

want of water. The Todd and Hall rivers disappear in that direction. O'Neill saw nothing but low sandhills covered with dead spinifex, and described it as the most desolate area he has ever entered up there. There are trees and bushes in the watercourses even in the Lake Eyre basin, but in that area there are none. Unlike the deserts of Upper Egypt, we saw no places where you could not get enough wood within a few miles to boil a billy. Such areas apparently exist in some of the Queensland grasslands, however. We were told by one old battler that he found himself without wood on one occasion, so he started a grass fire. The grass was thin and dry, and burnt quickly, so he had to run with the billy to keep it over the fire. He ran for nearly three miles before the water was boiling, and when it did boil he was darned if he hadn't left the blanky tea behind. We heard some good ones up there, but we are old travellers in many climes ourselves.

**A Reserve for Aborigines.**

The only natives we saw were those employed on the stations, and those who have congregated round Alice Springs, attracted by the issue of rations, but we heard from several men recently returned, including one of the officials, that there were plenty of blacks out west in the region of Mount Olga and Lake Amadeus and the aboriginal reserve, fine healthy people, breeding rapidly. We saw none as far as 120 miles west. The general opinion up there, to which we heartily subscribed, was that the reserve was the only thing for the natives, and that an issue of rations and clothing was simply their undoing, as they at once give up their natural life and hunting, and stay around the settlements, and are soon reduced to the wretched specimens seen about the Alice. The ration is nominally only for the aged and infirm, but the whole family comes in and attempts to live on one ration. Once they have any contact with the white man they are lost. The half-castes are mostly brought up by their black mothers in "the Bungalow" at Alice Springs, and go to school for an hour and a half a day, where they eventually learn to read and write, under the kind care of Mrs. Standley, but owing to their upbringing they are more black than white in their instincts, and it is wrong to take them, and even more so, the full bloods, away from their natural environment in Central Australia. The girls will go to any length to get back to the "Bungalow" from Adelaide, and there is one easy way that many of them take. These children are as happy as they can be at the "Bungalow," laughing and playing all day without a care in the world. They love it as their home, and they know no better. There is no doubt that the half-castes, apart from the ethical standpoint, are a great asset to the country. It would be almost impossible to get along without them. The women do all the domestic work, the climate is natural to them, and they never want to leave. The men do a big share of the stock and station work.

**A Great Task.**

In 1886 Mr. (now Dr.) Charles Chewings wrote an excellent account of a large portion of Central Australia, under the title, "The Sources of the Finke River." It was published, with a map by the author, by W. K. Thomas & Co., reprinted from The Adelaide Observer. It contains a fine tribute to Stuart, and an eloquent appeal on behalf of Central Australia, and was the result of 14 months' continuous travelling. From the mention of stations then existing the melancholy conclusion must be drawn that the country has not advanced during the 40 intervening years. Let us hope that Dr. Chewings, who has stuck out those 40 years in the country he championed, and has only recently retired to the city, the man whom the writer would place as the foremost authority on Central Australia, will live to see his dreams of great future development come true.

While civilization and the mode of living are as we know them, any idea of a large population in Central Australia is as fantastic as Stefansson's propaganda on the "Friendly Arctic," and the closer settlement of the arctic regions. Science has gradually extended the confines of the useful and habitable portions of the earth, and in time no doubt even the recognised deserts of the globe will be occupied, under conditions we cannot now foretell, evolved under the urge of the will to live. We need not wait for those distant times before utilizing Central Australia to its fullest for our present gain, and more important still, studying its problems and advancing the researches into the questions of the adaptation to this unfriendly region of present methods of utilizing land, or on the other hand, of finding new uses for country so forbidding to the agriculturist of normal regions.

To study Australian flora, particularly in relation to economic questions, Dr. A. W. Hill, C.M.G., F.R.S., Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London, has begun a tour of the continent. He has just made a comprehensive inspection of the south-west of Western Australia, and is due to reach Adelaide next week.



**DR. HILL,**  
Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, who arrived in Perth yesterday.

He will disembark at Terowie to-day, and proceed with Professor Osborn, of the Adelaide University, to the Koonamore experimental reserve. At the University commemoration on Wednesday, Dr. Hill will have conferred upon him the degree of D.Sc., ad eundem gradum. The arrival of Dr. Hill marks the first official visit to Australia of a director of the Kew Gardens. He came at the invitation of the Empire Marketing Board, and, in an interview, said he would be particularly interested in noting as much of the Australian flora and timber development as time would permit. He expects to attend the meeting of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science in Hobart, and, when he has concluded his seven weeks' tour of the Australian States, he will proceed to New Zealand. He will return to Augland via Java and Ceylon. He has been invited to make a short stay in both islands.

**THE PARLIAMENT.**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

The President (Sir Lancelot Stirling) took the Chair at 2 p.m.

**Dental Hospital Conditions.**

Replying to questions by the Hon. T. Guyas arising out of allegations against the conduct and methods at the Dental School and Hospital, which were made at the recent dinner of the Dental Association, the Chief Secretary (Hon. H. Tassie) said the statements made in connection with the question were contrary to fact. The superintendent possessed all the necessary technical and clinical qualifications required for his office, and had the capacity to enforce discipline. It was not a fact that patients were treated there who could afford outside attention, for the financial circumstances of every patient were carefully investigated. Dental mechanics employed there did no such work other than for the hospital, and as to the question whether the Faculty of Dentistry had refused the offer of a scholarship from one of America's leading university dental schools, no such offer had ever been submitted to the Faculty. Replying to a further query, the Chief Secretary said that patients were examined by students under qualified supervision as a necessary part of their training, but the nature of the treatment was determined by a qualified official.

**CONSERVATORIUM STUDENTS.**

**A DISTINGUISHED PERFORMANCE.**

The first of two concluding performances for the year by the Elder Conservatorium opera class was given at the Norwood Town Hall on Thursday evening. The second performance of the same operas will be given this evening by another cast. These occasions are of peculiar interest, in view of the early departure from Adelaide of Mr. Clive Carey, the director of the class. They should leave behind them an abiding memory of a notable achievement that redounds very distinctly to Mr. Carey's credit. The programme consisted of Gluck's rapturous conception of the ever-loved Orpheus myth, and, by way of vivid contrast, the second act of Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro." In both the players acquitted themselves well. The incident in "Figaro" is sufficiently complete in itself to be regarded as a sub-plot, and makes an intriguing curtain-raiser to the more impressive work. The comedy element was well sustained, the students entering into the story with zest and enjoyment. Harold Tidemann's pleasing vocalism stood him in good stead as the faithless and suspicious Count, and Dorothy Back fulfilled the exacting musical demands of the part of the countess. Joy Watson, perhaps the most promising member in the cast, sustained the important part of Susanna with almost professional attention to both vocal and dramatic requirements. Fine blending of the principal voices was a feature of the several important trios in the scene. Small parts were well filled by Gerald Moyse (as Figaro, the count's valet); Beryl Counter (as Cherubino, the page); Charles Gordon (as Antonio, the gardener); Minetta Cleworth (as Marcellina); Ray Pierce (as Bartolo); H. R. Watson (as Basilio, the family priest).

Aesthetic ensembles, effective lighting, expressive ballets, excellent chorus, and convincing principals were prominent features that made for the unquestioned success of the Orpheus performance. The cast was headed by Edna Lawrence, in the name part, who was ably supported by Hilda Barnes, as Eurydice, and Isabel Burton, as Love. The tableaux and slow moving chorus so characteristic of Greek tragedy were especially effective. The mourners, lamenting over the tomb of Eurydice, provided scope for classic costuming and richly harmonious grouping. In the underworld scene the mad dance of furies was a brilliant piece of staging, reflecting distinction upon Phyllis Leitch, who arranged this and all the ballets. The Elysian fields reached by the magic of Orpheus's harp and voice revealed, by vivid contrast, a place of peace, where dwell the blessed spirits. In this scene, too, the ballet work was a charming feature. The scene culminates in the fulfilment of Orpheus's desire to see Eurydice, and leads to the final scene in which, through looking upon her, he causes her death, which is subsequently overcome by the God of Love. Miss Lawrence used her rich voice with marked effect, and expressed the poignant despair of Orpheus with considerable power. The singular charm of her voice and Hilda Barnes realized the full beauty and significance of the part of Eurydice, and artistry of her singing were especially acceptable.

The full responsibility of conducting fell upon the shoulders of Mr. Winsloe Hall, who exercised commendable command of instrumentalists and singers. But for a few almost unavoidable lapses in tempo, the unanimity of all forces was excellent. Miss Sylvia Whittington was the capable leader of the orchestra. Muriel Prince the pianist, Frank Johnston the stage manager, and Charles Carter his assistant. Gus Cawthorne acted as "house" manager.

**NOBEL PEACE PRIZE.**

**DIVIDED BETWEEN FRENCH-MAN AND GERMAN.**

PARIS, December 8.  
Professor Ferdinand Buisson (France) and Professor Ludwig Guilde (Germany) will share the Nobel Peace Prize for 1927. Professor Buisson is an honorary professor at the Sorbonne in Paris, and president of the League for the Rights of Man. Professor Guilde is the originator of many schemes for international peace.

Mr. Clive Carey conducted the Elder Conservatorium Opera Class for the last time at the Norwood Town Hall last evening, when "The Marriage of Figaro" and "Orpheus" were staged. Opportunity was taken by the members of the class, with whom Mr. Carey has been so popular, to bid him farewell. At the conclusion of the performance Mr. Carey was made the recipient of a presentation, and he was heartily thanked for the work he had done on behalf of the Conservatorium. General regret was expressed at his departure, and everyone wished him success.

**ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.**

**PERFORMANCES IN OPERA.**

The two special performances by the Elder Conservatorium Operatic Company given in the Norwood Town Hall on Thursday evening were repeated on Friday evening with a different cast. There was a large attendance and the work of the singers, actors, and instrumentalists was generally admired. The performances reflected the highest credit upon the principals, those who took part in the choruses, and also those responsible for the training of the participants and the production of the operas. It was evident throughout that there are great possibilities for the development of this class of work as a means for encouraging a taste on the part of the public for opera, and also as a medium for providing experience for students in both singing and acting.

"The Marriage of Figaro" (Mozart) was again staged first, and the production in practically every respect was worthy of praise. The overture was daintily played by the orchestra, and the opening solo by Miss Valda Harvey was sung with nice restraint. The work of this lady was uniformly pleasing. Miss Phyllis Tonkin was vivacious and active, and her solos were given with taste and expression. As the page Miss Gwen Priest was successful, her solo, "Tell Me, Fair Lady," being perhaps her best effort. As the jealous count, Mr. Mostyn Skinner sang and acted with credit, his anger when he thought he was being deceived by his wife and his repentance when he found he was mistaken being well portrayed. Mr. Ronald Moss was successful as Figaro, and the other parts were capably represented as follows.—Antonio the gardener, Mr. Charles Gordon; Marcellina, Miss Dorothy Vardon; Bartolo, Mr. Leslie Coney; and Basilio, the family priest, by Mr. J. H. Williams. The duet between the count and countess, the trio in which the two were joined by Suzanna, and the quintet were among the most pleasing numbers. The final chorus was also finely sung, and although applause was not conspicuous during the opera there was an enthusiastic outburst at its conclusion. The performers were repeatedly recalled, and the ladies received many floral tributes.

Gluck's beautiful opera "Orpheus" in four scenes, was again staged with remarkably fine effects, and the choral work was particularly good. The solos of the principals were also of a high order of merit. On this occasion Miss Jean Sinclair took the part of Orpheus. Miss Ruth Taylor that of Eurydice, and Miss Ethel Greenwood that of Love. Fairies and Blessed Spirits were represented by Misses Phyllis Leitch, Peggy Leitch, Janet Reid, Kiwi Wells, Constance Ure, and Stella Sobek. The opening scene at Eurydice's tomb was most impressive, and sweet harmony was produced by the chorus. Intense feeling was imparted into the solos of Orpheus by Miss Sinclair, whose cultured musical voice was well suited for the difficult part she was called upon to portray. This singer showed herself possessed of considerable dramatic power. Miss Greenwood's singing was most effective, especially when informing Orpheus that the gods had taken pity on him and bade him journey to the underworld. She also acted with conviction. Miss Naylor sang with tuneful voice and won admiration with her representation of the delicate part entrusted to her. The artists were loudly applauded at the conclusion of each scene, and at the conclusion of the opera the principals were presented with bouquets. The scenic effects with the sprites attired in red garments and dancing in the underworld were well produced. The dance of the girls in the Elysian fields formed a beautiful study in graceful and charming movements. The work of the orchestra was again worthy of special mention.

The operas were directed and produced by Mr. Clive Carey, with Mr. H. Winsloe Hall as musical director. Miss Sylvia Whittington, as leader of the orchestra, Mr. H. Winsloe Hall, and Mr. Clive Carey, conductors. Miss Muriel Prince pianist, Mr. Frank Johnston stage manager, Mr. Charles Carter assistant stage manager, Miss Phyllis Leitch directress of the ballet, and Mr. Gus Cawthorne concert manager.

**PRESENTATION TO MR. WILLIAM SILVER.**

On Friday afternoon Mr. William Silver was given a handsome easy chair and books by his students at the Elder Conservatorium. The presentation was made to him in the studio of Mr. I. G. Reimann (Acting Director), who said it was in that room that he had first met Mr. Silver. He had watched his career with the greatest interest, and was pleased at the success he had achieved, both as a true artist and an excellent teacher. He had won the love of all his pupils, without which no teacher could be a success. They had been told that Mr. Silver was most energetic, and when he was not sitting at the piano he was at work in his garden, which was his great hobby. His pupils thought that if they gave him such a comfortable chair he would perhaps not like to leave it, and so take a little rest. Mr. Silver, in thanking them, said that this was a great surprise to him, and he deeply appreciated their kind thought.

Mr. F. M. Bailey, the eldest son of the Director of the Adelaide Botanic Garden, who studied forestry for two years at the Adelaide University, and has been at the Australian School of Forestry at Canberra for a year, will arrive in Adelaide tomorrow, and will take his degree of Bachelor of Science at the University of Adelaide. Mr. Bailey, who is 21 years of age, will then enter upon an engagement for three years in the Forestry Department of the New South Wales Government.

Dr. Ronald Trudinger (medical missionary), who has been stationed in the Soudan for some years, reached Outer Harbor by the liner Moldavia today. He will spend a portion of his leave in South Australia.