

CANBERRA.

"A SYMPHONY IN COPPER ORES."

TREE-PLANTING EVERYWHERE.

No. IV.

By J. S. MacDONALD.

In Canberra you cannot buy land. You can bid for it at auction, and if successful secure a maximum lease of 99 years, paying the Government rental at the rate of 3 per cent. on the unimproved capital value of the land, as fixed by the ultimate of the augmenting bids. Nothing could be surer in determining the worth of a place, but it is also provided that re-appraisal shall take place first after twenty years, and thereafter every ten.

It is something like a Calcutta sweep, where, if the horse you draw is good enough to hold, you will either buy him in or get a good price for him from someone who wants him more than you do. If you want to keep your land in Canberra you are willing to pay for it. What it does and can do for you makes it worth while for you to improve it, even though that will send its value up. If you don't like it and haven't done much for it, when you relinquish it it won't bring you much. Its value reaction will always be commensurate to your actions.

It is a good scheme. If Melbourne had been built upon a land leasehold system, the land rents by now would have obviated all necessity for a State income tax. At Canberra over 900 square miles of country have been acquired at a per acre price, and the rents receivable from city, residential and rural blocks will, in a few years, covers interest on the whole purchase cost. As Australia grows so will her capital, and in the near future Canberra will be a profit-making concern for the Commonwealth.

This occurred to me on the way to Mt. Stromlo, where a view was to be seen, a panoramic view calculated to impress the poorest imagination, my mentor said, so I had a chance. To get there we swing out west along the Uriarra-road, passing on our left the Prime Minister's house, which is not yet sufficiently advanced to pass an opinion on. It looks roomy and comfortable, and has a fine situation.

Then we pass the brickworks, on the edge of the city district, where they make the superbrick, and a mile further on splash through the Yarrolumla Creek, quick and shallow, but likely to rise high with the least warning.

A Young Engineer from Adelaide.

Up to this we have been running through park-like land. Now we come to where a big range makes the horizon for everything in sight. In between us and it are foothills and isolated peaks, and Stromlo is one of the latter. Though it only stands 600 feet above the road, here it is on a plateau 1,808 feet above sea level, so that its real height is 2,508 ft.

Up a well-graded road the car goes easily to the top. Almost on the top are being built the houses for the Solar Physics Observatory. Right on top is an old-fashioned observatory, apparently abandoned, or about to be superseded. A keen young engineer from Adelaide got the hang of the scientific side of the matter instantly, but the writer was interested in the magnificence of the scene.

The weather was such that kaleidoscopes were the order of the day. A brisk breeze, like a "scabbing" scene-shifter, pushed on and off the scene at great speed after a sale of huge woolpack clouds. Wherever he got the opening the sun darted through between him and the clouds, the landscape was beautiful beyond belief. A symphony in copper ores would best describe it, with azurite, malachite, and peacock ore predominating. Millions and millions of tons of it piled up along the hills, never still, shadows of blue and lights of bronze changing shape and place continuously.

Down the slopes of Stromlo and beyond stretched planted pine forests, part of the big programme of afforestation. It will be needed, for there is not a great deal of timber to be seen in that part of the territory close to the capital. A number of species are being grown, and they are sure to be a source of great all-round profit.

Tree-planting changed the face of Scotland and vastly improved it. It became a mania, it was so profitable. One old Laird, Grant of Monymusk, planted 50 millions, mostly spruce; Lord Findlater, planted 11 millions; Lord Moray, 12 millions of beeches, oaks and elms; the Duke of Athol, 27 million larches. Every small landholder planted and cared for thousands of trees, many of which had formerly been declared too delicate to thrive in Scotland. This was early in the 18th century. Three generations later Scott was able to write "land of brown heath and boggy wood" of a country formerly referred to sneeringly as barrenness itself.

"Thoughts that Ripple Through the Brain."

It is safe to say that to some extent the sudden vision and flooding of

creeks here is due to the absence of trees, and so must be the drenchy oozy earth one meets with away from the well made Canberra gutters and drains. Why fail to plant trees, when by planting them the rains that water-log the earth and cause bothersome and disastrous floods can be used so profitably to nourish the very trees that rob the waters of their destructiveness?

The Commission evidently intend that in this respect there will be no failure. Constantly one is informed in going about—"more plantations!" and there they are vigorous and verdant and beneficent, making life safer and living easier and cheaper. The director of forestry for the territory is making experiments with a great variety of trees and shrubs for practical and ornamental purposes, and from them much benefit may be expected.

Everywhere example in the control and exploitation of nature is being created, from the results of which will emerge guidance for parts outside the limits of the Federal territory. The earth there already yields good road-making material, bricks, tiles, and other clay articles. The planted forests will starve the floods to feed themselves and give the projected dams less work to do. The dams will provide ornamental waters well held in hand and adorning the city in the handsomest way.

These thoughts ripple through the brain as one looks out across miles of rolling pastures to the city in the making. One is also made still more aware of the necessity of putting Nature in her place, by the presence on Stromlo itself of a service reservoir of three million gallons capacity, and which is filled by water pumped from a pumping station three and a half miles away on the banks of the Murrumbidgee. This station in turn is fed from the Cotter River reservoir, from which an 18-in. pipe carries water for about three-quarters of a mile, and then dives under the Murrumbidgee to get pumped on to Stromlo reservoir.

This is interesting, and our expectancy rises as we begin to make the descent preparatory to getting on to the Cotter River road, which leads us first over the 'Bidgee bridge, then to the junction of the two rivers, and finally to the dam, which supplies the capital of Australia with water.

MAIL. 7.8.26

Mr. F. H. Humphris was awarded the Agas Engineering Scholarship at the last meeting of the Council of the University of Adelaide. Mr. Humphris, who has been in New South Wales for the past two years, graduated as a Bachelor of Engineering at the University of Adelaide in 1924. The scholarship which he has been awarded was founded by the late Hon. J. H. Angus in 1888, with a view to encouraging the training of scientific men, especially engineers. It is of the value of £200 a year for two years, with an additional allowance of £100 for travelling expenses. Mr. Humphris is a son of Mr. R. K. Humphris, stationmaster at Two Wells.

MAIL 7.8.26.

Former Governors

Two of South Australia's former Governors—Lord Tennyson and Lord Kintore—celebrate their birthdays next week. They are the same age—seventy-four, the laureate's son being just a day older than his predecessor at Government House. Lord Tennyson's natal anniversary is next Wednesday and the Earl of Kintore's occurs the following day.

MAIL 7.8.26

Lord Tennyson

Hallam, second Lord Tennyson, was Governor of South Australia from 1909 to July, 1902. He came to Adelaide, as Governor, ten years after Lord Kintore arrived. Lord Tennyson was Governor when Australian Federation was inaugurated. The first Governor-General, Lord Hope-toun (created Marquis of Linlithgow) did not remain in office so long as he had intended, and when he left Australia, Lord Tennyson, the senior of the State Governors, was appointed Acting Governor-General from July, 1902. In the following January he became Governor-General, and continued in office until January 21, 1904.

The reign of the Tennysons in both State and Commonwealth proved popular. Lord Tennyson took every opportunity to encourage art. Among his treasures are pictures by G. F. Watts, Herkower, Hunt, Doyle, and Lear. Acting upon Lord Tennyson's advice, the governors of the National Gallery at Adelaide, purchased G. F. Watts' painting, "Love and Death," which adorns the Gallery on North terrace. Watts was a personal friend of the Tennysons, and in 1902 he presented to South Australia his magnificent portrait of the poet laureate, a highly-prized addition to the national art collection.

Governor Tennyson was also a patron of high-class music. His public addresses were models of literary excellence. His

style and character were revealed in his cultured and carefully studied speeches which he delivered in an attractive, sonorous, penetrating voice.

On a number of occasions he preferred to go quietly to institutions and public functions, say a few words, and be done with it rather than that any fuss or show should be made or much speaking should be expected from him. At the Commercial Travellers' banquet one night Lord Tennyson said that he almost felt like Daniel in the lions' den—"no after-dinner speaking for me"—but he spoke all the same, and his speech represented more than a column in the newspapers. He was, and no doubt still is, a remarkably happy phrasemaker and knew how to feel the pulse of his audience.

ALSO ADV. REG 9.8.26.

S.A. ORCHESTRA.

A Tschaikowsky Night.

A Brilliant Performance.

The splendid service rendered to the musical life of Adelaide by the establishment of the South Australian Orchestra cannot be over-estimated. The founder (Professor E. Harold Davies, Mus. Doc.) and his successor—the present conductor (Mr. W. H. Foote, A.R.C.M.)—have been jointly responsible for a perceptible quickening in artistic matters of this nature. Madame Pavlova, speaking of this country, upon her recent visit, said:—"Australia can never be a truly great nation unless her art keeps pace with her industrial life." No one can dispute this farseeing observation, and must therefore agree that such an institution as the State Orchestra is an important step in that branch of Empire building. On Saturday night the crowded nature of the Adelaide Town Hall testified to the public interest manifested in this series of entertainments by a local combination of professional and amateur musicians. The stormy condition of the weather in no wise deterred music-lovers, and the organ galleries had to be requisitioned.

This fourth concert of the 1926 season was devoted to a programme composed entirely of work by Tschaikowsky. The popularity of Russian music with present-day audiences is indicated by the success achieved by the Russian ballet in Australia, and a similar triumph now being attained by Chaliapin. The decision of Mr. Foote, therefore, to devote an orchestral night to interpretations of the great Tschaikowsky was a happy one. Not only were the three works performed of an extremely enjoyable description, but they likewise served to indicate the progress made by that earnest company of instrumentalists. Interest focussed itself upon an additional instrument included in the well-equipped series occupying the enlarged platform. This was a dulcitone, lent by Cawthorne's, and capably played by Miss Bessie Francis. Its harp-like cadences were particularly impressive in the Nut-Cracker suite.

An Immortal Theme.

One of the triumphs of the evening was acclaimed in the famous "Concerto in B flat minor," for piano and orchestra. Mr. George Pearce played the piano part with a distinction and technical ease that fully warranted the ovation that followed. As a pianist, Mr. Pearce has frequently distinguished himself upon our concert platforms, but Saturday night's achievement stands out as one of the finest things yet done by this sincere musician. In composing this immortal theme, Tschaikowsky apparently took little account of the colossal difficulties with which he was strewing the path of the executants. Both in the orchestral and pianoforte sections very great demands are made upon the virtuosity of all concerned. If there were occasional slight indications of "raggedness" in the treatment of some of the passages, criticism must be silenced by the worthy ambition that prompted a determination to present this work—bristling with orchestral pitfalls—when there was only opportunity for a few rehearsals. Taken all through, it was a magnificent accomplishment, and Mr. Foote's masterly and yet sympathetic conducting, was typically convincing. Mr. Pearce's clear, firm touch, effortless rendition of the difficult solo portion, and delicacy of treatment shown in the ornate passages—all tended to reveal an enviable facility. To memorize so involved a series of motifs was in itself a feat. Throughout this very fully scored and harmonized work, the principal theme pursued its melodious way through the various movements to a brilliant finale ("Allegro con fuoco"), in which the entire strength of the orchestra was restrainedly revealed.

The famous "Fourth symphony in F minor" (opus 36) was played with insight. Thus one realized its essentially Russian atmosphere, with swift transitions from joyousness to sorrowful repinings. All this was eloquently depicted in the four movements full of vibrating life. The symphony, dedicated to Madame Von Meck

was a remarkable effort upon the part of Tschaikowsky to strive to express in musical notation the meaning of life and its attendant moods. In the martial opening to the andante sostenuto, the theme was gradually unfolded with an expressive appeal that stamped the work of the orchestra as one of a fine order. Light and shade were splendidly maintained, leading to a tempestuous fortissimo. Charming influences were infused into the succeeding Andantino, with its kaleidoscopic pictures so clearly visualized by strings, wood wind, and brasses. In the third movement—the Scherzo—a sense of unrest crept into the music, heightened by repetitious pizzicato of the strings. But, again, a change to happier thoughts occurred with the fourth movement, Allegro con fuoco, in which a revel of the populace concluded the theme, in the composer's own appealing text—"Rejoice in the joy of others, and you will live."

Further Enjoyment.

The delightful and melodious "Nut-cracker" suite afforded further enjoyment. The eight numbers, selected out of 16 that comprise the Fairy ballet, are gems of composition, and indicate Tschaikowsky in the maturity of his genius. The story has been built upon a Christmas romance that should delight the hearts of "children" of all ages. The interpretative sections played were—"Miniature overture," with its exacting part for the strings; "March characteristic," full of brilliancy; "The dance of the Sugar-plum Fairy," a dainty fragment; "Russian dance, Trepak," possessing a virility that called forth the whole strength of the players (and then had to be repeated); "Arabian dance," a contrast to the preceding item, with its slumberous Eastern atmosphere; "Chinese dance," in which strings and woodwind presented a mellow-toned theme; "Reed pipe dance," an unusual arrangement, full of beating rhythms; and the final "Grand waltz," with its irresistible lilt of the dance set to a haunting refrain.

Prolonged applause rewarded each of the three sections of a memorable evening. Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A., as leader, acquitted herself with a capability and brilliancy that have given her a foremost position in this important connection. Mr. Frank Bowden had charge of the general arrangements. As the Town Hall is not available for the first Saturday in September, the next concert will be given there on Wednesday, September 8.

Dr. E. Harold Davies writes:—"I should like, through the columns of The Register, to thank every one of the large audience which assembled at the Town Hall on Saturday night to hear the concert of the S.A. Orchestra. To face such a storm as we experienced just at the hour when most people were getting out, showed an enthusiasm that we intensely appreciate; and, speaking for the executive, as well as for Mr. Foote and the performers (including George Pearce), I want to say how deeply grateful we all are for the encouragement of such a splendid attendance. Every proof of a growing love for the orchestra helps us on our way; and I am quite sure that all who heard this last programme of Russian works will agree with me that we have, here in Adelaide, a body of players—as well as a conductor—capable of almost any artistic achievement."

REG. 9.8.26

VALUE OF ACADEMISTS.

Professor Naylor's Defence.

A thoughtful address on national characteristics and problems was given by Professor Darnley Naylor at the Commercial Travellers and Warehousemen's Association dinner on Saturday night. He defended the academist, from the assertion that his value was small in a community, and showed that his influence on practical life was important.

Professor Naylor, in submitting "Australia," said it was the greatest toast of the evening. He was an "alien," but he had had the happiness of spending his working life in Australia. Any one coming from the old country could find only friendliness and help and every possibility of advancement in this great democracy. (Applause.) He wanted to express to the Premier the things that he and his colleagues at the University really felt they owed to him for his work in education. There was one advantage to him personally in leaving the Adelaide University. He would be able to sing its praises. They had one of the greatest staffs there of any university south of the "line." He believed that the man who could make one blade of grass into two was a great patriot; but they had in the Waite Institute a place where they would make one blade into three soon. (Applause.) Australia was a vast country, and a great deal of it was level and even; but it had a tone like that of a great organ—a tone that would resound through the ages. There were, too, harmonies of great beauty, some of which