

The Advertiser

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ABOUT six years ago a School of Music was started at the University. It was generally felt at that time that the establishment of a Chair of Music was a little premature, but as the funds necessary for its maintenance for five years were generously provided by public-spirited colonists there could be no harm in trying the experiment. Fortunately the gentlemen selected as Professor of Music, besides having special musical knowledge, possessed administrative abilities of no mean order, and so judiciously did he direct the operations of the school that when the five years expired for which the professorship had been endowed the school needed no further monetary assistance—it was self-supporting. It may, therefore, be assumed that the School of Music is now a permanent feature of our University system. Professor Ives was not slow to perceive that in order to meet the requirements of the times a professor of music must not confine his efforts to lecturing and examining students within the University, but must make his influence felt in guiding and directing musical thought and work throughout the colony. To this end he formulated and the University Council adopted a scheme of local examinations in the theory and practice of music. These examinations have given a great stimulus to musical education, and advantage has been taken of them to a large extent by music students who were not able to attend the lectures at the University or who were studying such subjects as were not included in the University curriculum. The success of this portion of Professor Ives's work has been most marked.

But how have those students who entered upon the course of study for degrees in music fared while this consideration for outside students has been shown? During the past six years there has been each year over twenty students preparing for the degree, but of these only one has succeeded in gaining the degree of Bachelor of Music. Why is this? Is it that the music students are not possessed of the same intelligence as their fellow students in the schools of law, arts, science, and medicine, several of whom have received degrees in their respective faculties during the same period? Or is it that degrees in music are more difficult to obtain than degrees in other subjects? We learn that the chief stumbling-block to candidates for degrees in music is the exercise or composition which they are required to write to the satisfaction of English examiners. This calls for a talent for original composition—a talent which is not possessed by many musicians, nor can it be imparted by the teacher, however earnest he be, unless the seeds of knowledge he sows find congenial ground for their growth. Does this requirement find any parallel in the regulations for degrees in other subjects? Would there be so many graduates in arts, law, and medicine, if each candidate were asked to write an original treatise on the subject of his studies? We fear not. There is no call to advocate the wholesale granting of degrees. We wish to make the most of our University system as a means of encouraging students in their search for knowledge. So far the students in the music course have not had much encouragement, and it is possible that they

may lose heart, abandon their studies, and leave the professor's classrooms untenanted.

The council of the University of Melbourne, under the advice of the new professor of music, has just made known its scheme of operations for the music school. Besides providing for a course of study for degrees in music it has decided to make a new departure by granting the diploma of Associate in Music. The requirements for this diploma include a knowledge of harmony, counterpoint, fugue, &c., as for the degree of Mus. Bac., except that the standard is not quite so high, but no "exercise" is necessary. In place of this candidates are allowed to offer themselves for examination in some practical subject, as playing upon some orchestral instrument, and this appears to be a sensible substitute. Surely it does not follow that because a musician studies the theory of music he must of necessity become a composer, any more than that the acquirement of a knowledge of English grammar fits the holder for writing books. The subject of music is a many-sided one, and while all students may be expected to become acquainted with its theoretical side the practical side should not be neglected, and if one student have a talent or playing upon some instrument and another one for singing, by all means let us encourage the development of such talent. The diploma of Associate in Music might be granted by our University. Probably it would not only foster natural talent, but would also serve as a stepping-stone from the present scheme of senior public examinations in music to the degree course, and would on this account be warmly welcomed by those students who, having taken senior certificates at the local examinations, look in vain for a spur to further effort. It must be pointed out that there is a wide difference between the work done by the holder of a senior certificate and what is required of a student who has studied two or three years for the Mus. Bac. degree. The senior certificate does not represent even the first year's study for the Mus. Bac. degree, so that the diploma of Associate is the least thing that should be granted to students who have completed their third year's term.

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Messrs. H. C. Evans and A. T. Chandler, the proprietors of *Quiz*, are the defendants in an action for criminal libel which has been initiated by Professor Ives, of the Adelaide University, in consequence of comments contained in a paragraph in that paper. The summons has been issued, and the case will come on for hearing before Mr. T. K. Pater, P.M., at the City Police Court on Wednesday next. Mr. E. W. O'Halloran is solicitor for the plaintiff, and he has retained Mr. J. H. Symon, Q.C., as counsel. The action has been delayed in consequence of the absence of Mr. Chandler in Sydney.