposition, reading from figured basses, as well as playing from vocal and orchestral scores.

Here, also, may be mentioned the study of harmony and rhythmic structure (shape), since these are essential to a grasp of form, without which no playing can be really intelligent.

Nor are the gifted student's tasks yet complete. There is still an imperative need for the practice of harmonisation and modulation at the keyboard. Many capable players have not the least idea of a natural chord-basis for the simplest and most familiar of melodies—such as "God Save the King." Nor are they able to pass easily from one key to another in any musical way. This is by no means a complete list of the true artist's needs, but enough has been said to show that what we call musicianship is something very real, and to be taken into serious account over and above merely technical facility.

### General Intelligence

AND it almost goes without saying that all these developments will ultimately depend on the power and quality of the brain itself—not merely to understand their importance, but also to rule and direct their attainment.

I have known many students of remarkable violinistic or pianistic ability who have utterly failed to make good, just for lack of what may be called the orderly mind. One has been dazzled by their initial promise and desolated by their ignominious failure for the want of mental stability and grip.

More than this, a finely developed and all-round intelligence is the surest guarantee of artistic eminence. Too often has the musician been branded by men of education as an intellectual inferior. At least it is certain that a wide culture can but increase the artist's power of interpretation. For him performance is the focal point of expression; and the more of knowledge and of human experience he can compress into that focal point the richer and more appealing will be his work as an exponent.

### The Will To Achieve

AND over and above the natural endowment, the acquired musicianship, the general education and mental development of a child of musical promise, we must look for and foster a real force of character, a sustained will to achieve in the face of all obstacles, however formidable.

*The greater the gift, the greater the demand for that moral presidency without which it must surely fail of full realisation.*

One is often asked to forecast the future for these young prodigies, but it is quite impossible to say what will happen to them. The talent is obvious. Even the evidence of inherent musical feeling may be discovered. But who is to tell how the mind or the character will shape? And all these factors, not to mention a robust physique and favorable opportunities, are of the greatest consequence.

*Is it any wonder, then, that few reach the zenith of fame when so many virtues are demanded, and when, at best, the journey is so long and difficult?*

patient brilliance that her playing suggested, and proposed that she should be given a stage career. The footlights, however, did not know Marie, for her mother was afraid that her health might be ruined.

### One Obsession

Instead of the glamor of the stage, Marie had to be content with playing the violin in a little rocking chair. Dolls knew no place in her life; her one obsession was her violin. When she was six, her family moved from Sydney, her birthplace, to Adelaide, and she entered Woodlands Girls' School at Glenelg. She also began seriously to study the art of the violin, using the Sevcik method.

The late Professor Brailsford Robertson was keenly interested in the child's work, and when he asked Mr. W. H. Foote to hear her play, the conductor of the South Australian Orchestra at once pronounced Marie a genius and forecast that she would make another Kreisler.

At the age of nine Marie played a whole programme from memory in a violin recital at the Stirling Institute, and last year she astounded the music-loving public of Adelaide when she gave a concert in the Adelaide Town Hall, and included in her programme the intricate Seventh and Ninth Concertos of de Berlioz. This programme also was rendered entirely from memory.

### Likened To Bradman

Comparing her instinctive flair for the violin with Don Bradman's natural ability to combine brain with bat, the Professor of Music at the Adelaide University (Dr. E. Harold Davies) prophesied a great future for Marie.

"Her great ability amounts almost to genius," he said. "If she and little Joy Worden, who won the Grade IV exhibition for pianoforte in the September examination of the Australian Music Examinations Board, develop, under further training, those higher qualities of pure musicianship which are an essential complement to a natural technique, there is no limit to their possibilities."

Her power lay in her ability to form judgment without reflection, he said. Her muscles were more highly susceptible and balanced, and the whole organisation between brain and finger more instinctive than in the case of the ordinary musician.