

Register March 31/85

MUSIC AND THE UNIVERSITY,

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—What I venture to consider the wisdom of the University in including the matriculation examination in the course for the degree of music has excited great opposition and much adverse comment. In your impression of to-day you publish a letter signed "Musical," the author of which uses arguments that have lately been constantly urged, but which I believe have not as yet been publicly combated. It is with this object in view that I crave a small space in your columns. Your correspondent first attacks the University for following in the footsteps of kindred institutions in England, "where," he asserts, "a more general degree of culture prevails." Even if this is a fact, he surely cannot expect the Council to alter in this particular instance the policy which they have hitherto resolutely adhered to, and adopt a standard lower, rather than higher, than that set by the English Universities. The general truth contained in his next statement I am prepared to admit, viz, that "genius often runs in special grooves," yet I fail to perceive how on this account he can fairly attribute blame to the authorities for framing their regulations on the assumption that the majority of the candidates for the degree will be of those who possess not an extraordinary, but a moderate talent for music. Can "Musical" dispute the truth of their assumption? I presume that men of genius are as rare in South Australia as in other parts of the world, but whether this be so or not, a genius will be well able to dispense with writing Mus. Bac. after his name, and there is nothing to prevent his attending lectures, and so acquiring that technical knowledge of his art which is as necessary for him to possess as it is for his less talented rivals. Your correspondent then proceeds to draw a vivid picture of the over-burdened musical student and man of genius grovelling in the depths of useless and distasteful science in order that he may appease his despotic examiners by displaying a knowledge of mathematics forsooth! from which I am led to infer that "Musical" himself can have but a limited acquaintance with the theory of music, or he would surely recognise the direct bearing which mathematics has upon all the branches of musical science, notably upon those treating of counterpoint and acoustics. Had he instanced Latin or Greek instead of adducing the singularly unfortunate example of mathematics he would have raised the vexed question. How far does a general education benefit the musician? Personally I hold that it is not only advantageous but even necessary for a musician to possess a general knowledge of matters outside his profession, and I attribute the reason why he holds so low a position in the social scale to the popular misapprehension of this necessity. The world emphatically demands a certain standard of general education from the clergyman, doctor, and lawyer, and even Bank clerk, which it waives and indeed does not even look for in the humble musician. Surely a musician of all

men should possess refinement, and is not education the surest means whereby that subtle quality is to be acquired? Lovers of music will do well to recognise that one of the readiest methods by which they can advance the cause of their art is by endeavouring to raise the stamp of the rank and file of the profession. And they will be adopting this hint if at the present juncture they rally round the University and support her in maintaining the regulations which have been so freely abused. Before concluding may I take the liberty of correcting a misstatement in your leader of Wednesday last treating of the above subject? It is the previous examination and not the matriculation, as you asserted, which Cambridge requires musical students to pass. The previous examination, commonly called the Little Go, is about equal I imagine to the Adelaide matriculation. Apologizing for writing at this length,—I am, Sir, &c.,

CANTAB.

Register April 1st 1885

PROFESSOR IVES'S LECTURES.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Referring to the letter of "Student" and your sub-leader of to-day, I am glad that attention has been called to the want of courtesy shown by the Registrar of the University to persons making enquiries with reference to these lectures. In confirmation of "Student's" statement, I know of two ladies (whose names I will furnish to you or the Registrar if desired) who were greeted with the same demand as that which she mentions, uttered with the emphasis of which she justly complains; and I may add that the rest of the interview was characterized by that want of courtesy and kindly consideration on the part of the Registrar which his opening remark would lead one to expect. The want of attention to the comfort of students as displayed on Monday last is calculated to deter persons from joining the classes, and indicates an indifference on the part of the officials whose duty it is to attend to such matters which does not redound to their credit.

I am, Sir, &c.,

EUSTACE B. GRUNDY.

96, King William-street, March 31.

MUSICAL DEGREES.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Under the above heading I have noticed several letters in your paper, all, or at least the majority of them, written by persons who are of opinion that the matriculation examination should be dispensed with in the case of students intending to proceed to degrees in music. On looking through the printed regulations issued by the University, I notice that "candidates for musical degrees will be required previously to entering upon the course to pass the matriculation examination." We thus have a certain standard which must be attained by persons who wish to graduate in music, viz., they will have to pass the matriculation and three subsequent examinations. If the matriculation examination be dispensed with this standard is lowered, and this being done, the degrees in music granted by the Adelaide University will not be recognised outside the colony, as the letters patent granted to that corporation imply. There is another point to which I would direct attention. The Senate, according to the Act of Incorporation, is to consist of all doctors and masters and all other graduates of three years' standing. If the matriculation examination were dispensed with we should probably have in a few years' time the musical faculty represented in that learned body by persons unable to pass the entrance examination, or who have not given up their time to read up for it. And here let me remind your readers that the Musical Chair is to continue in existence for five years yet, and that there is no limit to the age of candidates for the matriculation examination, and also that persons who have not the time to spare for reading for the examination are not debarred from attending lectures, and pro-

bably, as is the case with students attending the other lectures, they will be able to obtain certificates showing their proficiency in musical studies which may rank higher outside the University than a good many of the degrees conferred by that body. In conclusion, let me recommend all who desire to graduate in music to read through the regulations for the matriculation examination, and they will find, I think, that there is nothing very formidable about it. I would also ask them to remember that the Adelaide University is following the example set by the British Universities. Apologizing for trespassing on your valuable space,

I am, Sir, &c.,

Z.

Norwood, March 31.