

Smart have proved the existence of those germs in the English mind, and have further proved that only the judicious recognition and encouragement of native talent are needed to enable the musicians of the old country to regain the position held by their predecessors in the past.

And here we may remark that there is too great a tendency on the part of musical critics at home to fall down and worship anything which comes from afar—which is foreign—and to ignore the merits of works produced by musicians born and educated in their own land. Too often the critic's claim to have an opinion, and to be heard in the expression of it, consists in the fact that he is himself one who has broken down in the attempt to undergo the training of a musician. Unable, either from want of ability or of perseverance, to come before the world himself as a musical genius, what is more natural than for him to deny his fellows the credit of possessing those talents which he himself has not; or, if their abilities be too obvious to admit of denial, what is easier than to attribute the existence of those abilities to foreign influences? Such a writer will not agree with Sir George Macfarren as to the worth of the music produced by Englishmen in the past. The music of the Reformation will be attributed to French or Italian influence—that of the Restoration to French and German. Humphreys will be pronounced a Frenchman just as surely as Sterndale Bennett was a German, while Purcell will rank as another Frenchman, although in the same sentence he may by such a writer be described as having "struck great tap-roots into the English writings of the Elizabethan period." "Music in England is, and always will be, an exotic, and whenever the exotic seed has escaped and grown wild on English soil the result has not been a stable and continuous growth." Such are the statements of writers whose words are unfortunately more plausible than correct, whose mental purblindness allows only one portion of the historical picture to be

seen, and whose descriptions and opinions are in consequence only received by the well-informed at their right value. Sir

George Macfarren tells us that he has been personally acquainted with many of the musicians whose names he quotes, and to have known and worked with such men as Atwood, Crotch, Bishop, Balfe, Wallace, and others, now, alas! no more, must indeed have been to him a source of supreme delight and perchance of profit. But although these men have passed away, others have taken their places, and the achievements of Barnby, Barnett, Mackenzie, Stanford, Sullivan, Goring Thomas, and last, but by no means least, of Sir George Macfarren himself, have proved that the musical faculty is as of yore indigenous in the English people, and that the future of the English school, if indeed there can be schools in an art whose language is so universal, may be safely trusted to those who are now carrying on the work of musical education in England.

Australian musicians are not forgotten in Sir George Macfarren's letter. They are told that although the colonies have yielded great men in various walks of life, and have even produced men who have displayed much executive musical ability, yet our Australian continent has so far "not sent composers into the world

to prove their tuneful consanguinity with their European kindred." Professor Ives is advised that perhaps the reason of this may be not for want of talent, but for want of proper schooling. and this leads to a very important part of Sir George's communication. Some time ago a proposal was made to institute a Chair of Music in the University of Melbourne by means of the princely sum which the Hon. Francis Ormond generously offered to provide for the purpose of advancing general musical culture among the colonists of Victoria. Some difficulty arose, however, owing to an opinion being entertained by many gentlemen interested in the question that a School of Music founded on the models of the European Conservatoires would best serve the objects of those who wished to see a speedy development of colonial musical talent. Professor Ives, of the Adelaide University, whose capacity to speak with authority on the subject is undoubted, having been appealed to, declared in favour of a Conservatoire, and in an important article on the subject expressed the opinion that one University Professorship of Music was sufficient for the present requirements of the Australian Colonies. Sir George Macfarren has endorsed all that the Professor has said on the subject, and further points out the advantages which would arise from there being an Academy of Music in the one colony, with a University School in another, the one providing tuition in the practical subjects of a musical education—pianoforte playing, organ playing, singing, &c.—while the other pays chief attention to the wide range of theoretical subjects. We trust Professor Ives's advice to the Victorian musicians will, now that it has received the acquiescence of the highest British authority, be acted upon, and that musicians will be united in their endeavours to do what is best in the interests of musical culture. Let no question of rivalry arise between the several colonies. That we have the good fortune to possess an University Professor of Music should

not be taken as the sole reason for founding another in a sister colony. If there existed an absolute need for one let it by all means be instituted should munificent patriots be found to provide the necessary pecuniary foundation. But we think the need hardly does exist at present, and with the opinion of Sir George Macfarren and Professor Ives declared in favour of this view we trust our Melbourne friends will not think us narrow-minded or selfish in expressing a hope that a Conservatoire may take the place of the proposed Chair of Music, and that Sir George Macfarren's experience may serve as a guide to our own musicians in their earnest efforts on behalf of the cause of musical education in these colonies.

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