

A CENTURY OF HARMONY

The Official Centenary History
of the
Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society

by
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Scanned, converted and repaginated from the original publication
(but without appendices)

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The published historical records of the very early days of Melbourne are few and differ in their accounts touching the beginning of musical culture in the settlement. Isaac Selby in "The Old Pioneers' Memorial History of Melbourne" (1924) states that "The first musical society in Melbourne was the Harmonic, started by William Clarke and John Jones Peers. ... The Harmonic was superseded by the Philharmonic" and leaves it at that.

In his "Chronicles of Early Melbourne" (1888), Edmund Finn ("Garryowen") declares "The first recorded notice of a vocal and instrumental entertainment given in Melbourne was on 23rd December, 1839, when a Mrs. Clark, announced as one of the lights of the Sydney stage, treated the inhabitants to a ten shillings 'grand soiree' in the large room of the Lamb Inn (West Collins Street) ...the valetudinarian piano, disordered in some of its strings, was aptly compensated, at least in sound, by a Mr. Tickle who played a key bugle with much animation." Proceeding, he notes that the first professional concert was given in Melbourne on 17th December, 1840, by Monsieur and Madame Gautrot in the large room of the Adelphi Hotel, Little Flinders Street and that it was a pronounced success. "The first musical combination in the Colony," he asserts, "was established under the designation of The Melbourne Harmonic in 1841. He gives the names of the office-holders and adds "but the effort did not come to much." He further notes, "A Philharmonic Society was started in 1843 but was not successful." Some of the "prominent names" connected therewith are given.

Alexander Sutherland, M.A., writes at some length in "Victoria and its Metropolis" (1888) in a Chapter on "Music and the Drama." No mention is made of a Harmonic Society but he relates that at a ball given by the "Bachelors of Melbourne" at the beginning of 1840, the formation of a society was suggested with the title of Philharmonic. It was to possess an orchestra but the absence of instruments was a difficulty and it was not till after the receipt of a supply from Sydney that the operations of the Society commenced. "Towards the end of the year came our first professionals, Monsieur and Madame Gautrot, from Sydney, at whose first concert on 18th December, 1840, the Philharmonic volunteered their services as an orchestra and performed with an effect that was truly startling. ...In 1841 there were several good concerts given by Mr. Isaac Nathan, a musician of repute who was coming from England to settle in Sydney but called in at Port Phillip on the way. The largest hall in Melbourne was then that which John Thomas Smith had built adjoining his Adelphi Hotel in Flinders Lane. At Mr. Nathan's performances it was crowded out into the Lane with an audience delighted beyond measure to hear the tones of the master." (Finn mentions a Nathan concert given in the large room of the Adelphi Hotel on 18th December).

"As Melbourne continued to grow, its musical entertainments took a higher form. ...The Philharmonic produced portions of oratorios and the Wesleyans gave organ recitals on the instrument which they had procured for their chapel in Collins Street, the first of the Colony. ...In 1849 Mr. Buddee, a new arrival from Berlin, formed his 'German Quartette' ... he himself contributing pianoforte pieces of a standard not till then experienced in the Colony. The singing class of the Mechanics' Institute gave periodic concerts of a pleasant character with Mrs. Testar in the leading parts but in 1851 the highest level of musical effect was reached in the series of concerts organised by Mr. Wilkie whose music warehouse in Collins Street was of itself an important feature in the musical education of the community. How long the process would have gone on with a steady improvement upward it would be hard to say; but at the close of 1851 the inrush of the army of gold seekers for the time being overwhelmed these quiet and cultivating pursuits". *Two extracts included in a review of the Society's work in 1854 give point and emphasis to this summary. See entries for 1854.*

"The main public fact was that the gold-digging Hood loved the extravagancies of the music halls and casinos, or the mad excitement of Rowe's American Circus. Yet the fame of the gold discoveries brought artists. ...First came Herr Strebinger who gave a series of concerts in 1853 and subsequently settled down in Melbourne and in the next year Madam Carandini.... In that year also came Herr Elsasser and the steady increase of musical talent was shown by the fact that for the performance of 'The Messiah' given in the Exhibition Building, an orchestra of 35 performers was collected. ...The poor old Philharmonic however, had perished in the stormy times of the gold diggers, but out of its ashes sprang a new one in 1853 under the leadership of Mr. Russell. ..."

Finn does not claim that the Harmonic Society actually appeared in public, whereas Sutherland cites the Philharmonic as taking part (as an orchestra) at the Gautrot's concert in December, 1840 -with the effects as described. However, there is but a year between the date given by each historian as to the first established musical body. Taking Sutherland's account as, seemingly, the more reliable, the Colony of Victoria was then only six years old; that is if 1834 is accepted as the foundation year of the Colony -the year when Edward Henty landed at Portland with his sheep, poultry and well-founded optimism to establish the first settlement.

Three years later (1837) Governor Bourke arrived from New South Wales to confer on the settlement on the banks of the Yarra the title of Melbourne. That same year eight thousand settlers arrived from Great Britain to supplement the first arrivals from Tasmania, foremost of whom were John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner. The settlement was composed of vigorous and progressive colonists who soon commenced an agitation for separation from New South Wales and were so rewarded in 1850 when, to their unbounded delight, Queen Victoria's Assent was received. So far it had been largely the story of virile people asserting themselves socially and politically in what may be described as pastoral conditions and, at the same time, giving expression to such cultural matters as the circumstances of the time permitted. As Sutherland remarks - in reference to music - How long the process would have moved progressively upward would be hard to say. The question can never be answered because the epoch-making discovery of gold in Victoria in large quantities in 1851 threw social conditions and the development of culture into the melting pot.

Enough has been said in Sutherland's account to indicate the musical status of the Colony of Victoria prior to the discovery of gold. While the turmoil that ensued upset the hitherto steady and orderly musical growth of the community, the influx of many thousands of migrants of all classes brought musical reinforcements of ability and taste who ultimately contributed to a musical revival of which the establishment of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society was among the first fruits. A child, as it were, born in turmoil, excitement and change, of strong forbears who counted music worth while, while the majority of the community were pre-occupied with the fevered pursuit of gold.

CHAPTER II. JOHN RUSSELL'S CONDUCTORSHIP

On Friday, 7th October, 1853, the following quaint advertisement appeared in the "Argus" under the heading of "Public Meetings." Melbourne, Sep, 26, 1853

Sir, -Having the fullest confidence in your qualifications, talents and experience, we respectfully invite you to become the Director and Conductor of a Musical Society in this city to be called the Melbourne Choral Society, We are persuaded that there are many individuals in this place, unknown to us and each other, who lament the loss of opportunities formerly delighted in, of not only improving their vocal or instrumental abilities, but of cultivating a pure and correct taste for the sublime compositions of those Masters whose works will never decay until

"The trumpet shall be heard on high, And music shall untune the sky",

The quotation is from Dryden's "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day". The lines quoted omit one which lies between - "The Dead shall live, the Living die", St. Cecilia is the patron saint of music and of blind people.

Should you accede to our request, we engage to afford you our hearty support and co-operation, We have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient servants, (Signed by upwards of 20 Amateurs)

To John Russell, Esq"
Great Collins-street.

(The Minute Book records eighteen names as follow:- Thomas Dredge, Hy. Smith, W. G. Dredge, F. B. Hood, Wm, Jarrett, W. J. Thomas, Michl. Ashton, R, S. Stelling Barker, W. P. Walker, Theo, J. Sumner, A. Miell, G. F, Smith, David Horn, Jas. Paterson, J, E, Ashley, Thos. Ewart, Chas, Vaughan, Jos. Little).
Collins-street, October 4th, 1853,

Gentlemen, -

In reply to your kind communication, I beg to say that my services are at your disposal in any way in which I can promote the objects contemplated.

Gentlemen, Your obedient servant, JOHN RUSSELL.

Under the heading "Domestic Intelligence," attention is drawn to the following advertisement in the " Argus," 8th October, 1853.

" A general meeting of amateurs of Choral Music who can take part therein either vocal or instrumental, will be held at one of the Committee Rooms, Mechanics' Institute, on Saturday evening, the 8th instant, chair to be taken at 7 o'clock."

The meeting was duly held with Mr. Charles Vaughan in the chair. It "constituted itself into an Association for the cultivation of choral music, sacred and secular, to be called the Melbourne Choral Society." A sub-committee was appointed "to frame rules" and to report to a meeting of members to be held on the following Saturday, 15th October. The names of 45 singers and instrumentalists "were taken down as members."

At the subsequent "general meeting," the title was changed to "Melbourne Philharmonic Society," rules were adopted and officers and committee elected. At this point, it is appropriate to quote from Mr. Peake's "Historical Souvenir" which was published in 1913 and covered the preceding sixty years of the Society's activities.

What a delightful thing it would have been to have had a picture of that now memorable meeting with John Russell, the first Conductor, holding forth and expatiating on the advantages of establishing such a Society as the Melbourne Philharmonic. Probably in their wildest dreams they never imagined that they were founding a Society which was in the future to play such an important part in the progress of oratorio and orchestral music.

It is to be regretted that the names of those 20 amateurs who signed the requisition do not appear in the advertisement. Among the signatories would probably have been found the names of the following gentlemen, who are known to have attended the first meeting and are therefore the founders.

W. G. DREDGE, well known as a Custom's House Agent and as an amateur organist. After the first few years he became Secretary, distinguished for his ability, interest and excellent ideas and general management.

THOMAS LUKE, a successful merchant, well known in the tea trade and also a prominent member of the Congregational body. He was a great enthusiast in Church Psalmody.

W. PETERSON, uncle of John Peterson Esq., the well-known Melbourne merchant and of Franklin Peterson, the Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne University.

DAVID MITCHELL, a prominent member of the community, who has made his mark as a leading builder and contractor, having erected Scots' Church and other large and important buildings. He will probably be better remembered as the father of one of the greatest singers of the age – Madame Melba. How curious it seems that his illustrious daughter should never have sung for the Society of which he was one of the founders. However, it is gratifying to know that she has promised to sing for the Society at some future date. (*This event did not ever come to pass. – ed.*) Those who know anything of her strong and generous nature have no doubt of its fulfillment. In so doing it is to be hoped that she 'Will form a new link in the Society which will lead to significant and historical results.

G. F. SMITH, for many years Town Clerk of Williamstown. As a tenor singer he was well and favourably known among the various societies and church choirs of Melbourne. He was also a musical enthusiast, especially interested in old violins.

W. H. WILLIAMS, a printer by profession. According to his own statement, he printed at his own expense and distributed personally 1000 copies of the Society's first prospectus, and so originated the subscribers' list. He was a man of push and energy, and was not "born to blush unseen and waste his sweetness on the desert air." As a tenor singer his services were decidedly valuable, especially in the chorus.

THEO DREDGE, a brother and partner of W. G. Dredge. In later years he became Secretary of the Society. "JOHN RUSSELL, originally of Liverpool, but came to Melbourne from America. Although highly respected as an Organist and Choir-master, he did not follow music as a profession. He invested his capital in the flour trade, and in time was in a fairly comfortable position. By nature he was said to have been a gentleman of a very retiring and unassuming disposition, sensitive and conscientious in the highest degree. For some years he held the position of Organist and Choir-master of Collins-street Independent Church. It is somewhat curious that at a complimentary concert given to Mr. Russell in the sixties, the contralto soloist failed to appear, and a lad named Peake, who was destined to become his successor both at the church and the Philharmonic Society, took her place. Although the portrait here given of John Russell presents a somewhat austere expression, it is said that he was a lovable man, and won the respect of all who knew him. Such were the types of men who founded the Melbourne Philharmonic Society.

On the first prospectus, we find that His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, C. J. La Trobe Esq., was the first Patron of the Society. ...The first President was his honor, Mr. Justice Barry, then Acting Chief Justice, a judge of distinctive personality, courtly and dignified, with a touch of the old world atmosphere still about him. It is pleasant to think that the founder of the Public Library, to whose honor a grateful community erected the splendid statue in front of the institution, was also the first President of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society.

Charles Vaughan, well-known in commercial circles, and John Matthew Smith, late head of the firm, Smith and Emmerton, Solicitors, were the first Vice-Presidents. Frederick Sargood, afterwards Sir Frederick, whose distinguished career, social and political, was closed at a comparatively recent date, Rev. W. Jarrett and Mr. G. L. Allan, then a leading singing master, and in later years head of the firm Allan and Co., music sellers, were among the Committee. The first Secretary was James Paterson, who at the time was Secretary of the Mechanics' Institute. He was greatly interested in the new Society and consented to hold office until it was fairly started."

It remains to complete Mr. Peake's narrative by recording that Mr. W. G. Dredge was the first Treasurer and the remainder of the first Committee comprised -Theo. Dredge, L. Montefiore, A. Morison, W. P. Walker and T. G. Goold. The last-named acted as Organist for many years.

The newly formed Society set to work with such energy that eleven weeks later, the first concert was given on Saturday evening, 24th December, 1853. The location was "the hall of the Mechanics' Institution, Collins Street" -now known as the Melbourne Athenaeum. *See illustration in original publication. The hall comprised the upper floor.* For the occasion an organ (loaned to the Society for three months by Mr. J. T. Charlton) was used. Since the first press announcement concerning the formation of the new Society, public interest had been maintained by at least three preliminary notices in the columns of "The Argus" relating to the inaugural concert. The work chosen was Handel's "The Messiah" *First performance in Victoria.* which, in the light of after experience, could not have been bettered. Indeed, with one solitary exception, the Society never departed

from its original choice for its Christmas concert. So, equipped with a borrowed organ, a small orchestra, a choir of forty voices and, obviously high hope, the Society began its long career.

In the Society's Guard Book has been preserved a copy of the printed programme of its first concert, which indicates that a large proportion of the oratorio was rendered and concludes with the quaint announcement - to modern eyes - "carriages to set down with horses heads towards Russell Street and take up with horses heads towards Swanston Street." It must be remembered, of course, that the time predates the advent in Melbourne of trains and trams. Another announcement runs "invitations being personal, tickets cannot be purchased."

The soloists were Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), and Mr. H. Loughnan (B). Mr. Joseph Griffiths was the Leader of the Orchestra and Mr. Michael Ashton, of the Wesleyan Church, was the Organist. It is curious to note that both lady soloists sang soprano and contralto parts. "The Argus" while remarking that the combined forces "were too powerful for the room" -which is hardly surprising - stated "the performance passed off with considerable success ...the hall was well filled with a respectable audience" and boldly declared that "our Philharmonic Society is destined to take a very high place in this Colony." Three of the soloists appeared as such on many subsequent occasions -Mrs. Testar 30, Mrs. Hancock 32 and Mr. Ewart 53. *(In 2008 an annotated score believed to be used by Mrs Hancock was found indicating a wide departure from the allocation of solos generally accepted today – and the reallocation of some choruses to the soloists in quartet – ed.)*

Until 1906, the Society's financial year began on the 1st of January in each year, the "concert" period normally commencing with a concert on Good Friday night and concluding with the annual performance of "The Messiah" on the evening of Christmas Day. This grouping of the Society's activities affords a convenient basis for historical presentation and will be followed in subsequent pages of this account until the change mentioned is encountered. In addition to "subscription" and "extra" concerts, the Society from time to time assisted at charitable appeals, public gatherings and so forth. In almost every case, these appearances are included (unnumbered) .Although not "Philharmonic" concerts, the Society's appearances are worthy of record, if only from the historical point of view. Needless to say the services were given without fee or reward.

1854

2 (2) MISCELLANEOUS (1) 14th Mar. Mechanics Instit. 1st Sub.

Vocal solos and duets. Choral items-Madrigals: "All Ye Who Music Love" (Donato) (1), "Hearken to Thy Faithful Swain" (Morales) (1), "Cynthia, Thy Song" (Grocce) (1), "My Mistress is as Fair as Fine" (J. Bennett) (1), "Thy Voice, O Harmony" (Webbe) (1), "Nymphs of the Forest" (W. Horsley) (1), Solo and Chorus "Now Tramp O'er Moss and Fell" (Bishop) (1), Part songs "With Hawk and Hound" (Bishop) (1), "I Would that my Love" (Mendelssohn) (1), "May Day" (Chorley) (1), "The Hardy Norseman" (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. H. ;Loughnan (B), Dr. Sanger.

"The room was well filled with a highly respectable assembly". "We do not hesitate to say that the programme contained more sterling music than has ever been given to a Melbourne audience" ("Argus" report). A new organ by Smith, costing £700, was formally opened by Messrs. Russell & Goold. Its advent was "an event of great importance in those early days". Some tickets were sold to the public; otherwise by invitation.

3 (3) THE CREATION (Haydn) (1) 4th July Mechanics Instit. 2nd Sub.

Mrs. Testar (S), Miss Edwards (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Hackett (B), Mr. Dredge (B).

"The company was for the most part invited by the Society" and was described as "very select and fashionable". "The singing was highly creditable. ...the orchestral part was well rendered". Mr. Hackett made the first of his 12 appearances as a soloist.

4 (4) THE CREATION (Haydn) (2) 2nd Aug. Mechanics Instit. 3rd Sub.

Repetition of previous concert with same Principals.

5 (5) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (1) 26th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Mrs. Testar (S), Miss Edwards (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Hackett (B), Mr. H. J. King (B). "Only 500 present". "As a musical performance, the effort of last night deserves much praise." This was the first of concerts given under a special arrangement with the Trustees of the Victorian Exhibition in William Street. *(An illustration appears in the original publication.)*

6 (6) THE MESSIAH (Handel) (2) 3rd Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Mrs. Testar (S), Miss Edwards (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. H. J. King (B).

"The choruses were given with precision, but the orchestral effects were rather too loudly rendered -the fine voce parts being from that cause almost completely obscured at times". Instruments (with players) were

stated -Violins 12, Violas 3, Cellos 3, Basso 3, Flute 1, Clarionettes 2, Basoon 2, Trumpet 1, Trombones 3, Ophicleide 1, Horns 2, Total 33.

7 (7) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (2) 10th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Hackett (B).

"There was a vast improvement in the rendering of the choruses, the popular "See the Conquering Hero Comes", being remarkably well executed on this occasion".

8 (8) MISCELLANEOUS (2) 17th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Madrigals "My Mistress is as Fair as Fine" (J. Bennett) (2), "Heaven to Thy Faithful Swain" (Morales) (2), "Acls and Galatea" (Handel) (1), Overture to "Zauberflote" (Mozart) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Hackett (B).

Attendance 1100. "In every way a great triumph" Mr. Lyell made the first of his 10 appearances with the Society. The "Herald" report extended to 14".

9 (9) MISCELLANEOUS (3) 24th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, trios, duets and violin concertante. "Blow gentle Gale" (Bishop) (1) "The Chough and the Crow" (Bishop) (1). Overture to "Anacreon" (Cherubine) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Dalton (C), Miss Stewart, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Hackett (B), Herr Strebinger (V'st).

"The orchestra (35) was exceedingly effective and the whole of the entertainment passed off most successfully". The audience was "numerous and respectable".

10 (10) MISCELLANEOUS (4) 30th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets, trios and violin solo. "All Ye Who Music Love" (Donato) (2), "When the Swallows" (Bishop) (1), Two choruses from "Preciosa" (Weber) (1), "O, By Rivers" (Bishop) (1), "Awake, Eolian Harp" (Dan by) (1), Overtures-"Italiana in Algeri" (Rossini) (1), "Preciosa" (Weber) (1), Grand Waltz-"The Rosita" (Jullien) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Dalton (C), Miss Stewart, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Hackett (B), Mr. H. J. King (B).

"This really brilliant affair". The glees and choruses were "admirably rendered". "Notwithstanding a dust storm, the building was crowded to excess".

11 (11) MISCELLANEOUS (5) 7th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and trios. "Turn Amaryllis to Thy Swain" (Brewer) (1), "Spring's Delights" (Muller) (1), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (2), "Nymphs of the Forest" (Horsley) (2), "On a Bank" (Werner) (1), "Harvest Time" (Author unknown) (1), Overtures "Anacreon" (Cherubine) (2), "Italiana in Algeri" (Rossini) (2).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Dalton (C), Miss Stewart, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mons. Emile Coulon (B), Mr. Hackett (B), Mr. H. J. King (B).

Neither the "Age" or "Argus" reported the concert.

12 (12) THE CREATION (Haydn) (3) 26th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Violin and pianoforte solos. Miss Stewart, Miss Edwards, Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Dalton (C), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Hackett (B), Mons. Herwyn (V'st), Madam Herwyn (P'st).

The proceeds of the concert were passed to the Melbourne Hospital. The "Argus" report extended to 11" and gave the attendance as 1550, including the Lieut. Governor Sir Charles Hotham and Lady Hotham, also that "the several choruses were well rendered".

So ended the first year's work. Eleven concerts was a prodigious effort, indicating remarkable energy and enthusiasm on the part of the members of the Society as well as a field of public entertainment awaiting development. As to the latter point, the "Herald" in a 14" report on concert No.8, remarked that while concerts with a limited number of vocal performers and instrumentalists were not infrequent "we had neither orchestra or chorus. ...to bring before us those splendid productions ...of the most eminent composers." Only in one subsequent year did the Society equal (and surpass) the effort of its initial year; in 1861; under Herr Elsasser, when it appeared before the public in 12 concerts.

Supplementing the quotation from the "Herald" the following extract from the Annual Report for 1854 should be set down -"The Committee believe that they are justified in saying that these concerts have introduced a class of music new to the Colony, have proved an unexpected source of gratification to the refined taste of the lovers of the highest style of composition and have had no small effect in popularising, in this country, the works of the great masters hitherto unknown to the bulk of the colonists."

Seven of the concerts (Nos. 5 to 11) were given under a special arrangement with the Trustees of the Victorian Exhibition and netted the Society £236/16/8. The arrangement was criticised in some quarters from two points of view, i.e., the Society being an amateur organisation should not have hired out its services and, further, it had made a "hard bargain" with the Trustees. As to the ethics of the case – six concerts was certainly an effort far beyond a normal gesture to aid a form of public entertainment and, perforce, it had to be considered as such. As to a "hard bargain" it may be presumed that the Trustees, in making a business arrangement to supplement the attractions of the Exhibition, considered the terms worth while.

The first Rules of the Society were promulgated during the year. Subscribers paid £3/3/0 for one seat or £5/5/0 for two seats at each concert "in addition to the privilege of attending all rehearsals of the Society." Performing members' subscription was £1/1/0 (ladies excepted) and each received one ticket for each concert, in addition to membership of the "Mechanics' Institution." Test for admission of performing members was - if a vocalist, ability to sing a part in a Plain Psalm Tune; if an instrumentalist, ability to play correctly oratorio music. The year's operations returned a nett profit of £373/1/3, out of which £112 was spent on the library and £43 on the orchestra. At the first Annual Meeting (held 9/1/55) Mr. Russell's services were recognised by a presentation of one hundred guineas. Performing members were stated at 104 and subscribers at 32.

1855

13 (13) SAMSON (Handel) (1) 13th Mar. Mechanics Instit. 1st Sub.
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Dalton (a), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Briggs (B), Mr. Hackett (B).
The hall was well filled and the "choruses were given in excellent style".

14 (-) SAMSON (Handel) (2) 3rd Apr. Mechanics Instit. Extra.
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Dalton (C), Mrs. Onn, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Stewart, Mr. Biggs (B), Mr. Hackett (B).
Press advertisements indicate "Band and performers will number upwards of 100 performers". The concert was given as a "benefit" for Mrs. Paterson, widow of the late Mr. J. Paterson, the Society's first (hon.) Secretary. The concert realised £135.

15 (14) MISCELLANEOUS (6) 1st May. Mechanics Instit. 2nd Sub.
Vocal solos and duets. "Music in Macbeth" (Locke) (1), "Turn Amarylus to thy Swain (Brewer) (2), "Sweet, Lovely, Chaste" (J. Benedict) (1), "Orpheus with his Lute" (Macfarren) (1), "Awake the Starry Midnight Hour" (Mendelssohn) (1), "The Sun is High in Heaven" (Monk) (1), "Is there a Land" (Reichardt) (1).
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Onn, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Hancock (B).
Despite the "generally impracticable state of the roads" and the "peculiarly impassable character of the approaches to the Mechanics Institution" the house was well filled. "The chorus was very efficient and the orchestra was all that could have been desired".

16 (15) MISCELLANEOUS (7) 26th Jun. Mechanics Instit. 3rd Sub.
Vocal solos. Choral items-"The Harmony of the Spheres" (Romberg) (1), "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (2), "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Testa) (1), "The Chough and the Crow" (Bishop) (2).
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Biggs (B).
"Audience was numerous". Press accounts to 10" were generally favourable. Mrs. Goodliffe made the first of her 17 appearances with the Society.

17 (16) MISCELLANEOUS (8) 28th Aug. Mechanics Instit. 4th Sub.
Vocal solos, duets and quartette. Choruses from "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (1) and "Israel in Egypt" (Handel) (1), Overture "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (1).
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Miss Howlett (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Moxon (B), Mr. Kaye (B), Mr. Bancroft (B).
The hall was filled. The Governor, Sir Charles Hotham and Lady Hotham attended. High praise was given to the Choir. Mr. Williams made the first of his 25 appearances with the Society as a soloist.

18 (17) MISCELLANEOUS (9) 18th Sep. Mechanics Instit. Extra.
Vocal solos, duets and quartette. Choruses from "Judas Maccabeus" (2) and "Israel in Egypt" (Handel) (2), Overture "Judas Maccabeus" (2).
Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Miss Howlett (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Moxon (B), Mr. Kaye (B), Mr. Bancroft (B).

"Very well attended". The concert was "of remarkable excellence both in the instrumental and vocal departments."

19 (18) MISCELLANEOUS (10) 20th Nov. Mechanics Instit. 5th Sub.

Vocal Solos. "The Transient and the Eternal" (Romberg) . *First performance in Melbourne*. "Swiftly o'er the Mountain's Brow" (Webbe) (1), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (3), "Strike the Lyre" (Cooke) (1), "When the Swallows" (Abt) (1), "Peace to the Souls of the Heroes" (Calcott) (1), "See the Chariot" (1) (Author unknown), "Now Tramp o'er Moss and Fell" (Bishop) (2) , "Queen of the Valley" (Calcott) (1). Symphony No.1 in E Flat (Romberg) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C).

The hall was well filled. Press accounts praised the various items. In the absence of Mr. Russell, Mr. Goold conducted.

20 (19) THE MESSIAH (3) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Mrs. Testar (S), Madm. Carandini (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Gregg (B).

The hall was "crowded with a brilliant assemblage". Press reports to 23" were glowing in their praise and congratulated the Society on giving the work in almost its complete state. Commencing at 7.30 p.m., the performance finished at 11.30 p.m. The Band, Chorus and Principals numbered nearly 150 and were assisted by the organ which had been installed for the occasion. "Madm. Sara Flower's matchless voice and performance made the contralto portion the most attractive in the oratorio". Miss Catherine Hayes -a visiting singer -whose terms, £200 for one solo were beyond the Society- was present as a listener. The fee required was generally considered exorbitant and provoked strong criticism in the press.

Though below the previous year's performances in point of number, eight concerts represents a substantial years work. The Annual Report refers to the loss of performing members through "removal from the town." After the closing of the Exhibition at the end of 1854, the Society reverted to the use of the Mechanics' Institution hall, but numerous complaints as to its limited accommodation led to a return to the Exhibition Building, despite its poor acoustic qualities. The Report also bemoaned the fact that "this great city is actually devoid of any one large hall really adapted for the holding of musical or other celebrations." Regretful reference was made to the death of the first Ron. Secretary, Mr. James Paterson, early in the year. Mr. J. E. Ashley was appointed to the vacant office. In August he resigned and Mr. G. B. Richardson took his place. Financially, the year's work showed a nett profit of £90/15/2 which, with the previous year's credit, enabled the expenditure of £39/9/9 on the library and a payment of £196/10- towards the liquidation of the cost of the organ.

1856

21 (20) THE CREATION (Haydn) (4) 13th Feb. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodlife (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Kay (B), Mr. John Blanchard (B).

"The room was well filled but not crowded". The Acting Governor was present with suite. A programme refers to a "band and chorus of 150 performers". Press accounts to 18" were kindly as to the chorus but had some criticism as to the Band. "There was an unpleasant preponderance of brass with a corresponding debility on the part of the violins".

22 (21) MISCELLANEOUS (II) 16th Apl. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

"The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (1), "As the Hart Pants" (Mendelssohn) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodlife (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Kaye (B).

"Exceedingly well attended". Acting Governor and suite present. As to "The Last Judgment" the work was stated to be beyond the capacity and resources of the Society but "As the Hart Pants" thoroughly redeemed the concert.

23 (22) MISCELLANEOUS (12) 11th Jul. Theatre Royal. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and quartettes. Choruses from "Samson" (Handel) (1), The greater part of "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (1), Quartette and chorus "Benedictus" (S. Nelson). First performance. Overture "Samson" (Handel) (1).

Madm. Anna Bishop (S), Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Guerin, Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mrs. Fiddes, Miss C. Nelson, Mons. Laglaise (T), Mons. Emile Coulon (B), Mr. F. Howson (B), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. Kitts, Mr. Hancock (B). First of a series of three concerts given in conjunction with Madm. Anna Bishop and George Coppin; advertised as orchestra and choir of 200 performers.

"The wettest night of this wet season" affected the attendance and performance. Though moved to the theatre, the organ was not installed in time. The staging was criticised. Parts of the performance were praised.

24 (23) THE CREATION (Haydn) (5) 18th Jul. Theatre Royal. Extra.

Solos by Madm. Anna Bishop. Mrs. Testar (S), Madm. Anna Bishop (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mons. Emile Coulon (B), Mons. Laglaise (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. F. Howson (B), Mr. Hancock (B).

Better attendance. Three press reports to 19" offered praise. The organ was used. The "Argus" account said "The production of such an oratorio as this, upon such a scale of completeness and with so much efficiency as were exhibited last night is an important event in the history of a city not yet 20 years old and so widely severed from the many centuried cities of Europe where music has for so long a period taken up her established home".

25 (24) MISCELLANEOUS (13) 25th Jul. Theatre Royal. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and quartettes. Choruses from "Israel in Egypt" (Handel) (3), "Benedictus" (Nelson) (2). Overtures-"The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (1), "Der Freischutz" (Weber) (1).

Mrs. Testar (S), Madm. Anna Bishop (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mons. Laglaise (T), Mr. Lyell (T), Mons. Emile Coulon (B), Mr. F. Howson (B), Mr. Hancock (B).

Despite heavy rain, the attendance was good and included the Governor and suite. The "Age" report said the concert "was a most brilliant success". The "Argus" chronicler noted-"Financially, these concerts resulted in a profit of £148 to the Society but musically they added little to its reputation, while, owing to the prejudices of some of its members against theatres, ill feeling was engendered in the ranks."

26 (25) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (3) 1st Aug. Theatre Royal. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Testar (S), Madm. Anna Bishop (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. Lyell (T), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. F. Howson (B), Mr. Hancock (B).

"Poorly attended". Press reports extended to 24" and were all favourable, the "Age" noting "highly creditable performance".

27 (26) MISCELLANEOUS (14) 17th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Vocal duets, solos and trios. "Under the Tree Tops" (Rutter) (1), "The Joyous Birds" (Spontone) (1), "Softly Rise" (Boyce) (1), "Now Tramp o'er Moss and Fell" (Bishop) (3), "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (3). Overture-"Italiana in Algeri" (Rossini) (3).

Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. McDougal (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Kaye (B).

The attendance was "comparatively thin". The Acting Governor, Major-General Macarthur and suite attended. "Band and chorus of 100 performers". Praise for the Choir. Programme stated "Omnibuses to and from all suburbs".

28 (27) MISCELLANEOUS (15) 21st Oct. Exhibition Bldg. 5th Sub.

Vocal solos from "Elijah" and "The Creation". "Te Deum" Dettingen (Handel). First performance in the Colony. "As Pants the Hart" (Mendelssohn) (2).

Mrs. Testar (S), Miss Julia Harland (S), Mr. Walter Sherwin (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

Attendance was "most numerous and fashionable". Press reports extended to 11" and offered warm praise for the Choir while the concert "as a whole was highly successful". Mr. Farquharson made the first of his 36 appearances as a soloist and "thoroughly electrified the audience by his magnificent declamation of the great air from "The Creation" -"Straight opening her fertile womb". Of Mr. Farquharson, Mr. Peake wrote "Of the bass singers, Mr Farquharson stands pre-eminent. No one, before or since, has ever approached him, if we accept the judgment of those who heard him. There can be no doubt that he had a magnificent voice of extensive range, and that he was a great vocalist and an excellent musician. Transposition came easy to him, and, as an accompanist, he was never at a loss in that respect. His little joke with a pretentious amateur, promising to put her song 'down a crochet' is well known".

29 (28) THE MESSIAH (4) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Miss Julia Harland (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mrs. McDougal (C), Mr. Walter Sherwin (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A most numerous, respectable and attentive audience". Those present numbered 1400. The performance lasted 4½ hours and scarcely anyone left his seat till the last note was sounded. Press accounts were warm in praising all parts. Mr. Farquharson added to the laurels obtained on his first appearance.

Six subscription and three extra concerts indicate a year of considerable activity. Due to extensive alterations to the Exhibition Buildings, the Society was excluded therefrom for four months, hence the use of the Theatre Royal for four concerts. The change necessitated two removals and re-erections of the organ at considerable expense. A sub-committee prepared and submitted a petition to the Acting Governor, requesting that a grant be placed on the Estimates for the purpose of aiding the Society in building a hall suitable for the Society's requirements. Apparently nothing eventuated. Despite the "fluctuations peculiar to

the social conditions" the Annual Report was able to record that the number of performing members had been maintained. Subscribers fees were fixed at two and four guineas, entitling the holders to two and five tickets for each concert respectively. The accounts showed that the normal receipts and expenditure left a profit of £42/12/7. On orchestral fittings £106/6/0 was spent and the final payment on the organ absorbed £151/0/0.

1857

30 (29) MISCELLANEOUS (16) 3rd Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

Vocal solos and duets. Choruses from "The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (1), Mass in C (Beethoven) (1), "Hallelujah" (1) and Chorus (1) from "Messiah" (Handel). Overture to "The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (2). Mrs. Testar (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

Large attendance, including the new Governor, Sir Henry Barkly and Lady Barkly. There was praise for all sections, " A brilliant and taking programme".

MISCELLANEOUS 14th Apr. Exhibition Bldg. Ass'd.

A farewell concert given by Mrs. Testar. The Society's Chorus assisted with a chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (4) and "Now Tramp o'er Moss and Fell" (Bishop) (4).

Mrs. Testar took the solo part.

31 (30) MISCELLANEOUS (17) 28th Apr. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos, trio and duets. Contra Bass solo. "From Oberon in Fairy Land" (Stevens) (1), "Orpheus With His Lute" (Macfarren) (2), "The Waits" (Saville) (1), "Awake the Starry Midnight Hour"~ (Mendelssohn) (2), "Turn, Amaryllis to Thy Swain" (Brewer) (3), "The Sea Hath its Pearls" (Rutter) (1). Overture-"Semiramide" (Rossini) (1), Symphony No. 1 in E Flat (Romberg) (2).

Miss Laura Baxter, Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Miss E. C. Daniel, Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. Chapman (Contra Bass).

"Numerous audience". Press reports to 12" were very favourable. " ...one of the most meritorious of the Society's miscellaneous music". Miss Octavia Hamilton made the first of her 41 appearances with the Society.

32 (31) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (1), 23rd Jun. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia. Madm. Anna Bishop (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

The announcement of this concert "was hailed with delight by all lovers of music". Duly impressed by the importance of such a new work, the Choir cheerfully and diligently rehearsed it for eight months. The press also recognised such a significant musical event and long preliminary notices-up to 22" – described the composition to its readers. In Madm. Sara Flower and Mr. Farquharson were two Principals of outstanding power and ability while Mrs. Goodliffe and Mr. Ewart were capable artists. Madm. Anna Bishop was available for the soprano part but, to quote the " Argus" chronicler "terms being an insurmountable barrier, the soprano devolved upon Mrs. Goodliffe. ...June 23rd was the night appointed. On the morning of that day, placards appeared announcing that Madm. Bishop would sing! This distinguished artist declined to lower her terms but her love of music was greater than her love of money and rather than allow "Hear Ye, Israel" to be indifferently rendered, she generously volunteered her services, and had the pleasure of introducing the wonderful air, written for Jenny Lind, to a Melbourne audience. At the conclusion of the concert, the President, Mr. Justice Barry, tendered to Madm. Bishop the thanks of the Committee for her valuable services." Despite muddy footpaths and unpaved roads, "a large and brilliant audience" assembled to listen to "the musical triumph of the year." Although some criticism was directed against the Orchestra, very warm praise was accorded the Principals and Choir. The "Argus" report noted that "We have seldom heard any of the efforts of this Society so even in execution and so free from faults." It is interesting to observe that the alto chorus "included Armes or more familiarly 'Ted' Beaumont, Perraton, Johnson, Cook, Marsden and a host of 'boys' who are now bearded benedicts" ("Argus" chronicler). (*Written In 1878. It is noted that at that time the also section was male – Ed.*) It only remains to add that "Elijah" has always remained a popular work with public and Choir alike. After "The Messiah" it ranks an easy second, having been performed on 66 occasions.

33 (32) MISCELLANEOUS (18) 1st Sep. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Vocal solos, trios and quartette. "Imperial Mass" (Haydn) (1), Coronation Anthem (Handel) (1), "The Heavens are Telling" from "The Creation" (Haydn) (1), "Hallelujah" from "Mount of Olives" (Beethoven) (1). Overture-"Judas Maccabeaus" (Handel) (3).

Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Master Charles Cook.

"A very large attendance". The Mass received qualified praise; the Anthem was "creditably rendered". A new basso appeared in the person of Mr. Angus "of much promise". The promise was justified. In all, he appeared as a soloist on 45 occasions.

34 (33) MISCELLANEOUS (19) 3rd Nov. Exhibition Bldg. 5th Sub.

Vocal and pianoforte solos. "When the West" (Mendelssohn) (1), "The Dream" (Stewart) (1), "Sweet, Lovely, Chaste" (Benedict) (2), "Awake the Starry Midnight Hour" (Mendelssohn) (3). "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (2), "Ye Meads and Groves" (Rutter). First performance. Overtures - No. 1 in E Flat (Romberg) (3), "Masaniello" (Auber) (1).

Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Miss Emily Smith (P'st), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A large and brilliant audience" included The Governor and Major General Macarthur. The Choir sang "remarkably well." The Orchestra was praised for both overtures.

35 (34) THE MESSIAH (5) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"The Exhibition Bldg. was filled." The Governor was present. Press reports to 8" noted that the performance was "at least as satisfactory. ..as any previous effort of the Society." Mrs. Fox made the first of her 14 appearances as a soloist.

Six concerts, plus the assistance rendered at Mrs. Testa's farewell concert represented a heavy year's work when it is remembered that "Elijah" was in rehearsal over eight months. A copy of the Annual Report does not appear in the records but the Treasurer's report showed that, setting normal expenditure against revenue, a surplus of £65/6/7 was disclosed. On the library £84/9/4 was expended and about the same amount on the orchestra.

1858

36 (35) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (2) Exhibition Bldg. 5th Jan. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

This concert was given before the Annual Meeting as an extra to liquidate debts incurred during the previous two years when a new orchestra platform was built and pedal pipes fitted to the organ. Though musically a success, the receipts were £75/18/6 against expenses £121/18/8. The Committee borrowed £250 from its bank and the Society began its fifth year with a debt little exceeding this amount. Mr. E. M. Gibb was elected Secretary.

37 (36) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (4) 2nd Feb. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Madm. Vitelli, Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. John Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Master Charles Cook.

This concert was given for the benefit of the Indian Relief Fund. "The performance as a whole, most satisfactory." The band was strengthened by several members of the 40th Regiment. All performers gave their services gratis. Unfortunately the weather was unfavourable with the consequence that only £32 was available for the Fund.

38 (37) MISCELLANEOUS (20) 30th Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

"Twelfth Mass" (Mozart) (1), "Engedi" (Beethoven) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Master Charles Cook.

Nearly 1200 were present. "The concert was in every respect worthy of the character of the Society. ..the band maintained its reputation." There was praise for Mr. Goold. This and the next five concerts were conducted by Mr. Goold. In March, Mr. Russell, on account of ill-health, was compelled to resign. Reluctantly his resignation was accepted and Mr. Goold was elected to his place. Fortunately, Mr. Russell was able to resume duty in the new year. For the purpose of this record, Mr. Goold's tenure as Conductor is regarded as of a temporary nature.

39 (38) MISCELLANEOUS (21) 1st Jun. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

"The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (2), "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (2).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mons. E. Coulon (B).

The Governor and Major-General Macarthur were present. Press accounts to 10" praised the concert.

40 (39) MISCELLANEOUS (22) 20th Jul. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Organ solos, vocal solos, duets and quartette. "Now the Bright Morning Star" (Rev. R. Greville) (1), "Down in Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (3), "Haste Thee, Nymph" (Handel) (1), "The Sea Hath its Pearls" (Rutter) (2) "The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (1), "Now is the Month of Maying" (Gibbons) (1), "In Going to My Lonesome Bed" (Edwards) (1), Choruses from "Il Trovatore" (Verdi) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Andrews, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mons. Emilie Coulon (B)

Large attendance. The concert was generally praised. Mr. G. R. G. Pringle made his first appearance as Organist. Programme noted "Special train to and from St. Kilda."

41 (40) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (1) 21st Sep. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Batten (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"Very numerous attendance." "The Society merits more than common praise for so efficient a performance."

42 (41) MISCELLANEOUS (23) 15th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. 5th Sub.

Vocal solos. "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (4), "The Curfew" (Rutter) (1), "The Hunting, Song" (Benedict) (1). Overtures-"Der Freischutz" (Weber) (2), "Fidelio" (Beethoven) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A large and distinguished audience." Soloists and Chorus were praised. Mr. Farquharson's rendering of the music of "Polyphemus" called forth a furore of approbation. During the interval he was presented with an inscribed cup on the eve of his departure for India.

43 (42) THE MESSIAH (6) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. John Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Mitchell, Master Johnson.

"The attendance was very numerous" -including the Governor and suite. High praise for the Choir. The large Orchestra was attributed to both the theatres being closed and the orchestral forces at those establishments being disengaged.

The six subscription concerts plus two "extras" made a full year's work. Mr. Goold proved a capable substitute for Mr. Russell, thus materially helping the Society out of a difficult situation brought about by Mr. Russell's resignation early in the year. In June it was decided to establish a list of "Honorary Members," a distinction to be conferred on members for outstanding service upon retirement. The distinction carried two privilege tickets for each of the ordinary concerts. Mr. Russell was the first elected Honorary Member. Nowadays the list is restricted to fifty and 15 years service as a performing member qualifies for admission. One ticket for each concert is allowed. During the year, a sub-committee from the Society waited on the Government and presented a petition for a grant of land for the purpose of erecting a music hall. The reply was to the effect that the present state of the law would not admit of such a grant. Another scheme contemplated the erection of a music hall in conjunction with the Mechanics' Institution but was not pursued further. The growing interest in Melbourne in choral activities outside the domain of the Society was indicated by the advent of the German Liedertafel, the North Melbourne and Collingwood Societies. *None has survived to this day.* The year's operations showed a profit of £52/2/4. Expenditure on library and furniture amounted to £16. Liabilities at the close of the year stood at £263/11/1.

1859

44 (43) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (1) 15th Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (C), Mrs. Stewart Ellis (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. John Blanchard (B).

Attendance was "excellent". High praise was accorded the Choir but the Orchestra was below strength. Preliminary press notices described the work; accounts of the performance extended to 10". "All the professional talent was gratuitously contributed."

45 (44) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (2) 21st Mar. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Goodliffe (a), Mrs. Stewart Ellis (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. John Blanchard (B).

Repeated by command of the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly who was present with suite. The audience was "not so numerous". Improvement on earlier performance was noted.

46 (45) MISCELLANEOUS (24) 10th May Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos, duets and trios, pianoforte and violin solos. Chorus from "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (1), "Calm is the Glassy Ocean" (Mozart) (1), "Haste Thee, Nymph" (Handel) (2), "The Curfew" (Rutter) (2), "May Morning" (Novello) (1), "Come if You Dare" (Purcell) (1), "Now Tramp o'er Moss and Fell" (Bishop) (5). Overtures-"Semiramide" (Rossini) (2), "Zauberflöte" (Mozart) (2). Wedding March "Midsummer Night's Dream" (Mendelssohn) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Hancock (a), Mons. Emilie Coulon (B), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Herr Nestor Haagan (V'st), Mr. Lewis (P'st).

Large attendance. Congratulations from two press critics.

47 (46) MISCELLANEOUS (25) 9th Aug. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

"Handel Centenary Celebration" (2 concerts).

Vocal, solos and duets. Choruses from "Samson" (2) "Judas Maccabeus" (3), "Israel in Egypt" (4), Overture-"Samson" (2).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Miss Macarthy (S) , Miss Georgina Macarthy (a), Mrs. E. Hancock (a), Mrs. Goodlife (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. John Blanchard (B), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A very numerous and select audience." Press reports were at variance. The "Argus" report of 12" was very disparaging. The "Age" (19") "This first concert of the festival must be declared to be a great success". The "Herald" (26") tendered more praise than blame.

48 (47) THE MESSIAH (7) 11th Aug. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Georgina Macarthy (a), Mrs. E. Hancock (a), Mrs. Goodliffe (S), Miss Macarthy (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

The Hall was "crowded". All three press reports were unanimous in praising the performance. The "Age" (25")...we have never in the Colonies heard Handel's greatest work performed more efficiently, or listened to with more reverence or appreciation." The "Examiner" joined in the chorus of praise after devoting 36" to the first concert.

49 (48) MISCELLANEOUS (26) 13th Sep. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

"Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (3), "The Second Advent" (Rutter) .First performance.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S). Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A large and fashionable audience". The " Argus" report was inclined to be critical; two others found much to praise.

50 (49) THE CREATION (Haydn) (6) 11th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S). Mrs. E. Hancock (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"A numerous and highly respectable assembly". Three press reports agreed in a large measure of praise.

51 (50) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (3) 6th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 5th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. T. Ewart (T).

"The performance as a whole calls for high praise" but the Band "displayed inadequate rehearsal." In the part of the Prophet Mr. Farquharson achieved "a marked success."

52 (51) THE MESSIAH (8) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Mrs. E. Hancock (S) , Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

Large attendance. Press reports to 11 " warmly praised the performance and commented on the large Choir. The team of Principals was a particularly good one.

The Annual Report remarked that as to the Handel Centenary Celebrations held in August (2 concerts) , the special efforts put forth led to the choir being more than doubled. At the end of the year the figures stood - Sop. 57, Alto 34, Tenor

29, Bass 48, Band 13, total 181. Another welcome effect of the celebrations was to bring in nearly £400 to the funds which enabled the Treasurer to show a nett profit of £346/14/7 for the year. From this sum £95 was spent on the library and £88 on furniture, further, the liabilities from the previous year were liquidated, leaving a small balance in hand. During the year another move was made in the direction of obtaining a music hall. A financial scheme was propounded and the Government was again approached with regard to a grant of land. On this occasion the Government met the Society's wish and made available one half acre in Section 40, conditional that building was commenced by 30/6/60. This date was afterwards extended by one year but the project fell through, partly through reasons which will appear later. Mr. W. G. Dredge was the moving spirit in this regard. Over 90 years have elapsed since the Society set out on such a worthy quest. Further efforts were put forward subsequently but, alas, although Melbourne's population has since passed the million mark and, at long last, a permanent Orchestra has been established, no suitable music hall graces the chief centre of culture in Australia. Six subscription and three "extra" concerts must be conceded a full year's work. After the year's labours members held a highly successful "soiree" in the Exhibition Building.

1860

53 (52) MISCELLANEOUS (27) 6th Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

Vocal solos and duets. Chorus from "Oberon" (1), "Preciosa" (5), and "Der Freischutz (Weber) (1), "Bright Orb" (Bishop) (1), "Calm is the Sea" (Beethoven) (1), "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (1), "The Chough and the Crow" (Bishop) (3), Chorus from "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (2). Overtures- "Zampa" (Auber) (1), "Masaniello" (Auber) (2).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Signora Bianchi, Signor Bianchi, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

A large attendance included the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly. The solitary report in the Guard Book spoke in warm terms of the concert and added that there was "every augury of a successful season".

54 (53) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (2) 1st May, Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Batten (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"The building was filled." Audience included the Governor and Maj-Gen. Pratt. Apart from some blemishes it was a meritorious performance.

55 (54) MISCELLANEOUS (28) 3rd Jul. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos, duet and quartette. "Praise the Lord" (Elsasser) (1). First performance. Coronation Anthem (Handel) (2), "Quad, Quad, in Orbe" (Hummel) (1), "Ave Verum" (Mozart) (1), "Hallelujah" from "Mount of Olives" (Handel) (2).

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Watson, Miss E. Watson, Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Moxon (B), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Master Johnson (Alto).

Audience was "numerous" and included the Governor and suite. Press accounts were mainly concerned with descriptions of the works performed. Miss Amelia Bailey (afterwards Mrs. R. Smythe) made the first of her 25 appearances as soloist and Mr. Charles Blanchard did likewise in respect to 23 appearances. Mr. Blanchard became a teacher of singing in the State Schools and achieved considerable success. Miss S. Mortley made the first of her 15 appearances with the Society.

56 (55) MISCELLANEOUS (29) 28th Aug. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

"Alexander's Feast" (Handel) (1), "Lay of the Bell" (Romberg) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss A. Bailey (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. John Blanchard (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"A crowded audience." Chorus received praise but the Band was "occasionally out of tune." Miss Hamilton was the only professional principal; all of the others were members of the Society.

57 (56) MISCELLANEOUS (30) 23rd Oct. Exhibition Bldg. 5th Sub.

"Lauda Sion" (Mendelssohn). First performance in Victoria. "Third (Imperial) Mass" (Haydn) (2).

Miss A. Bailey (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).

Attendance was affected by heavy rain which lasted almost without intermission throughout the concert. The noise of the rain on the resounding roof "did not contribute beneficially to the harmony. ..." but the critics found little fault.

58 (57) THE MESSIAH (9) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 6th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Miss A. Bailey (S), Miss J. King, Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. J. Hinchcliffe (B), Mr. S. Angus (B), Master Cook (Alto), Mr. Fletcher (C).

"The E.B. was crowded to excess by an appreciative audience". Praise for a good performance.

The year began on a happy note. At the Annual Meeting, Major-General Macarthur presented to the Society a Collard grand piano "because it is one that has already conferred infinite social benefits on this community." As already noted, the first concert indicated "every augury of a successful season." Although ushered in so auspiciously, the year 1860 proved to be a critical one for the Society and marks the first crisis in its history. Dissension arose among the members and threatened to break up the seven years old body. Without going into the causes it is "enough to say that party feeling ran high and that a number of valuable members seceded from the parent Society to join the Musical Union under the leadership of Mr. Pringle." The effect of the dissension was reflected in the year's work; public appearances declined to six, the lowest for anyone year to date, while, for the first time, the years operations disclosed a loss - £51/12/9 (£78 was nevertheless spent on the library). Also for the first time, no entrance fee was required of prospective performing members. No return of members appears in the Annual Report; possibly the omission was, in the circumstances, intentional. At the conclusion of the Christmas concert, Mr. Russell laid down his baton for the last time, thereby concluding a period of nearly seven years as the Society's first Conductor. Doubtless he did so with considerable satisfaction to himself; certainly as to the Society and the musical world of Melbourne. Under his control and despite the social turmoil and difficulties of the time, the Society was

successfully launched and established as the premier musical body in the young Colony. Numerically it had grown from a small Orchestra and a Choir of forty voices to a body approaching two hundred performers, while in the process a tradition was founded to inspire future conductors and performers. The foregoing pages clearly indicate Mr. Russell's undoubted talents as a musician and leader. In the Society's annals he, accordingly, holds a unique and honoured place. It is pleasing to note that, as already mentioned, Mr. Russell was elected the Society's first Honorary Member. Mr. Peake mentions a complimentary concert given to Mr. Russell in the sixties (in which he, as a lad, took part) but there is no trace of it in the records. The predominant influence of Handel in respect of major works performed during this period will be appreciated from the following table of performances:-

Performances		
The Messiah	(Handel)	9 (1) Cond. by Mr. T. G. Goold.
Judas Maccabeaus	"	4
Israel in Egypt	"	2
Samson	"	2
The Creation.	(Haydn)	6
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	3
St. Paul.	"	2 (1) Cond. by Mr. T. G. Goold.
Miscellaneous		<u>30</u> (4) Cond. by Mr. T. G. Goold.
		58
Assisted		<u>1</u>
		59

The foundation President, Mr. Justice Barry, remained in office during the whole of this period but changes took place in all other offices. Details will be found in the Appendix. It remains to note that up to the last year, the affairs of the Society -financial and general -were wisely directed. The heavy annual programming must have called for much labour and care on the part of the Committee to which performing members responded loyally. A summary of the financial accounts for the seven years discloses the following results.

	Total	Average per Concert
Receipts from Concerts (48)	£4,631/18/3	£96/10/0
Subscribers' Fees	<u>2,183/18/11</u>	<u>45/10/0</u>
Total from Concerts	£6,815/17/2	£142/0/0
Expenditure on Concerts	<u>4,955/10/5</u>	<u>103/4/9</u>
Profit from Concerts.	£1,860/6/9	£38/15/3
Other Income:		
Nett return from Exhibition Concerts (7)	£236/16/8	
Performing Members' Subs.	586/5/5	
Hire of Furniture	171/12/0	
Hire of Music.	7/10/0	
Sundries	<u>115/15/0</u>	
	£2,978//10	
General Expenditure	<u>2,059/6/1</u>	
Nett Profit	£918/19/9	

CHAPTER III. HERR ELSASSER'S CONDUCTORSHIP

The dissension referred to in the previous chapter came to a head at the Annual Meeting (21/1/61). According to the "Argus" chronicler, the meeting "betrayed strong symptoms of mutiny but the firm attachment of the old members pulled the Society through the ordeal". Mr. Russell, however, resolutely declined to continue in office and Herr Elsasser was elected in his stead. The meeting decided to reduce the subscription concerts from six to four and the new Committee was recommended to obtain the services of an honorary secretary. Yielding to "universal wish", Mr. W. G. Dredge again assumed office. There is no doubt that his whole-hearted enthusiasm for all things Philharmonic, combined with his happy relations with all members saved the Society from further disintegration. Furthermore, due to his untiring efforts, "many valuable members, vocal and instrumental, returned to their allegiance" and the door was held open for a final reconciliation which, happily, took place a few years later in circumstances which will be noted.

Mr. Russell's retirement, as it proved, presented the Society with the major problem of finding a competent conductor. The quest was to extend over nearly six years, during which time four aspirants were "tried out" before the problem was solved. The first of the four was Herr Elsasser whom Mr. Peake described as "a typical German musician of the old school - genial, pleasant and scholarly. He was one of the early Melbourne composers whose compositions were occasionally performed by the musical societies of the period". His tenure as Conductor lasted one full year as the following record will show.

1861

59 (58) THE CREATION (Haydn) (7) 9th Apr. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Mrs. E. Hancock (C), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. S. Moxon (B).

The building "presented a gay and fashionable appearance." The Governor, Sir Henry Barkly and Lady Barkly and suite were present. "The performance on the whole, highly creditable. ...the instrumentation was excellent." The programme announced "trains and omnibuses to and from all suburbs."

60 (59) THE CREATION (Haydn) (8) 23rd Apr. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Same Principals as before, plus Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

A special concert given for the benefit of the widow and family of the late Mr. W. B. Wray, Organist. The sum of £100 was raised.

61 (60) MISCELLANEOUS (31) 11th Jun. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos, duets and quartette. "Lay of the Bell" (Romberg) (2) , "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (2), "The Curfew" (Rutter) (3), Choruses from "Euryanthe" (Weber) (1). Overtures-"Fidelio" (Beethoven) (2) , "Der Freischutz"

(Weber) (3). Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"Large Audience." The Governor, Sir Henry Barkly and suite attended. Press notices to 12" extended praise for all sections and the Conductor.

62 (61) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (4) 30th Jul. Theatre Royal. Extra

Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Miss Georgina Hodson (C), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

Despite unpropitious weather, a large attendance. This and the two following concerts were given in conjunction with Lyster's Grand Opera Co., the Chorus and Orchestra of each body joining forces. The programme announced "over 300 performers". Warm praise was extended to Conductor and all sections.

63 (62) THE CREATION (Haydn) (9) 31st Jul. Theatre Royal. Extra.

Madm. Lucy Escott (S) , Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

The performance was generally praised.

64 (63) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (5) 1st Aug. Theatre Royal. Extra.

Soloists as in concert No.62, plus Mr. T. Ewart (T), and Mr. S. Angus (B).

Neither the "Age" or "Argus" reported the concert (A parliamentary election was in progress).

65 (64) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (3) 18th Sep. Theatre Royal 3rd Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. E. A. Beaumont (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Richardson (B).

"Despite stormy weather, the arrival of the mail and other adverse circumstances, there was a good attendance." Press accounts indicate generally a good performance.

66 (65) MISCELLANEOUS (32) 30th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos and trio. "Bright Orb" (Bishop) (2), "On the Sea" (Mendelssohn) (1), "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (3), "Home" (Mendelssohn) (1), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (6).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Miss S. Mortley (S) .

Due to unfavourable weather, only about 500 persons were present. The concert was "decidedly successful."

67 (66) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (5) 8th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S) , Miss S. Mortley (S) , Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Richardson (B).

The performance was "very favourably received by an audience numbering about 400 people." Miss Liddle made the first of her 12 appearances with the Society as Soloist and Mr. Exon likewise began 30 appearances.

68 (67) MISCELLANEOUS (33) 22nd Nov. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos and duet. Chorus from "Alexander's Feast (Handel) (1), Chorus from "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (3), "My Heart from its Terror Reposes" (Macfarren's "Robin Hood") (1), "Farewell, Sweet May" (Elsasser) (1), "Night, Lovely Night" (Berger) (1). Overture - "Fidelio" (Beethoven) (3), Symphonies – D Major (Haydn) (1), C Major (Mozart) (1).

Miss Harriet Gordon (S), Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

A brief press report was favourable.

69 (68) MISCELLANEOUS (34) 7th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duet and quartette. Organ and pianoforte solos. Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mons. Boulanger (P'st). Four choruses from "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (4), Three choruses from "Lay of the Bell" (Romberg) (1), Chorus from "Oberon" (Weber) (2), "Spring" (Muller) (1), "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn's "The Creation") (2), "O Hills, O Vales of Pleasure" (Mendelssohn) (1).

Closing night of the Exhibition. "A crowded building, where everyone is walking about in search of novelty is not the best place for any set musical entertainment... the choruses were well rendered."

70 (69) THE MESSIAH (10) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Julia Matthews (S), Mrs. Webster (C), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. W. H. Williams (T). Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"An unusually large audience...the performance was...a most interesting one. ..the orchestra which included some of our best performers, was highly efficient."

The Annual Report referred to "the commercial depression" and states the strength of the performing members as Soprano 57, Alto 18, Tenor 40, Bass 36, Band 14 - Total 165.

Herr Elsasser's term concluded with the Christmas concert: in the new year another Conductor was elected on his nomination. Despite the brevity of Herr Elsasser's conductorship, the year's work -12 concerts (4 subscription, 5 extra and 3 in association with Lyster's Royal Opera Co.) constitutes a record for the Society. Truly a remarkable effort! The "loyalists" it seems, were determined that, in spite of dissension and desertion, the Society was not to go down in defeat. Financially, however, the situation had not materially improved. The number of subscribing members fell off considerably. On the other hand subscriptions from performing members increased from £29/18/6 in 1860 to £37/5/6 in 1861, although the rate had been reduced from one guinea to a half guinea early in the year. The three concerts given with the Opera Co. netted £70/10/0 and the four special "Exhibition" concerts returned £100 but over all the net profit was only £39/1/6 while liabilities stood at £258/0/6, a disappointing result having regard to the prodigious effort of the year.

Concerts given during the year are summarised thus:-

	Performances
The Creation (Haydn)	3
Elijah (Mendelssohn)	2
Israel in Egypt (Handel)	1
Judas Maccabeaus	1
The Messiah	1
Miscellaneous.	<u>4</u>
	12

CHAPTER IV. C. E. HORSLEY'S CONDUCTORSHIP

Among those immigrants from England who arrived in Melbourne in December, 1861, was Charles Edward Horsley. Born in London in 1822, he was a grandson of Dr. J. W. Callcott and a son of William Horsley. Both forebears were notable musicians and composers, the latter having helped to form the London Philharmonic Society (now Royal) in 1813. As Charles Edward afterwards directed the musical activities of the Melbourne Society for three years, an interesting link is thus established between the Royal London Philharmonic Society - claimed to be the second oldest concert organisation in the world -and the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society, the oldest in the British Commonwealth outside of Great Britain (*and now held to be the fourth oldest in the world – ed.*). Charles Edward Horsley followed the family tradition. As a young man he became the friend and pupil of Mendelssohn. Later he established himself in the forefront of the musicians of his time by his writings and compositions in widely different fields of music. Although his arrival in Melbourne was unannounced, his fame had preceded him; to quote the "Argus" chronicler "all classes joined in feeling that a new musical era had dawned for Melbourne".

Of him, Mr. Peake wrote "... (he) was not only immeasurably superior as a musician to those who preceded him but also to those who followed him. ... In accepting the position of conductor of the M.P.S., in 1862, he was undoubtedly conferring an honour upon the Society. They could not add lustre to his name, which was then at its zenith, but they conferred the highest musical honour which it was in their power to bestow, and his nomination by Herr Elsasser was peculiarly gracious. Mr. Horsley's genius, wide experience and splendid associations, gave him an easy ascendancy over all his Melbourne confreres, while his fund of anecdote and ability as a raconteur added a charm to his personality which increased his popularity on all sides. But this species of popularity is not always calculated to develop those qualities which are so essential in the conduct of a large society. His life appeared to be marred by weaknesses which could not fail to affect his influence. As a church organist, he was known to become absolutely oblivious to all around him. The practice of extemporising immediately before the last verse of the final hymn was much in vogue in those days. On one occasion, it was said that the organist of St. Peter's Church, Melbourne, invited Mr. Horsley to play the last hymn and concluding voluntary. Poor Horsley was soon in the clouds and continued at such interminable length, that the Incumbent, the late Canon Hadfield, had to send the verger to stop him. The sudden shock of returning to earth is said to have brought him to the floor. This is probably an exaggeration but the fiat went forth that Mr. Horsley was not to receive a second invitation. In the orchestra, if the players were proceeding satisfactorily he would frequently place his baton on the desk and cease beating until near the finish. A story is told that on one occasion, forgetting a silent bar before a fortissimo lead, he gave a terrific down beat. As the orchestra did not respond, the force of the beat disturbed his balance, and he fell to the floor. As a man of conspicuous ability and genius he could not fail to exert a powerful influence over the Society and the public generally. ... It was said that he was a most erratic conductor, and quite incapable of beating time with any degree of clearness, but old musicians who knew him declared he could do something infinitely better, namely give an interpretation of the work and make his orchestra talk."

Such was the man who was to lead and direct the Society for three years -the second in the quest for a competent conductor. Concerts given under his baton are listed as follow.

1862

71 (70) MISCELLANEOUS (35) 8th Apr. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

"Requiem" (Mozart) (1). First performance in Australia. "Engedi" (Beethoven) (2), "God Save The Queen." Arranged for solo voices, Choir and Orchestra by the Conductor for the Society. "Dead March in Saul" (Handel) (1).

Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Miss Georgina Hodson (C), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

"Audience was very numerous and select" including the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly and suite. The

"Requiem" was given in memory of His late Royal Highness, - Prince

Consort. Press reports to 17" praised the singers and instrumentalists. "Concert was undoubtedly one of the best that has ever taken place in Melbourne." At the request of the Governor, the National Anthem (as arranged) was repeated.

72 (71) MISCELLANEOUS (36) 8th Jul. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos and quartettes. "Too Late" (C. E. Horsley) (1), "Stars of the Summer Night" (Rutter) (1) .Both first performances. Hymn of Praise (Mendelssohn) (1). Symphony No.8 (Beethoven) (1). First performance in Australia. Overture-"William Tell" (Rossini) (1).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Miss E. Neville, Mr. E. A. Beaumont (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"The concert as a whole must be regarded as one of the most successful the Society has ever given."

73 (72) MISCELLANEOUS (37) 7th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

"Comus" (C. E. Horsley) (1), "Inauguration Ode" (W. S. Bennett) (1), "Grand Triumphal March" (Auber) (1), Overture-"En forme de March" ("Exhibition") (Meyer-beer) (1). *All first performances in Australia.* "Hallelujah" (2), and Chorus from Handel's "Messiah" (2).

Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

This was the first of three concerts arranged as "THE MELBOURNE SECOND TRIENNIAL MUSICAL FESTIVAL" of which the proceeds were to be divided between the Melbourne Hospital, Benevolent Asylum, Lying-in-hospital and the Society. Band and Chorus numbered nearly 300. Attendance of about 1600 included Sir Henry Barkly, Lady Barkly and suite. Press notices extended to 21", mainly by way of description. The concert was praised but the Orchestra did not escape criticism. The circumstances attendant on the performances of the "International Exhibition Music" -composed expressly for and performed at the inauguration of the Exhibition in London in the previous May -are worthy of mention. While in London, the President (Sir Redmond Barry) wrote to the Society, stating that he was sending the music as a gift. In anticipation of the arrival of full scores, the Committee announced their performance. Unfortunately, only the piano copies arrived. Rather than postpone the performance, the Conductor, at the cost of much time and labour, scored the works for a full Orchestra. The Society's appreciation was expressed by a special vote of thanks and the presentation of a cheque for 20 guineas. No specific claim has been made by the Society as First performances in Australia, but as the facts point very strongly to that conclusion, the three items have been classified as such in this record.

74 (73) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (3) 9th Oct. Exhibiton Bldg. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. E. A. Beaumont (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B).

A lessened attendance. Press reports to 17" were favourable. "As a whole, it was decidedly satisfactory."

75 (74) MISCELLANEOUS (38) 11th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and quartette. "Inauguration Ode" (W. S. Bennett) (2), "Hunting Chorus" (G. O. Rutter) (1), Chorus from "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (5), Chorus from "Euryanthe" (Weber) (2), "Bright Orb" (Bishop) (3). Pianoforte Concerto "Concert Stuck" (Weber) (1), First performance in Melbourne, "Fifth Symphony" (Beethoven) (1), First performance in Australia. Overtures-"Jessonda" (Spohr) (1), "Exhibition" (Meyerbeer) (2).

Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Isoline Mercante (S), Madm. Sara Flower (C), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. L. L. Lewis (P'st).

Good attendance. An enjoyable concert but encores prolonged the finish till after 11 o'clock. In reporting the third concert and reviewing the Festival, the "Argus" writer's comments extended to 27". "Artistically, the Festival was a great advance on that of 1859. "Such performances" wrote the "Argus" chronicler, "were unprecedented in the colony." Financially it was a failure and involved the Society in a loss of £84. Divided Interest was the explanation -"Simultaneously with the announcement of the Festival appeared notices of an Opera Season of 50 nights. ..the subscription of £10 or an average of 4/- each night, while by the Rules, the Society's prices were fixed at 7/6 each reserved seat. Further, during the past year unusual demands have been made on the public purse in numerous channels as In the various Relief Funds rendered necessary from the unparalleled distress in England, etc., and the additional supplies required for public charities."

78 (75) ABRAHAM (Molique) (1) 9th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Batten (C), Mr. T. J. Jackman (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. R. Farquharson (B). Press reports to 16" were mainly concerned with description of and comments on the work itself. "The Orchestra was only moderately good."

77 (78) THE MESSIAH (Handel (II) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mrs. Batten (C), Mr. T. J. Jackson (T), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"An immense audience which crowded the entire floor ." Press reports to 16" were favourable. The Chorus numbered 130 and the Band 50 performers. "Nor has the oratorio ever been given in the colony with more complete effect."

The year closed, as usual, with a performance of "The Messiah" on Christmas Eve, "when, for the first time, there was a rival performance in the Theatre Royal, the Musical Union supplying the necessary extra Chorus." Musically, the work of the year exceeded all former achievements but the financial result was most unsatisfactory. Every concert showed a loss, the total of which even the subscribers' fees failed to extinguish. In part, this was due to the galleries of the Exhibition being declared unsafe and were accordingly closed. In the circumstances the cost per concert, £52/10/0 apart from professional fees, was a

heavy burden, For the year the nett loss reached the unprecedented total of £817/16/3, apart from expenditure of £111 on the library. Worse still, the liabilities at the close stood at the staggering sum of £762/9/3.

1863

78 (77) THE CREATION (Haydn) (10) 3rd Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mr. T. J. Jackman (T), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Farquharson (B). "A large and fashionable audience." Press reports to 17" indicated a "satisfactory performance."

79 (78) David (C. E. Horsley) (1) 30th Jun. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Helen Watson (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. E. Amery (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).

Audience of "nearly a thousand persons." Extended press reports up to 22" described the work and appended comments on the performance. The Band and Chorus numbered about 200. "Performers and vocalists and instrumentalists alike did themselves the highest credit." First performed by the Liverpool Philharmonic Society in 1850. Miss Bertha Watson's appearance was the first of 17 with the Society.

80 (79) David (c. E. Horsley) (2) 28th Jul. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Helen Watson (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

The audience was "numerous and discriminating" and included the Governor and Lady Barkly and suite. Again extended press reports appeared which indicated "an improved performance."

81 (80) MISCELLANEOUS (39) 6th Oct. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos and duets. "The First Walpurgis Night" (Mendelssohn) (1), Three choruses from "Alexander's Feast" (Handel) (2). Overtures-"Euryanthe" (Weber) (1), "L'Etoile du Nord" (Meyerbeer) (1), Symphony No.4 (Mozart) (1). All three first performances in Victoria.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. H. Wharton (B).

"A larger and more brilliant audience has seldom gathered in the building." The new Governor, Sir Charles Henry Darling, Lady Darling and Miss Darling were present. "A highly successful concert."

82 (81) THE MESSIAH (12) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Henry Wharton (B).

A large audience. Press reports to 15" agreed as to the excellence of the performance. "Altogether, the performance was worthy of the Society and its Conductor."

The serious position in which the Society found itself at the end of 1862 called for review of the situation and special efforts to meet it Accordingly, at the Annual Meeting (19/1/63) certain decisions were made. To raise additional funds, an addition to Rule 4 was made, reading "A donation of £10/0/0 by any person to the fund of the Society shall constitute that person to be a Life Subscriber to the Society and to be admitted to each subscription concert". The immediate effect was the admission of three Life Subscribers. Another change read 'That admission to the Society's concerts should be limited to subscribers'. Energetic action followed and resulted in subscribers' fees attaining £425/16/6, nearly double the total of 1862. While four subscribers' and one extra concert were presented, a substantial reduction in general expenses was attained. It is interesting to note that "the amateur band has been materially strengthened and this increase has also reduced the expenses of concerts by £23/16/0, i.e. £122/11/0 in 1863 as against £146/7/0 in 1862.

An improved financial position was revealed by the accounts; although the bank was in credit to the extent of 10d. only, the year's results showed a net profit of £148/8/4 and a reduction in liabilities to £544/12/6. Naturally the annual report revealed a hopeful tone, especially as the Committee was able to refer to a recent decision that "the proposed town hall *It was opened in 1870.* itself shall be of the best known acoustic proportions, similar to the Philharmonic Hall of Liverpool". In urging still greater efforts, the Committee concluded by remarking, "The Society has been now established for ten years, and has risen from very small beginnings to the proud position of the First Musical Association in the Southern World. Its doings are watched with interest and recorded by the musical press in England and so long as the members are true to the spirit in which the Society began, 'as amateurs meeting for the cultivation and diffusion of classical instrumental. and vocal music' they cannot fail."

1864

83 (82) MISCELLANEOUS (40) 22nd Mar. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

"Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (4), "The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (3).

Miss Emma Howson (S) , Miss Bertha Watson (S) , Miss Clelia Hawson (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Frank Howson (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

"Unusually large audience". The Governor, Lady Darling and suite were present. Press accounts extended to 17". "The directors of the Society may safely congratulate themselves on. ..one of the most decided successes of 13 years."

84 (83) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (4) 21st Jun. Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Miss Bertha Watson (S) , Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B) .

"The attendance was very numerous" and included the Governor and Lady Darling. "A very efficient performance."

85 (84) MISCELLANEOUS (41) 17th Aug. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets, trios and quartette. "The Heavens are Telling" (3) and choruses from "The Creation" (Haydn) (1), "David" (C. E. Horsley) (2).

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss S. Mortley (S), Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. Moxon (B), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. John Blanchard (B), Master J. Cook.

The attendance was affected by unfavourable weather. Members of the Masonic Lodges attended in full regalia. The choruses, with exceptions, were sung with steadiness but the work of the Band was criticised. Mr. Donaldson made the first of his 20 appearances with the Society and Mr. Pringle re-appeared as Organist. The concert was given in aid of the Melbourne Orphan Asylum.

86 (85) MISCELLANEOUS (42) 20th Sep. Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos, duets and trios. "Not Unto Us, O Lord" (Mendelssohn) (1) and "The Easter Morning" (Neukomm) (1). Both first performances in Victoria. "The Curfew" (G. O. Rutter) (4), "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (4), "In Going to My Lonesome Bed" (Edwards) (2). Oboe Concerto (Kalliwoda) (1). Overture - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (1). Symphony No.2 (Haydn) (1). First performance in Victoria.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S) , Miss Bertha Watson (S) , Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. Henry Wilkinson, Signor Castelli (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. Schott (Oboe) .

Good attendance. The concert was generally praised but the trumpets in the band were censured.

87 (86) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (6) 15th Nov. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Octavia Hamilton (S), Miss Bertha Watson (8), Madm. Stuttaford (C), Signor Castelli (T), Mr. R. Farquharson (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B). (Madm. Stuttaford was a sister of Mr. G. R. G. Pringle).

"Fittingly witnessed by a crowded audience which included His Excellency Sir Charles Darling and Major-General Chute, the two patrons of the Association." "Argus", "An able though not extraordinary performance". "Age", "The oratorio was performed. ..in a manner superior to any of the previous efforts of the Society."

88 (87) THE MESSIAH (Handel) (13) 24th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Mrs. Testar (8), Madm. Stuttaford (C), Signor Castelli (T), Mr. F. Howson (B), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Mr. E. Exon (T) .

"Exhibition. ..densely crowded". "Taking it all, we may congratulate Melbourne on the possession of such performers in chorus, on instruments and in solo." Early leavers disturbed listeners in the final choruses and, twice, Mr. Horsley stopped the performance "till all was still."

During the year, the Government strengthened the galleries of the Exhibition Building. It was decided to admit the public thereto (ground floor for subscribers) , accordingly additional revenue was obtained. The Christmas concert was treated as an "extra" to the four subscription concerts, with benefit to the revenue. Failing health led to the retirement of the Ron. Secretary, Mr. W. G. Dredge and the Annual Report recorded in grateful terms his outstanding and continuous services to the Society since its inception. A benefit concert in acknowledgement was planned. In referring to the weekly rehearsals, the report stated "frequent presence of numerous subscribers has testified to the interest felt in the Society's doings." Again the committee looked forward to the completion of the proposed new town hall-"when this is completed, the greatest hindrance to the Society's progress will be removed". The financial accounts disclosed a nett profit of £121/10/3 apart from £29/3/6 spent on the library. The bank account increased to £46/8/10 and liabilities to £598/13/3.

1865

89 (88) MISCELLANEOUS (43) 7th Feb. Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and trios. 'Hymn of Praise' (Mendelssohn) (2) , Choruses from Israel in Egypt" (5), "Engedi" (Handel) (1), and "The Creation" (2) including 'The Heavens are Telling' (Haydn) (4).

Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss G. Warden (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Charles Blandchard (B).

The concert was arranged as a testimonial to Mr. W. G . Dredge. Duties of Conductor were shared by Mr. C. E. Horsley, Mr. John Russell, Herr Elsasser, and Mr. T. G. Goold. Organists were Mr. T. G. Goold, Mr. L. L. Lewis and Mr. G. R. G. Pringle. Unfortunately, unfavourable weather affected the attendance. There was little criticism; 'Hymn of Praise' was brilliantly executed.

90 (89) MISCELLANEOUS (44) 11th Apl. Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.

"Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (1) First performance in Australia. "Requiem" (Mozart) (2). "Dead March in Saul" (Handel) (2).

Miss Bertha Watson (S) , Miss Sarah Mortley (S) , Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B). "Numerously and fashionably attended". The concert generally was praised. The "Requiem" was given as a tribute of respect to the memory of the late Mr. W. G. Dredge, late Hon. Secretary and one of the "stalwarts" of the Society since its formation. Mr. Dredge died with in a fortnight of his benefit concert.

As it proved, the April concert was the last given under Mr. Horsley. "Towards the close of 1864," wrote Mr. Peake, "the musical atmosphere of the Society was becoming disturbed and Mr. Horsley's position was made uncomfortable." After the concert mentioned, he resigned. He sought re-election at the following Annual Meeting but was rejected. So closed a conductorship over three years, which indicates the capacity and versatility of the leader. The list of "first performances" is a very impressive one and there is no doubt that the musical stature of the Society was substantially increased at a time when the young Colony was "settling down" after the hectic days of the fifties. Unfortunately outstanding musical gifts were not accompanied by the stability of personal character necessary in one who was entrusted with the destinies of a large musical society. Nevertheless in three short years, Mr. Horsley made an appreciable and significant contribution to the musical world of Melbourne in general and to the Melbourne Philharmonic Society in particular. Concerts given during this period are summarised thus:

Performances		
The Messiah	(Handel)	3
The Creation	(Haydn)	1
St Paul.	(Mendelssohn)	1
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	1
Abraham.	(Moliue)	1
David	(C. E. Horsley)	2
Israel in Egypt	(Handel)	1
Miscellaneous		<u>10</u>
		20

CHAPTER V. G. R. G. PRINGLE'S CONDUCTORSRIP

It will be recalled that when the Society was rent with dissension in 1860, one of those who seceded was the Ron. Organist, Mr. G. R. G. Pringle. As stated, he and some at least of the dissenting spirits, proceeded to form a rival body known as the Musical Union under the conductorship of Mr. Pringle. The new body had but a short life and its death left the seceders free to return to their first allegiance. Among those who so repented was Mr. Pringle who in due course resumed his post as Ron. Organist at the concert given on 17/8/64, as already noted. On Mr. Horsley's resignation he was elected to take up the baton and thus became the third aspirant to be "tried out" in the quest for a leader. Another to join the ranks of the Society was Mr. E. Quiney, Ron. Secretary of the late Musical Union. He was elected in place of the late Mr. W. G. Dredge. Mr. Pringle's tenure of office lasted for one year, concerts given in that time were as follows:

1865

91 (90) MISCELLANEOUS (45) 13th June, Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.
Vocal solos, " Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (2). Overtures-"Son and Stranger" (Mendelssohn) (1), "William Tell" (Rossini) (2) , Second Symphony (Beethoven) (1).
Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss G. Warden (S), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Madm. Stuttaford (S).
Good attendance. Generally the concert received praise which included the instrumentalists. The " Argus" writer expressed the opinion "that in him (Mr. Pringle) the Society has secured a Conductor whose care, intelligence and decision have already secured the confidence of the band and chorus."

92 (91) THE CREATION (Haydn) (11) 5th Sept., Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.
Miss Bertha Watson (S), Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Mr. T. Ewart (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).
"A numerous and fashionable audience". Press reports to 13" tendered qualified praise.

93 (92) MISCELLANEOUS (46) 7th Nov., Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.
"The First Walpurgis Night" (Mendelssohn) (2) , Mass in C (Beethoven) (2), Sixth Symphony (Mozart) (2).
Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. Labertouche (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).
"Numerous attendance". Mr. David Lee's name first appears as Organist. Press reports to 11 " generally praised the concert.

94 (93) THE MESSIAH (14) 23rd Dec., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
Mrs. Testar (S), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).
"A large and enthusiastic audience." The only press report available tendered praise for all parts.

The six concerts given equalled the previous year's public appearances and Mr. Pringle's conductorship found favour with the press critics. The annual report recorded a falling off in subscribers and public support. As a result, the accounts showed a loss of £84/19/6 for the year. Liabilities at the close stood at the ominous total of £721/2/6. Deep regret was expressed at the death of Mr. W. G. Dredge. The performing members numbered, Soprano 55, Alto 26, Tenor 41, Bass 39, Band 18, total 179.

1866

At the Annual Meeting (16/1/66) Mr. Rorsley was nominated for the position of Conductor against Mr. Pringle. A ballot resulted in the election of Mr. Pringle; the voting being 42-25. Mr. Rorsley took the verdict in good spirit but indicated that nothing would induce him to act as Conductor again. In recognition of his services he was elected as a Life Member. Mr. E. Quiney was re-elected as Ron. Secretary. The "Argus" chronicler noted that the annual meeting in 1866 "proved that the seceding element of 1860 had now become prominent in the parent society." Thus the unhappy dissension and "break-away" of 1860 became but memories in a Society happily reunited. It was fortunate, as it proved, that reconciliation was not further delayed. Failing public support and a staggering burden of debt provided a sufficiently depressing opening for the new year. With a view to reducing the Society's liabilities, it was decided to give a "benefit" concert before commencing the ordinary business of the year .The "benefit" was given on the 10th April, but although Principals and Band gave gratuitous services, a loss of £2/3/10 was incurred. Another effect of the concert in question-plus some other causes-was to compress the year's programming into the last six months of the year.

95 (-) Concert given on 10th Apr ., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
No record has been preserved, neither did the press report the concert.

96 (94) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (6) 17th Jul., Exhibition Bldg. Ist Sub.

Mrs. J. C. Ellis (S), Miss Ivey (C), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. E. Amery (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B) .

Unfavourable weather affected the attendance. Generally a good performance. Press reports to 10".

After the July concert, ill health obliged Mr. Pringle to resign from the conductorship. His tenure of office was short and uneventful, but his assumption of the baton helped the Society to carry on at a difficult time. His return to the Society doubtless influenced other seceders to return to the fold and happily reunite a Society struggling with financial burdens that were fast becoming intolerable. Summary of works performed - during Mr. Pringle's conductorship:

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	1
Judas Maccabeus	(Handel)	1
The Creation.	(Haydn)	1
Miscellaneous		<u>3</u>
		6

CHAPTER VI. DAVID LEE'S CONDUCTORSHIP (I)

Mr. Pringle was succeeded by Mr. David Lee, who, it will be recalled, had acted as Organist since the 92nd concert. His succession-Organist, Conductor-was thus in line with Mr. Pringle's progression. Mr. Lee was the fourth aspirant "tried out" by the Society in its six-year old quest for a Conductor. Fortunately for the Society, in the present case, the new leader proved equal to the demands of his new office and, furthermore, he was to show that he possessed resolution and courage in sufficient measure to steer the Society through the second and greatest crisis in its history.

Of Mr. Lee, Mr. Peake-who had intimate knowledge of his subject-wrote at length. His comments are, of course, those of one musician appraising another. However, accepting them as such, an extract will conveniently serve to introduce the new leader. "Mr. Lee", he wrote, "was a musician of undoubted ability, shrewd, business like and full of energy. Mainly by his own personal exertions and natural gifts he rose from a bank clerk to become one of the most successful and popular musicians in the Colony. Leaving the banking business, he became a piano tuner, organist of Collins Street Independent Church, Conductor of the Philharmonic Society, City Organist, music seller and organ builder. He was ever on good terms with himself, bright and cheery in disposition, and generally successful in impressing his friends with the value of his ability. His advice to the chorus "to keep one eye on the Conductor and one on the music" came bubbling to the surface with great frequency, much to his own enjoyment. His keen business instinct possibly affected his musical judgment, while his bonhomie and personal popularity probably disarmed criticism, much to his own disadvantage as a public musician. His musical enterprise appeared to be influenced by a desire to please the public and win popularity rather than promote the educational and progressive advance of musical art. His troops of friends and easily-won popularity were not calculated to lead to any continuous development of his natural gifts and fine musical talent. Altogether he gained an ascendancy in the Philharmonic Society which made him aggressive and difficult to manage, and enabled him to defeat the strong personal force of some very able men on the committee. When Mr. Lee commenced duties as Conductor, the Society was in anything but a flourishing condition. There were no visiting star vocalists; they were unable to engage a really competent orchestra, and were still heavily in debt; consequently the new Conductor of the Society had a hard row to hoe. His nature, however, was not easily daunted, and, confident that many improvements might be effected notwithstanding these serious drawbacks, he commenced..." An account of the first period of his conductorship follows.

1866

97 (95) MISCELLANEOUS (47) 11th Sep., st. George's Hall. 2nd Sub.

"The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (4), "As the Hart Pants" (Mendelssohn) (3), March from "Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (1).

Mrs. J. C. Ellis (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

The "Argus" report to 12" noted that the hall was "so much better adapted for music than any. ..previously occupied" and accorded general praise for all sections in both choral works and the March, also congratulations on Mr. Lee's first appearance as Conductor. In the absence of an organ a harmonium was used. No professional artists were engaged, the principals were drawn from the chorus. The names of 35 players in the Orchestra appear on the programme.

98 (96) MISCELLANEOUS (48) 22nd Oct., st. George's Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Praise Jehovah" (Mendelssohn) (1), Mass in C (Mozart) (2), Symphony in C (No.6) (Mozart) (3).

Mrs. J. C. Ellis (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. E. Amery (B).

"Not a large attendance". "Notwithstanding the defects which candour compels us to notice. ..was highly creditable to the leader, conductor and committee of management".

99 (97) MISCELLANEOUS (49) 29th Nov., st. George's Hall. 4th Sub.

.'Acls and Galatea" (Handel) (5), Inauguration Ode (W. S. Bennett) (3). Overture-"Exhibition" (Meyerbeer) (3), Grand Triumphal March (Auber) (2).

Mrs. J. C. Ellis (S), Signor Castelli (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"Attendance was unusually large". General praise for all of the programme. The Orchestra was assisted by the Band of the 14th Regiment.

100 (98) THE MESSIAH (15) 24th Dec., St. George's Hall. Extra.

Mrs. J. C. Ellis (S), Miss M. A. Liddle (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

The building "was crowded". The Governor and members of his family attended. The performance, on the whole, was very satisfactory and Mr. Lee was complimented. In the absence of an organ, a harmonium was used.

101 (99) THE MESSIAH (16) 25th Dec., St. George's Hall. Extra.
Repeat performance with the same Soloists. Attendance was "again very large".

The Annual Report pointed out that the effect of holding the "benefit" concert in April was to compress the years work into the last six months of the year. In the circumstances, the presentation of six concerts in that time indicates that the Society was grappling with its financial position in no uncertain manner. The change of venue to St. George's Hall had led to a reduction in the concert expenses, but the accommodation was insufficient. Subscribers' fees further declined and only the two Christmas concerts yielded any profit. The Treasurers Report is absent from the Guard Book, but it is clear from a press report that no improvement in the financial position had been achieved. Having in mind the heavy burden of debt and the prospects for the new year, the committee recommended that the organ, piano and surplus music be disposed of and the proceeds applied to the liquidation of the Society's liabilities. At the adjourned Annual Meeting (22/1/67) a resolution was passed confirming the committee's recommendation. Another factor (about which the Society's records are silent) was the opening of the International Exhibition in the New Exhibition Building *At the corner of Russell and Latrobe Streets.* on 29th October, 1866. A large choir under Mr. C. E. Horsley was raised for the occasion and gave concerts during the ensuing six months. Its closing Festival of two concerts clashed with the Society's Easter concert in the following year. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Theo Dredge, was specially thanked for the manner in which he had discharged his duties during a very onerous year. Performers were stated- Soprano 38, Contralto 25, Tenor 27, Bass 35, Band 18, Total 143.

1867

102 (100) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (7) 28th Mar., st. George's Hall. 1st Sub.
Madm. Carandini (8), Miss Rosina Carandini (8) , Miss Fanny Carandini (C), Mrs. Cunningham (C), Mr. W. Sherwin (T), Mr. D. A. Beaumont (T), Mr. P. Cazzaly (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).
"There was not a crowded audience, but rather one both studious and appreciative." After explaining the necessity for hurried preparation the "Argus" was restrained in its report. The "Age" account accorded generous praise. Madm. Carandini and her two daughters rendered the trio "Lift Thine Eyes" so successfully that a repetition was demanded (and accorded) despite the forbidding of encores. Miss Rosina made the first of her 56 appearances as a soloist, being second to Mr. Armes Beaumont in point of number. Miss Carandini afterwards became Mrs. Palmer.

103 (101) MISCELLANEOUS (5) 19th Apr.* *Good Friday evening. An asterisk denotes subsequent Good Friday evening performances.* Theatre Royal. Extra.

Vocal solos from "The Messiah". Choruses from "The Messiah" (3) and Parts I and II of "The Creation" (3) including "The Heavens are Telling" (5) , "Hallelujah" from "The Messiah" (3). Overture-"The Messiah" (Handel) (1).

Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Miss Livingston, Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mrs. Cunningham (C), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"Concert very fairly attended". Band and Chorus comprised about 100 performers. Press critics took a lenient view of the performance; one pointed out the absence of the organ and referred to "a recent surfeit of oratorio". (The "Exhibition Choir" rendered "Elijah" and "The Messiah" in the new Exhibition Bldg. within the four previous days; conducted by Mr. C. E. Horsley).

104 (102) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (8) 4th Jun., Princess Opera Ho. Extra.

Madm. Lucy Escott (S), Mrs. J. H. Fox (8), Miss Georgia Hodson (C), Mr. Henry Squires (T), Mr. D. A. Beaumont (T), Mr. Richardson (B).

The concert was arranged as a "benefit" for Mr. Armes Beaumont "late member of the Society in sympathy for his severe affliction" (loss of an eye) .A very thinly attended house; attributed to the Governor's ball being held on the same evening. The " Age" report spoke favourably of the performance, but the " Argus" writer said "it cannot be regarded as anything but a signal failure".

105 (103) MISCELLANEOUS (51) 16th Jul., St. George's Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos. "Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (3), "Song of the Nuns of Amesbury" (Horsley) (1), "The Curfew" (Rutter) (5). Overtures-"Zampa" (Harold) (2), "Masaniello" (Auber) (3). Symphony-"Jupiter" (Mozart) (2). Miss S. Mortley (S), Miss Bertha Watson (S), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

"Audience was numerous and appreciative". Lady Manners Button and the Misses Button attended. General praise for all sections.

106 (104) MISCELLANEOUS (52) 17th Sep., St. George's Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Acis and Galatea" (Handel) (6), Alexander's Feast (Handel) (2).

Miss S. Mortley (S), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T); Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

Good attendance. "Band and Chorus of 130 performers". "Altogether, Mr. Lee, the Conductor and the Managing Committee may be congratulated upon a performance which was as effective in every respect as the resources of the Society will permit".

107 (105) MISCELLANEOUS (53) 21st Dec., New Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

"By authority and under the patronage of the Royal Reception Committee" during the visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. Band and Chorus numbered 400 performers.

"The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (2), "O, Thou to Whom all Creatures Bow" (H.R.H. The late Prince Consort) (1), "Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (4), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (4), "Alfred March" (J. Schott, R.A.M.). First performance. The St. Kilda Glee and Madrigal Society sang "On the March" (Becker) and "The Mariner's Return" (Hoesler). Overture-"Exhibition" (Meyerbeer) (4), Piano Concerto "Concert Stuck" (Weber) (2), Oboe Concerto "Guillaume Tell" (Rossini) (1).

Miss Eastdown (B), Miss S. Mortley (B), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Herr Staab (P'st), Mr. J. Schott (Oboe).

The attendance was "very large" and included H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, the Governor Sir J. H. T. Manners Button, Lady Button and suite. The press duly honoured the occasion with extended notices - up to 31 - and tendered the highest praise for the whole of the concert. It was "in every sense of the word, grand".

108 (106) THE MESSIAH (18) 24th Dec., Theatre Royal. 4th Sub.

Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

Band and Chorus advertised as 500 performers. Poor attendance. The oratorio was given with only one partial rehearsal on the morning of the day of the performance. Some of the Orchestra could not see the Conductor. The performance was "faulty to a degree we hope never to experience again" ("Argus").

109 (107) THE MESSIAH (19) 25th Dec., Theatre Royal. Extra.

Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Fanny Reeves (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"The house was well attended". Press reports stated "Vastly Improved result". "The whole affair, indeed, was well done". Unfortunately the Guard Book does not contain a copy of the Annual Report or Treasurer's Report. From a press account of the Annual Meeting (21/1/68) it is learned that losses were sustained on all concerts, amounting to £127/2/10 and that liabilities had further increased and stood at £903/2/4. The Committee stated its opinion "that the public, without some extraordinary efforts or attractions, would not support the ordinary concerts of the Society". No move had been made to dispose of the organ, piano and surplus music (as authorised at the previous Annual Meeting) but the Committee recommended greater economy in getting up concerts and that "a bazaar be held at an early date". It is clear that a badly crippled Society struggled through 1867, but managed to give eight concerts; a tribute to the determination and fighting spirit of all concerned. Mr. S. Moxon succeeded Mr. Theo Dredge as Secretary. Mr. Theo Dredge succeeded Mr. J. J. Blundell as Treasurer, the latter had been Treasurer since 1854.

1868

110 (108) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (4) 10th Apr.*, St. George's Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. Alfred Ford (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Moxon (B).

"The hall was crowded". Band and Chorus were advertised as "of two hundred performers". "The whole affair, indeed, was well done". In view of the circumstances of the Society, the professional musicians gave their services gratuitously. Miss Lambert's appearance was the first of eleven as soloist.

111 (109) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (5) 23rd Jun., St. George's Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Staff (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. E. Amery (B), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).

The hall was filled. On the whole, favourable reports were tendered. Miss Staff (afterwards Mrs. Howitz) made the first of her 25 appearances as soloist and Miss Pitts did likewise as to 23.

112 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (54) 8th Jul., Wesleyan Church, Brunswick. Extra.

Solos and Choruses from "The Messiah" (4).

Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. D. Maddern (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B), Mr. S. Moxon (B).

The concert was given "in aid of the bazaar funds of the Society and the new Wesleyan Church".

113 (-) Concert given at Williamstown. Date not known. Extra.
No record of details.

114 (-) THE CREATION (Haydn) (12) 14th Sep., Mechanics Inst., Williamstown. Extra.
No record of soloists.
The concert was given in aid of the Fund for extending the building of the Institute.

115 (110) MISCELLANEOUS (55) 22nd Sep., St. George's Hall. 3rd Sub.
Vocal solos. "Lay of the Bell" (Romberg) (3), "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (4), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (7). Overture-"Robert le Diable" (Meyerbeer) (1). Symphony-"Queen of France" (Haydn) (1).
Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Ml. Alfred Ford (T), Ml. S. Angus (B).

116 (111) SAMSON (Handel) (3) 24th Nov., St. George's Hall. 4th Sub.
Miss Staff (S), Miss Lambert (C), Ml. Alfred Ford (T), Ml. E. Amery (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).
"Hall filled in every part". The Governor, Lady Manners Sutton and Miss Sutton were present. The choruses were given with precision and gave evidence of careful rehearsal. At times, Mr. Lee accompanied - on the harmonium - with one hand and conducted with the other.

117 (-) THE CREATION (Haydn) (13) 3rd Dec., Orderly Room, Carlton. Extra.
Miss Bertha Watson (S), Ml. C. A. Donaldson (T), Ml. Charles Blanchard (B) .
Concert given in aid of the Melbourne Orphan Asylum.
"A sort of unpretentious but excellent performance".

118 (112) THE MESSIAH (19) 24th Dec., St. George's Hall. Extra.
Miss Bertha Watson (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. Alfred Ford (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).
Attendance was "large and fashionable". The "Age" and "Herald" commented in favourable terms but the "Argus" in a 14" report was disposed to be critical, especially as to tempi.

119 (113) THE MESSIAH (20) 25th Dec., Independent Church, Collins st. Extra.
Miss Staff (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Charles Blanchard (B).
The performance "Was well attended". There was no orchestra; accompaniments were supplied by Mr. Lee on the church organ. Mr. S. Kaye took the baton in place of Mr. Lee. Press report was favourable.

120 (-) THE CREATION (Haydn) (14) 28th Dec., Mechanics Inst., Emerald Hill. Extra.
Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. E. Amery (B).
The performance was given in aid of the Melbourne Orphan Asylum.

The year 1868 records one of the turning points in the history of the Society. It is, therefore, a matter of regret that the Guard Book of the period does not contain a Copy of the Annual Report, consequently the full Story of an eventful and crucial year is not available. However, it is clear that although the Society continued to stagger under an enormous load of debts, its vitality and determination were undiminished and that it refused to accept defeat. As noted, eleven public appearances were made during the year; actually one under the record. Apparently the Society possessed all the requisites of a public musical body-except the necessary finance. Following the recommendation of the previous Annual Meeting, economies were effected, a drive for subscribers led to an increase of nearly 50 per cent in fees over the previous year, i.e., £101/8/0 - £147/7/0, and a bazaar was held on 21-22nd October, in St. George's Hall. Offered for sale at the bazaar were "fancy and useful goods, works of art and the Society's organ and grand pianoforte". Additional attractions were performances by the bands of H.M. 14th Regiment and the Collingwood Rifles, as well as vocal and instrumental music each evening by members of the Society and of the profession. Despite determined efforts, the Committee had to report that the bazaar "had not altogether realised expectations - owing, no doubt, to a great extent, to the police interference on the first and second nights". The reason for police action does not appear. With the disposal of the Society's organ and pianoforte effected and the result of the bazaar known, a special meeting was held on 14th December, at which the Society's creditors were presented with a statement of assets and liabilities. The upshot was that the creditors accepted a composition of 6/8 in the pound. Thereupon the Treasurer was enabled to discharge all liabilities and to present to the Annual Meeting a statement of accounts clear of liabilities, a small balance in hand and the Society's library remaining as an asset. The Committee were pleased to note that "the average attendance at rehearsals had been good, and more than usual interest had been shown by members in the affairs of the Society". All of the Soloists "appeared gratuitously during the season."

1869

121 (114) MISCELLANEOUS (56) 23rd Mar.*, St. George's Hall. 1st Sub.

Mass in C (Beethoven) (3), "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (5).

Miss Staff (S), Mrs. Perraton (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"Large and fashionable audience". Press accounts extended to 10". The "Argus" tendered guarded praise, the "Age" reported favourably and the "Economist" was generally favourable, stating that the Band was much more complete and effective than usual.

122 (115) MISCELLANEOUS (57) 26th Mar., St. George's Hall. Extra.

Vocal solos and trio. "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (6), Choruses from "Mass in C" (Beethoven) (1),

Mendelssohn's "Elijah" (1), Handel's "Samson" (3), and "The Heavens are Telling" Haydn's "Creation" (6).

Symphony from "The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (1).

Madm. Anna Bishop (S). Mrs. Perraton (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. G. E. Labertouche (B), Miss Staff (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Lambert (C) (last three in a trio).

The hall was "crowded to excess". Press notices to 10"

were generally favourable with special praise for Madm. Bishop.

123 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (58) 17th Jun., Trinity Church, East Melb. Extra.

Duets and vocal and organ solos. Choruses from Spohr's "Crucifixion" (1), "Twelfth Mass" Mozart) (1),

"Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (1). "The Messiah" (5), "Hallelujah" from Handel's "The Messiah" (5), "The Heavens are Telling" from Haydn's "The Creation" (7).

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. G. E. Labertouche (B).

The concert was given on the opening of the new organ.

124 (116) MISCELLANEOUS (59) 1st Jul., Academy of Music *Late Princess Theatre*. 2nd Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos, duets and trio.

"Stars of the Summer Night" (Rutter) (2), "Come if You Dare" (Purcell) (2), "Old May Morning" (Novello) (1),

"Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (5), "The Evening Star" (Horsley) (1), "The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (3),

"Now the Bright Morning Star" (Greville) (2).

Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Professor Hughes (V'st), Mr. Hart (C'st), Mr. David Lee (P'st), Mr. M. Harvie.

The attendance was good. Chorally - "In most, the execution was marked with precision and good management". The other items were praised.

125 (117) ERNANI (Verdi) (1) 8th Sep., Duke of Edinburgh Theatre. 3rd Sub.

Miss Staff (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. G. A. Johnson (T), Mr. P. Cazaly (B), Mr. W.

Juniper (B), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Professor Hughes (P'st).

Good attendance. The Governor and family were present. Chorus work was "highly creditable" and an

"orchestra of five and twenty were pretty evenly balanced". Mr. W. Juniper made the first of his 23

appearances as soloist in bass parts as an amateur. Mr. Lamble also made the first

of many appearances; 49 in all.

126 (118) ERNANI (Verdi) (2) 25th Sep., Duke of Edinburgh Theatre. Extra.

Repeat performance with same Principals. "A very large audience". High praise for the Chorus. In a 27"

report the "Argus" said "The Society must by this time have become aware of two very important facts - first,

that in Melbourne there exists a discriminative audience, and, secondly, that by their recent studies and performances they have made a great advance in public favour by popularising a class of music which in

these times the general public are...most ready to appreciate and support". The "Daily Telegraph" and

"Economist" joined in the general praise.

127 (119) THE BOHEMIAN GIRL (Balfe) (1) 30th Nov., Duke of Edinburgh Theatre, 4th Sub.

Miss Staff (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. S. Angus (B), Mr. S. W. Lamble (B).

"A brilliant and numerous audience". Generally a satisfactory performance. The Chorus was praised but the Orchestra, containing "many players of the highest ability" was criticised in parts. Press reports extended to 21".

128 (120) THE MESSIAH (21) 25th Dec., Theatre Royal. Extra.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

The theatre was "crammed from the 'flies' down to the pit". "Band and chorus of 200 performers". In the absence of the organ a harmonium was used at which Mr. Joseph Summers presided in the absence of Professor Hughes (ill) .A creditable performance and appreciative audience. Press reports to 15".

It is clear from the Annual Report that, having escaped from the thralldom of debt, the Committee was determined "to pay its way" in future. Having observed that the previous policy of adhering to oratorio was "prolific of debt", it decided to give "the intellectual and musically cultivated what they can appreciate. ..." It was claimed that this course was in a measure adopted and explains the performances of "Ernani" (2) and "The Bohemian Girr'. The former were accorded full houses and the latter was well attended. With obvious relief, the Treasurer's Report was submitted to the Annual Meeting (19/1/70) showing a net profit of £2/5/6 and no liability. The four subscription and four extra concerts given during the year indicated continued vitality and enterprise. Most of the Soloists sang gratuitously. Mr. W. G. Rhind succeeded Mr. Theo Dredge as Hon. Treasurer. Mr. R. B. Caunter took over the Secretarial duties from Mr. S. Moxon; on an honorary basis.

1870

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 9th Aug., New Town Hall. Assisted.

Vocal solos and quartettes. "Euterpe" (C. E. Horsley) (1).

Soloists-Madm. Fanny Simonsen (S) , Miss Lucy Chambers (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Chorus from "Ernani" (Verdi) (1) , Pianoforte Concerto (Hensel) (1).

Overtures-"Robert le Diable" (2) and "Exhibition" (Meyerbeer) (5).

Other Soloists-Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Signora Baratti (S), Mr. Johnson (T), Signora Contini, Neri and Dondi. Mr. Buddee (P'st).

"Euterpe" a cantata, words by Henry Kendall (composed expressly for and dedicated to R.W. The Mayor of Melbourne) was conducted by the Composer.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 13th Aug., New Town Hall. Assisted.

Vocal and violin solos, trios and quartette. "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (7) .

Soloists-Mrs. J. H. Fox (S), Miss Lucy Chambers (C). Mr .Armes Beaumont (T) .Signor Devoti (T) , Signor Dondi (B), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (6), Fifth Symphony (Beethoven) (2).

Overtures-"L'Etoile du Nord" (Meyerbeer) (6), "Euryanthe" (Weber) (2).

Other Soloists-Madm. Fanny Simonsen (S) , Signora Baratti (8), Signori Contini and Neri. Mr. Simonson (V'st) .

The opening of the new Town Hall was an event of outstanding importance in Melbourne in 1870. Apart from the completion of the magnificent edifice -"by very far , the finest municipal building in Australia" - the Society saw in its presence the answer to its long standing want of an adequate hall for its public performances and, at the same time, an escape from the acute financial worries of past years. Accordingly, the whole weight of the Society's resources were devoted to securing the success of the musical festivities. The two concerts were given by the Mayor, Councillor R .W. Amess, who, in addition to enlisting the Society's choral and instrumental services, appointed the Society's Conductor and Hon. Secretary as Musical Director and Secretary respectively. Mr. David Lee and Mr. Julius Siede shared the duties of Conductor. For the opening concert, 4,000 invitations were issued. The Governor and suite attended and amidst great enthusiasm the Governor declared the hall open. An immense audience attended the second concert which, however, lacked some of the enthusiasm displayed at the first concert. The press devoted columns of space in describing the proceedings. Mr. Armes Beaumont's appearance marked the beginning of a long and happy association with the Society; in all 67 occasions as a principal in tenor roles; a record which surpasses all other soloists. Both concerts were largely "Philharmonic" affairs but they have been classified in this record as "assisted concerts". It remains to note that in view of the importance of the event, the Society deferred its yearly concert programme until after the opening of the hall. Consequently the normal year's work had to be compressed into four and a half months.

129 (121) MISCELLANEOUS (60) 13th Sep., Town Hall. Ist Sub.

Vocal solos and quartette.

Fair Scene from "The Bohemian Girl" (Balfe) (1). "The Legend of st. Cecilia" (Jules Benedict) (1).

Fifth Symphony (Mendelssohn) (1). Two latter first performances in Australia.

Miss Fannie Simonsen (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. P. Cazaly (B).

One press account said "audience was numerous", another referred to a "wilderness of empty chairs." The critics were lukewarm as to Legend as a composition and to its performance. It was not repeated by the

Society. The Symphony was given "in a creditable manner". Mrs. Cutter's appearance was the first of 17 with the Society.

130 (122) ERNANI (Verdi) (3) 1st Oct., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

In conjunction with Lyster & Smith's Royal Italian Opera Co.

Signora Lucia Baratti (S) , Mrs. J. H. Fox (S) , Signor Mariano Neri (T), Mr. G. W. Johnson (T), Signor Liugi Contini (B), Mr. Edward Farley (B), Signor Enrico Dondi (B).

High hopes for a successful performance by the combined forces were not realised. In a 14" report the "Argus" critic remarked "Probably the most uncomfortable man in all Melbourne on Saturday night was the Conductor of the P .S. ...The Italian singers who only returned from Geelong on Saturday afternoon had not enjoyed the advantage of rehearsal with the Phil. band and chorus under Mr. Lee. ...The Conductor was sometimes left behind, the band had occasionally to try back and the chorus was in many parts greatly flustered. It was in fact a musical entertainment in which there was no concert". The critic was kind enough to add that there were "some good sections".

131 (123) ABRAHAM (Moliere) (2) 5th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. Henry Hallam (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

The attendance "was very limited". The Duke of Edinburgh, The Governor and Viscountess Canterbury were present. "Of the performance, we can speak with commendation". The "Argus" 12" report described the work at length but did not think highly of it. It was the second and last performance by the Society.

132 (124) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (9) 6th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. Henry Hallam (T), Mr. J. A. Ure (T), Mr. T. Rainford (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"Large and appreciative audience". Performance given after a lapse of five years. Performance generally praised but one writer had criticism for the Orchestra.

133 (125) THE MESSIAH (22), 24th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Miss Staff (Mrs. D. Howitz) (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

The hall was "crowded". Press accounts to 20". "The choir acquitted itself with credit. ...the band was extremely effective". The Band gave their services gratuitously.

So ended a memorable year. At long last, a hall adequate for the Society's performances was available. It became a "home" for 55 years; until 1925 when it was destroyed by fire. The presentation of five concerts in four and a half months, following the preparation for the Mayor's concerts was a notable achievement. Nor did the character of the performances suffer thereby. Evidently overlooking the performance of "Ernani", the Committee remarked in its Annual Report "no words of praise are needed from your Committee to extol their excellence; the enlightened and unbiased opinion of a music-loving public, whose advanced taste and appreciation for the production of high-class music is the best possible proof of the Society's success". Subscribers' Fees reached £214/10/0, the "highest during the past 10 years". A net profit £23/14/6 on the year's work was disclosed, of which £14/16/8 was spent on the purchase of the scores of 'The Legend of St. Cecilia.' Performing members at close were Sop. 78, Alto 31, Ten. 41, Bass 43-total 193.

Mention should be made of a presentation by the Ron. Secretary (Mr. R. B. Caunter) of a specially constructed Guard Book containing "a complete collection of programmes, reports, critiques, etc., of the Society's proceedings from its establishment in 1853 to date." The statement is almost literally correct. It is simple justice to say that Mr. Caunter's unique offering - and the continuance of the record by later Secretaries - made possible the compilation of this history of the Society. At the Annual Meeting held in January , the President. Sir Redmond Barry relinquished his office which he had held since the inception of the Society and Mr. J. D. Pinock was elected in his place.

1871

134 (126) THE CREATION (Haydn) (15), 7th Apr. *, Princess's Opera House. Extra.

Miss Fannie Silmons (S), Mrs. J. H. Fox (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. G. W. Johnson (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B).

Good attendance. "The band was very good" but the Chorus and all the Principals, save one, were criticised for indifferent work. The Band was assisted by opera players and some of the Principals were members of the Opera Company.

135 (127) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (10), 11th May, Town Hall. First Sub.

Madm. Fannie Simonsen (S), Miss Lambert (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Henry Hallam (T), Mr. T. Rainford (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"An Immense audience". All press reports ("Age", "Argus" and "Daily Telegraph") tendered generous praise; a liberal share going to the Choir.

136 (128) THE SEASONS (Haydn) (1), 1st Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Victoria.

Miss Amelia Bailey (Mrs. R. Smythe) (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

A large audience. "Entire performance a pronounced success". An Orchestra of 35 was very successful. Press report extended to 14".

137 (129) MISCELLANEOUS (61), 10th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"The Last Judgment" (Spohr) (5), "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (3) .

Miss Staff (Mrs. D. Von Howitz) (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. c. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B).

A large audience. Press reports to 18" all tendered high praise. About 50 in the Orchestra and the Choir filled the choir gallery. Miss Christian began her long association with the Society as a Principal in contralto roles; 43 in all.

138 (130) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (6), 28th Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Mrs. Cutter (c), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"A great attendance". All press reports (to 14") accorded high praise. The "Argus" tendered a preliminary notice extending to 21" and in the report of the concert severely criticised the "considerable number" of people who left during the last chorus.

139 (131) THE MESSIAH (23). 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Miss Rosina carandini (S), Miss Christian (c), Mr. Henry Hallam (T), Mr. John D. Haga (B).

"Very large audience". "...a crowded band and chorus produced effects that were more solid and brilliant than usual" (a new organ was in process of installation). Mr. Lee halted the "Amen" chorus as a protest against those who were leaving before the finish; a proceeding which had the hearty approval of those who remained. A year of solid achievement. The critics tendered high praise for all concerts except the April performance of "The Creation". A successful year was reflected in the accounts, a profit of £224/15/0 emerging from which £38/3/6 was spent on the library and £60 in the purchase of a new piano. For the first time, a prospectus was issued in the beginning of the year which was carried out in its entirety. Further revision of the Rules took place in August. The Annual Report stated that 115 performing members were admitted during the year - left through removal, etc. 65 - on the roll at the close 218.

1872

140 (132) MISCELLANEOUS (62) 29th Mar.* , Town Hall. Extra.

Vocal solos and duet.

Choruses from "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (2), Mendelssohn's "Elijah" (2), "Inflammatum" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater" (1), "Hallelujah" from Handel's "The Messiah" (7) , "Reformation" Symphony (Mendelssohn) (2).

Madm. Agatha States (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Signor Checci (T), Signor Orlandi (Bar.), Signor Susi (B).

A "crowded" attendance. Band and Chorus were stated at "250 performers"-due to reinforcements from Agatha States Opera Troupe. The Orchestra was "capital". Choruses were generally praised. Before the last item was commenced "a few senseless people made a rush for the doors". Mr. Lee "very properly delayed commencing until the disturbance had ceased and during the pause those who caused the annoyance were heartily hissed for their pains".

141 (133) MISCELLANEOUS (63), 23rd Apr., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Vocal solos.

"Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (5), Choruses from "The Legend of st. Cecilia" (Benedict) (1), "Hallelujah" from Beethoven's "Engedi" (1). Overture-L'Etoile du Nord" (Meyerbeer) (3), Fourth Symphony ("Scotch") (Mendelssohn) (1).

Madm. Carandini (S) , Misses Rosina (S) and Fanny Carandini (C).

Good attendance. The " Athalie" choruses were most creditable throughout but the same was not said of those in the rest of the programme. The orchestral work throughout was praised.

142 (134) THE SEASONS (Haydn) (2) , 1st Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. P. Cazaly (B).

The attendance was "not large". Qualified praise for the Choir and Orchestra. The sopranos were "shaky" in the high passages. In the "Argus" report the difficulty in obtaining competent orchestral players during the current opera season was pointed out.

143 (135) THE MESSIAH (24) , 14th Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

Concert was given in aid of Melbourne charities. For the first time the organ was used with the Chorus. The Orchestra was dispensed with and Mr. Lee presided at the organ; his place as Conductor was filled by Mr. Goold. Press reports generally praised the Choir although the trebles did not escape criticism. Mr. Lee was complimented for his success with the new organ. The charities benefited to the extent of £63.

144 (136) MISCELLANEOUS (64), 24th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos. "The Ancient Mariner" (Barnett) (1), "Choral Symphony" (Beethoven) (1). Both first performances in Melbourne. "Hallelujah" from "Engedi" (Beethoven) (2). Overture - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (2).

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Mrs. Cutter (0), Mr. C. A. Donaldson (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

A good attendance included the Governor, and Viscountess Canterbury. Press notices extended to 27" and generally praised the concert, the Orchestra receiving favourable mention.

145 (137) MISCELLANEOUS (65) 6th Nov., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Vocal solos.

Choruses from "The Ancient Mariner" (Barnett) (1) , "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (3), "The Seasons" (Haydn) (1). Overtures-"Exhibition" (Meyerbeer) (6), "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (3). Symphonies-From "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (1), Fourth Symphony (Mozart) (3).

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Mrs. Cutter (0).

The concert was given on the opening of the International Exhibition, Russell St. No seating was provided but a "genial audience" walked and stood as it felt disposed.

146 (138) MISCELLANEOUS (66) 19th Nov., New Hall, Athenaeum. Extra.

Vocal solos. Chorus from "The Ancient Mariner" (Barnett) (2) , "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (8).

Overtures - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (4), "Euryanthe" (Weber) (3), "Surprise" Symphony (Haydn) (1).

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Mrs. Cutter (0).

The occasion was the opening of the new hall of "The Athenaeum," now used as a picture theatre. The Melbourne German Liedertafel Society, under Herr Sprinkhorn, contributed two choruses. The Governor performed the opening ceremony.

147 (139) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (5), 10th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Amelia Bailey (S), Miss Christian (0), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. E. Amery (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"Somewhat scant attendance". Orchestra was reported satisfactory. The trebles were criticised but other parts of the Choir were creditable.

148 (140) THE MESSIAH (25) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Miss Staff (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Hall filled in every part". "The whole performance was in the highest degree satisfactory". "The organ was more appropriately employed than on former occasions".

Another year of solid achievement-five subscription and four extra concerts. In the Annual Report the Committee said, "The operations for the year have been of unusual magnitude, and, on the whole, attended with gratifying success... The concerts in connection with the opening of the Industrial Exhibition and New Athenaeum were given without any pecuniary interest in the result". The Report spoke regretfully of the decease of Mr. John Russell, the Society's first Conductor and of Mr. Michael Ashton, the Society's first Organist. Financially, the Treasurer's Report indicated a favourable result for the year, i.e., £181/16/7 out of which £63 was passed to the various charities as already noted and £45/16/0 was spent on the Library. Fifty three new performing members were admitted, 43 left, leaving 228 on the roll. Mr. Fred Tate succeeded Mr. W. G. Rhind as Ron. Treasurer.

1878

149 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (67) 11th Apr.*, The Opera House. Extra.

Vocal solos, duets and quartettes. "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (8), Choruses from "Elijah" (Mendelssohn) (3). Fifth Symphony (Mendelssohn) (3).

Signore Zenoni, Bosiso and Coy (S), Signora Riboldi (C), Signori Rosnati, Coy, and Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Signori Coliva and Tournerie (Bar.), Signor Dondi (Bass).

The concert was given in conjunction with the Royal Italian Opera Co. Mr. Alberto Zelman Sen. Conducted "Stabat Mater" and Mr. Lee the choruses. The Chorus was unhappy in "Stabat Mater" but redeemed itself afterwards in the choruses.

150 (141) MISCELLANEOUS (68) 14th Apr., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Vocal solos. "The Ancient Mariner" (Barnett) (2), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (1), "Hallelujah" (Beethoven's "Engedi") (3). Overture - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (5) .

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T).

Attendance was "very good". The choral work found favour with the critics who reported that the audience was undecided as to whether it should or should not stand for the "Hallelujah".

151 (142) MISCELLANEOUS (69) 1st Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solo and duet. "The Prodigal Son" (Sullivan), First performance in Melbourne. Choruses from St. Cecilia (Benedict) (2) .Symphony - "Italian" (Mendelssohn) (2) .

Madm. Miranda Hurst (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Very thinly attended" owing to unfavourable weather. Press accounts to 17" were distinctly favourable. " ...the performance did great credit to all concerned".

152 (143) MOSE IN EGITTO (Rossini) (1) 5th Sep., Town Hall. Extra.

Signori Fillipo Colvia, Leandro Coy, Pietro Favas, Francisco Benso, Enrico Dondi, Mr. G. A. Johnson (T), Signora Tournerie, Signora Margherita Zenomi.

The performance was given in conjunction with the Royal Italian Opera Company. Mr. Alberto Zelman Sen. conducted with Mr. David Lee at the organ. Press reports to 18" agreed that the performance was outstandingly good - "the best without exception that has been heard here". Mr. Lee received acclamation for his work at the organ.

153 (144) MOSE IN EGITTO (Rossini) (2) 6th Sep., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance. The Governor, Sir G. F. Bowen, G.C.M.G., and Lady Bowen attended.

154 (145) THE CREATION (Haydn) (16) 21st Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Press accounts were cordial. Mr. Gould was specially commended for his work at the organ. Attendance was "moderate".

155 (146) NAAMAN (Costa) (1) 16th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Attendance was "not large". Press reports extended to 17". All three agreed on the excellence of the choral work. "The orchestra deserves praise for their share in the performance but the brass distressed musical ears occasionally with discordant blasts".

156 THE MESSIAH (26) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

(147) Mrs. Howitz (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. w. M. Lamble (B).

Press accounts to 11 II " ...the whole Town Hall full of people listened to as fine a performance of Handel's inspired work as we remember to have been given here".

In reporting on the year's work, the Committee remarked that the concerts given in conjunction with Mr. W. S. Lyster's Opera Company were, in a financial sense, disappointing, but the Society gave "the grandest performances of 'Mose in Egitto' ever attempted in Victoria." Five subscription concerts and three "extras" speak of continued vitality. Again the Treasurer reported a surplus, i.e., £15/8/9 for the year. This with balance in hand at the outset permitted an expenditure of £53 on the library and a presentation of £50 to Mr. Lee. Again the Annual Report commented on the changes in performing members; 31 new ones enrolled, 'out through the constant changes incidental to the Colony, the number of members does not exceed 200." Mr. I. M. Pitts succeeded Mr. R. B. Caunter as Hon. Secretary.

1874

157 (148) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (11) 3rd Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss R. darandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).

"The Town Hall was filled from side to side and end to end". Press reports to 10" were in agreement. One said "The great work was worthily performed". Another - "The chorus was represented in great strength and the members of it did their work in a most commendable manner".

With the Easter concert, Mr. Lee's first term as conductor came to a close. As he had planned to visit Europe, he tendered his resignation. On his return he was again appointed Conductor and served for a second term-twelve years. At the end of his second term an assessment of his contribution to the Society's record will be presented, therefore this chapter may appropriately end with a quotation from the "Argus" chronicler. "The performance of 'Elijah' ...was noteworthy as the last conducted by Mr. Lee before his visit to Europe and was a worthy close to what any unprejudiced person must allow had been a very laborious though highly honourable career, as Honorary Conductor of, despite its occasional shortcomings, the first musical society in Australia."

It should be added that the year witnessed the resignation of Mr. T. G. Goold who, with a very short interruption, had been associated with the Society since its commencement and had rendered invaluable services as Ron. Organist and Conductor.

A summary of concerts performed under Mr. Lee's baton is:

Performances

The Messiah	(Handel)	12	Mr. Kaye conducted 1.
Israel in Egypt	(Handel)	2	
Samson	(Handel)	1	
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	5	
St. Paul	(Mendelssohn)	2	
The Creation.	(Haydn)	5	
Mose in Egitto	(Rossini)	2	Mr. Alberto Zelman Sen. conducted.
Ernani	(Verdi)	3	
Abraham	(Molique)	1	
The Bohemian Girl	(Balfe)	1	
The Seasons	(Haydn)	2	
Naaman	(Costa)	1	
Miscellaneous		23	
Not recorded		<u>1</u>	
		61	
Assisted –Miscellaneous		<u>2</u>	
		63	

CHAPTER VII. JOSEPH SUMMERS' CONDUCTORSHIP

Following Mr. Lee's resignation, Mr. Joseph Summers Mus.Bac. Oxon. was elected to fill his place. His only previous connection with the Society appears to have been his appearance at the harmonium at concert No.128. of the new Conductor, Mr. Peake wrote -"Mr. Summers, like Mr. Horsley, was a disciple of Mendelssohn and certainly had a touch of genius of the Mendelssohn order. Under stress of excitement, he apparently failed to perceive the faults or blemishes of any performance of which he was Conductor. His imagination seemed to supply the missing qualities of perfection, and probably saved him from much bitter disappointment. Under other conditions, he could be a keen critic. Passing over this peculiarity, it must be admitted that his term of office was characterised by a fine spirit of enterprise, in which lofty musical ideas and a true conception of the influence of musical art predominated. ..." Mr. Goold's place as Organist was filled by Mr. George Peake. Mr. Summers' Conductorship lasted but two and a quarter years and his record follows.

1874

158 (149) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (7) 16th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Signora Maria Palmieri (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Bassett (a), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"Fine attendance" including the Governor Sir G. F. Bowen and Lady Bowen. Press accounts to 13" were favourable. The Orchestra was strong, being reinforced by players "from the opera".

159 (150) MISCELLANEOUS (70) 22nd Aug., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos and duet. "Engedi" (Beethoven) (3), "Since First I saw Your Face" (Ford) (1), "Hail, Bright Abode" (Wagner's "Tannhauser") (1). Overtures-"Midsummer Night's Dream" (Mendelssohn) (1), "The Magic Flute" (Mozart) (3).

Madm. Miranda Hirst (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Signora Almacinzia Magi, Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

A moderate attendance. Press accounts were favourable. In "Engedi" the "choruses were, with one exception, magnificent".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 26th Sep., Town Hall. Assisted.

"Farewell to the Forest" (Mendelssohn) (1), "Hail Bright Abode" (Wagner's "Tannhauser") (2), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (2), "Since First I saw Your Face" (Ford) (2), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (8).

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Signor Cecchi, Signor Susini, Madm. Arabella Goddard (V'st).

The concert was given by Madm. Arabella Goddard in aid of the Hospital Sunday Fund. The Choir assisted with the foregoing numbers.

160 (151) MISCELLANEOUS (71) 24th Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mass in C (Beethoven) (4), "Adoration" (A. T. Turner, Ballarat). First performance. Symphony-First (Beethoven) (1).

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss St. Clair (C), Mr. Alfred Ford (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Attendance "only moderate". Mr. Turner conducted his own work in which the "trombones were out of tune; not for the first time". The choruses in the "Mass" "were admirably done".

161 (152) THE MESSIAH (27) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Hall completely filled". Congratulations extended to Chorus, Orchestra and Principals.

Despite the change of Conductor and Organist, it was a satisfactory year, musically and financially. The Annual Report refers to steady improvement in choral singing and included a list of Life Members (8), Subscribers (127), Honorary Members (9) and Performing Members (208). The Treasurer's report showed a surplus of £137/6/7 over expenses. On the Library £49/13/8 was spent.

1875

162 (153) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (1), 26th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Mrs. Haydon (S), Madm. Lucy Chambers (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Melchor Winter (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B), Mr. W. R. Furlong (B).

"The hall was literally crammed". The chorales "were delightful to listen to ...the choruses at the ends or Parts 1 and 2 were magnificent" but there was evidence of insufficient preparation in the other parts. Although the audience was invited to join in the singing of the chorales, "nobody rose and joined in the chorales".

183 (154) MISCELLANEOUS (72) 22nd Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos and duets.

"Acis & Galatea" (Handel) (7), "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (1). First performance in Melbourne. "Night" (Summers) (1). First performance.

Mrs. Emmanuel Mendelssohn (S) , Mrs. J. H. Fox (S) , Miss Clara Thompson (S), Miss Winston (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Melchor Winter (T), Mr. Henry Bracy (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B), Miss Griffiths, R.A.M. (P'st).

"Splendid attendance". "A Song of Destiny" was "well given by choir and orchestra". Programme did not finish till a quarter to 12 by which time the hall was nearly empty.

164 (155) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (12), 17th Aug., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Signor Rosanti (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"A very numerous audience". Press accounts to 16" qualified the writers' praise, both as to Chorus and Orchestra. "The brass instruments were out of tune... not for the first time".

165 (156) THE CREATION (Haydn) (17) 13th Sep., Town Hall. Extra.

Mdlle. Ilma De Murska (S) , Signor Carmini Morley (T), Mr. W. R. Furlong (B), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"A grand attendance on the part of the public". The Acting Governor, Sir Wm. Stawell and suite present. Press reports to 23" tendered some praise to the Orchestra but they were modified as to the Choir. The singing of Mdlle. Ilma De Murska delighted everyone. Of her, Mr. Peake wrote (in 1913) "Perhaps the greatest of all singers engaged by the Society. Born in Croatia, in 1843. She had a pure soprano voice of nearly three octaves compass and became the pupil of Madm. Marchesi, in Paris. It would be difficult to imagine anything more wonderful than her extraordinary executive skill. She is said to have been a brilliant and original actress, and certainly had a most fascinating personality. The charm of her manner, the purity of her vocalisation, wonderful technique and personal magnetism, will never be forgotten by those who were privileged to hear her. It seems incredible that such an artist, who, musically, had Europe at her feet, should have died in absolute poverty".

188 (158) MISCELLANEOUS (73) 23rd Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Vocal solos. "By Cynthia's Dwelling" (Summers) and "O, My Love's Like a Red, Red Rose" (Garrett), First performance of both. "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (4). Overtures - "Le Nozze de Figaro" (Mozart) (1), "William Tell" (Rossini) (3).

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T).

The Acting Governor attended. The attendance was "fair". Press reports to 15" indicated that the "Hymn" was "creditably performed".

167 (157) THE MESSIAH (28) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Henry Bracey (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B).

A "large audience". "Band and chorus of 300 performers". Three press accounts ("Age", "Argus" and "Daily Telegraph") agreed that it was an excellent performance. The Conductor stopped the performance to allow the early departees to retire.

The Annual Report stated that owing to the death of Ron. J. D. Pinnock, who had acted as President for many years, the Ron. Sir George Verdon, K.C.M.G., was elected to the office. The late President was an energetic and enthusiastic supporter of the Society. Mr. Pitts resigned his office as Hon. Secretary and was succeeded by Mr. W. F. Dixon. In commenting on the first performance of "St. Matthew Passion" the Committee claimed that the Society "is to be congratulated upon having so successfully performed for the first time, south of the line, this truly magnificent work." Five subscription and one extra concert represents a normal year's work at this period. For the first time in six years, a loss is shown in the financial accounts, i.e., £83/1/2, after a payment of £50 to the conductor. Nevertheless £70/4/3 was spent on the library from funds carried forward from previous year.

1876

168 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (74) 15th Feb., Town Hall. Extra.

Vocal and instrumental solos.

"A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (2), "Night" (J. Summers) (2), "Hail, Bright Abode" (Wagner) (3), Choruses from Israel in Egypt" (6) .

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T).

An extra concert "by invitation" drew a "crowded house" and favourable comment from the critics.

169 (159) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (2) 14th Apr.* , Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. R. Smythe (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Mavor (T), Mr. T. B. Brown (B), Mr. Newberry (B).

" A very numerous audience". The critics were at variance in their reports. In a 16" report the "Argus" writer remarked that "a completely satisfactory effect has not yet been attained. ..by the Society". The reference was mainly to the Principals. "Of the choral singing we may speak with approval".

170 (160) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (6) 13th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Funeral March (J. Summers) (1).

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).

Disagreeable weather accounted for a small attendance. The organ was not used; an omission which led the " Argus" writer to remark, " A pianoforte could not be accepted as supplying the loss". He also noted that as to the choral work "the faults were fully as numerous as the good points". The "Funeral March" was written in memory of Mr. C. E. Horsley, a former Conductor of the Society who died in New York in the previous February. The work was well received.

171 (181) MISCELLANEOUS (75) 12th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Fridolin" (Randegger) (1), First performance in Australia. "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (3).

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B), Mr. T. B. Maroney (B), Mr. T. H. Guenett (P'st).

The hall "was fairly filled". The press accounts extended to 16" and were mainly concerned in describing the new work. Two writers were disposed to record acceptable performances of both works but the third was caustic in each case.

As it proved, the September concert was the last conducted by Mr. Summers. According to Mr. Peake, "Mr. Summers' peculiar methods and manner were not altogether calculated to win personal popularity .His characteristic pose and air of superiority, combined with his somewhat autocratic actions did not inspire confidence." At all events, the return of Mr. Lee from Europe and his evident desire to regain his former position set in train forces which led to Mr. Summers' resignation. His tenure as Conductor did not lack enterprise, but other essentials which go to the making of a successful conductor were missing.

Concerts given under his baton are summarised thus:

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	2
st. Matthew Passion	(Bach)	2
Ellijah	(Mendelssohn)	1
The Creation.	(Haydn)	1
Israel in Egypt.	(Handel)	1
St. Paul	(Mendelssohn)	1
Miscellaneous		<u>6</u>
		14
Assisted -- Miscellaneous		<u>1</u>
		15

CHAPTER VIII. DAVID LEE'S CONDUCTORSHIP (II)

Mr. Summers' resignation left the way open for the return of Mr. Lee and the Society did not hesitate to re-elect him as Conductor. "It soon became evident," wrote Mr. Peake, "that the Conductor, in some respects, had benefited considerably by his visit to Europe. He threw himself into the work with renewed energy and was aiming for a higher standard as regards performances." His second term of office was to extend over twelve years, the longest period for a conductor up to that time. Performances given during his second term are recorded as follows :

1876

172 (162) MARITANA (Wallace) (1) 5th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Mrs. Howitz (Maritana), Mrs. Ramsden (Lazarillo), Mr. Benjamin Clark and Mr. G. F. Smith (Don Caesar de Brazan), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (Don Jose), Mr. T. Rainford (King of Spain).
Large attendance. Press accounts to 22" agreed on the excellence of the choral and orchestral work. The audience was "very enthusiastic".

173 (163) THE MESSIAH (29) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.
Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).
The Town Hall was "crowded in all parts". Press accounts agreed on a meritorious performance. "The band was admirable under the control of the Conductor".

The Annual Report lacks the confidence of many earlier reports. Possibly a financial loss of £102/1/6 oppressed the Committee. Subscribers' fees declined by £53 and £40 was outstanding. Noted with regret were the deaths of Mr. C. E. Horsley (already mentioned) and Mr. I. I. Blundell, Treasurer for 13 years. Mr. F. Tate, Treasurer for 3 years, resigned and was succeeded by Mr. David Lee.

1877

174 (164) MARITANA (Wallace) (2) 1st Jan., Town Hall. Extra.
Mrs. Howitz (S), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Mr. Ben Clark (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).
"Large audience". The critics were agreed on an excellent performance. The orchestral work "deserves unqualified praise".

175 (165) NAAMAN (Costa) (2) 30th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. D. Miranda (T), Mr. G. F. Smith (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).
"A grand attendance". All sections received good marks from the critics. Press accounts extended to 16".

176 (166) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (7) 26th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mrs. Edwards (S), Miss Alice Holland (C), Member of Society (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).
"Very fair attendance". A good performance was "characterised by a level of good quality throughout".

177 (167) MISCELLANEOUS (76) 18th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
"Antigone" (Mendelssohn) (1), First performance in Victoria. "Athalie" (Mendelssohn) (5).
Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Bessie Jukes (C), Miss May Hill (C), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. B. T. Moroney (B).
A large attendance included the Governor, Sir George Bowen, K.C.M.G., Lady Bowen and suite. For "Antigone" (male voices only), the Choir was assisted by "German Liedertafel Society", "Turn Verin Society" and others. The "Argus" critic described the choral work in "Antigone" as "the grandest of its kind ever here" but the "Age" report was critical. "Athalie", however, pleased both.

178 (168) FRIDOLIN (Randegger) (2) 6th Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Orchestral-Overture "Mignon" (Thomas), First performance in Australia.
Mrs. Howitz (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. B. T. Moroney (B).
"Not a large gathering". Press accounts to 16" were in agreement. One stated, "The result was some of the most perfect musical effects in choral singing and orchestration which have ever yet been heard in Melbourne".

179 (169) THE MESSIAH (3) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.

Madm. Fannie Simonsen (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).
Of the attendance, the "Argus" said "there was seen such a sight as in this part of the world can only be witnessed in Melbourne. Every available inch of space within the four walls was crowded. ...a thousand sought admission". (Obviously the later restrictions imposed by the Board of Health did not apply). Press reports to 10" indicated an outstanding performance".

It is clear that, musically, the Society had regained its ability to give performances which, in addition to pleasing its audiences, satisfied the critics as well. In addition to the five subscription and one extra concert, the Society assisted at a complimentary given to Mr. Siede, the Conductor of the German Liedertafel of which no details are available. For the first time an item "salary to Conductor" appears in the accounts. In the present instance, the figure was £100, a sum which recurs in the four following years. The Rules were again amended. Chief change was the reduction of five subscription concerts per year to four. A corresponding change was to increase subscribers tickets to four double admissions to the gallery (£2/2/0) or ten single tickets to the chairs for one guinea. Financially the year's operations resulted in a loss of £13/11/2.

1878

180 (170) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (13) 19th Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Madm. Fannie Simonsen (8), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), also Madm. Steinbach, Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).
Crowded attendance. Press reports agree on the excellence of the performance. One remarked that "the oratorio was rendered magnificently".

181 (171) PARADISE and the PERI (Schumann) 27th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Victoria.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S) , Miss Christian (C) , Miss Bessie Pitts (8), Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. E. Exon (T), Mr. Dixon (T), Herr Johannes Elmblad (B).

"A large audience". Press accounts to 22" agreed on the excellence of the performance. The difficulties of the Orchestra on account of the elaborate scoring were noted.

182 (172) EUTERPE (C. E. Horsley) (2) 26th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Exhibition" Overture (Meyerbeer) (7).

Miss Bessie Pitts (8), Miss Christian (C), Mr. W. B. Dixon (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

The critics agreed on an excellent performance; one remarked "the orchestra performed their work, on the whole, most efficiently".

183 (173) THE MESSIAH (31) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. R. L. Skinner (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. A. Staker (B).

Attendance "very numerous". Press reports to 14" voted an excellent performance. There was praise for the Orchestra but the Choir took the honours.

The Annual Report stated that the reduction of subscription concerts to four enabled greater rehearsal of the works chosen for performance. In addition the Society assisted at a complimentary concert given to Mr. W. S. Lyster and at one given in aid of the "Loch Ard Fund". *Consequent on the wreck of the "Loch Ard" on the Victoria.n coast near Port Campbell.* details of which have not been preserved. Subscribers fees reached £231/6/6, an increase of £84/5/6 on 1877. The year's income showed a surplus over expenditure of £103/2/1 with no outstanding liabilities. At the end of the year "The Argus" commenced the serial publication in its columns of a review of the first twenty-five years of the Society's activities to which previous reference has been made.

1879

184 (174) THE CREATION (Haydn) 11th Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Building was quite full". "...the performance throughout was quite honourable to the members of the choir. The organ and the orchestra did all that was needed to give colour and support to the effects of the solo and chorus singers".

185 (175) MISCELLANEOUS (77) 19th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"St. Dorothea" (Madm. Sainton Dolby) (1), First performance in Australia. Third Symphony ("Scotch") (Mendelssohn) (1).

Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. W. A. Staker (T), Mr. S. Moyle (Bar.), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"The hall. ..well filled". Press reports to 13" were in agreement as to the excellence of both items. "The chorus singing was truly admirable". "...the best symphonic performance yet heard in this part of the world".

186 (176) MISCELLANEOUS (78) 27th Oct., Town Hall, 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos. "The Ancient Mariner" (Barnett) (3), Chorus from "Preciosa" (Weber) (9) . Overture - "Mignon" (Thomas) (2).

Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Mr. Fred Lineker (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Audience "not very numerous". "The chorus singing was truly admirable". The overture was played "most effectively".

187 (177) THE MESSIAH (32) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Alice Rees (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Fred Lineker (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

"Before 7 p.m., the place was filled with a vast audience". "The choral work was magnificently rendered".

"The orchestral work, generally was played in a masterly manner".

The Annual Report had much pleasure in referring to the favourable reports of the four subscription concerts. In addition to the four concerts the Society assisted at a complimentary concert tendered to the Society's Conductor of which no details have been preserved. Financially, a loss of £15/14/4 was recorded.

1880

188 (178) ISRAEL IN EGYPT. (Handel) (8) 26th Mar.* , Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Signora Aritoinetta Link (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"Large audience". Press accounts to 14" were distinctly favourable. Choir was reinforced for the occasion.

189 (179) MISCELLANEOUS (79) 17th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"The Pilgrimage of the Rose" (Schumann) (1), "Spring" (Alfred Plumpton) (1), Both first performances in Melbourne.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Christian (C), Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. W. A. Staker (T), Mr. G. F. Smith (T), Mr. J. Lake (Bar.), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Following preliminary descriptive notices, press accounts (to 17") noted that "a great orchestra had been got together" and admitted that the "Pilgrimage" was a difficult work to perform. Qualified praise was accorded but "Spring" performance was adjudged satisfactory. Due credit was given for the Society's enterprise.

190 (180) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (14) 1st Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Howitz (S), Miss Christian (C), Miss May Hill (C), Mr. Charles Turner (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"Very large attendance". "Orchestra numbered about 50" and tendered "superior orchestral accompaniment". "On the whole the choir sang with commendable precision and effect". Mr. Charles Turner "a new English tenor" was warmly praised. Press reports extended to 13".

191 (181) THE MESSIAH (33) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Annis Montague (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Charles Turner (T), Mr. S. Angus (B).

"A vast audience". Warm praise was accorded the Choir and an Orchestra of 50. "The accompaniments were beautifully' subdued throughout".

The Annual Report refers to the continued success of the Society despite exceptionally numerous counter attractions during the earlier part of the year. A small loss on the year's working appeared, viz., £24/5/3. Twenty three meetings of the committee were held. The Melbourne International Exhibition was opened on 1st October, in buildings erected on the site of the present Exhibition Buildings. Mons. Caron conducted a choir of 800 voices and an orchestra of 100 players. Other concerts were given during the life of the Exhibition; 7 months. The Society's records are silent, indicating that it took no part. Individual members, no doubt, joined the Exhibition Choir.

1881

192 (182) CALVARY (Spohr) (1) 15th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Frith (C), Miss Orme (C), Master W. Perraton (Alto), Mr. Alfred Ford (T), Mr. T. E. Jones (B), Mr. Rofo (B), Mr. F. S. Whitehead (B).

There was "a great attendance". The press recognised the importance of the occasion with reports to 22". Good choral work was noted but an Orchestra of 48 was not balanced by the Choir. The absence of competent professional soloists was regretted.

193 (183) MISCELLANEOUS (80) 30th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos. "Victoria" (A. T. Turner), First performance. "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (5), "Bright Orb" (Bishop) (4), "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (6). Overture-"Midsummer Night's Dream"

(Mendelssohn) (2), Piano Concerto "Concert Stuck" (Weber) (3).

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Orme (C), Mr. Mavor (T), Herr Hartmann (B), Miss E. S. Anderson (P'st).

Good attendance. "Victoria" described as an "Australian Confederation March and descriptive cantata" was performed "with considerable success". The Bishop choruses "were rendered with magnificent success".

The overture was admirably played except for the wood wind instruments part in the opening passage.

"Victoria" was conducted by the Composer .

194 (184) ELI (Costa) (1) 29th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Ben Clark (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).

"Good attendance". Some criticism was directed against both Choir and Orchestra although the Choir's work was described as "the most difficult part of Eli". Although it was the Society's first performance of the work, it was first rendered in Victoria by the Brighton Harmonic Society in 1876.

195 (185) THE MESSIAH (34) 24th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Ben Clark (T), Mr. T. E. Jones (B).

196 (188) THE MESSIAH (35) 26th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Same Principals as before.

Good attendances. "On both nights, and especially the latter, the work of the chorus was rendered with a precision which was really admirable. The orchestra, considering the difficulty of getting a body of instrumentalists together at this time of the year, was highly efficient".

In the Annual Report, the Committee expressed satisfiofi asl to the year's work, but commented adversely, "that so many members absent themselves from rehearsal and fail to give any reason". Owing to the large number of sopranos on the roll (85) admission was restricted to the filling of vacancies. A loss of £34/9/10 was recorded.

1882

197 (187) THE CREATION (Haydn) (19) 7th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Madm. Gabriella Boema (S), Miss Bessie Pitts (S), Mr. Wm. Walshe (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

Very large attendance. Press accounts to 13" praised the performance with good marks for the Choir and Orchestra. Mr. W. Juniper, one of the "stalwarts" of the choir was presented with a handsomely bound copy of the work for long and valued services as soloist and chorister.

198 (188) FRIDOLIN (Randegger) (3) 12th Sep., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Overture-"Mignon" (Thomas) (3).

Miss Alice Simmons (S), Mr. W. A. Staker (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B), Mr. B. T. Moroney (B).

The choral parts were "well performed" but some criticism was directed against the brass and reed instruments in the Orchestra in the rendering of the overture.

199 (189) ERNANI (Verdi) (4) 12th Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Alice Rees (S), Miss May Hill (S), Signor Leandro Coy (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. E. Amery (B), Mr. F. W. Sincock (B), Mr. Fred Jolley (B).

"Sparse attendance". "There was but one opinion amongst the whole audience as to the admirable quality of this....concert". Signor Coy sang in Italian, taking the part at two hours notice vice Mr. Knight Ashton who had been engaged.

200 (-) THE MESSIAH (36) 25th Dec. Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Miss Alice Rees (S), Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Signora Palma (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B), Signor Verdi (B).

Mr. Gooch made the first of 15 appearances as soloist. The Society merged its annual performance in the second concert given under the auspices of the "Melbourne Music Festival Association". An extended report by the "Argus" writer referred to a choir numbering over one thousand voices and an orchestra of 125. Mr. Julius Seide conducted. Mr. Lee apparently considered he was slighted by the appointment of another conductor and directed a concert given in the Town Hall on the same evening. The "Argus" account said "The night. . .will be memorable in the musical circles of this place as having witnessed the most imposing gathering of Victorian citizens that was ever drawn together by a common impulse to listen to the well studied interpretation of a musical masterpiece".

Six concerts were given under the direction of the Melbourne Music Festival Association within the space of five days and, apart from the musical activities associated with the Centennial Exhibition (see next Chapter), they represent the greatest musical festival held in Melbourne. Nothing like it has been attempted since. Mr. Julius Herz was referred to as "the promoter of the festival." As the Society's choral orchestral and library resources were a substantial contribution to the festival, Mr. Lee's omission as a Conductor from the "Messiah" and other concerts is remarkable; apparently he had good reason to feel slighted. A press account noted, "The Festival Choir has been the very pith and substance of the whole meeting." Details of the other concerts follow.

-- ELI (Costa) (2) 23rd Dec. Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Miss Alice Rees (S), Miss Christian (C), Signor Verdi (B), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B), Master Perraton (Child Samuel).

The first of six concerts given as the "First Melbourne Musical Festival". A sparse attendance listened to a performance by 900 choristers and an orchestra of 65 players, conducted by Mr. Julius Herz. The choral work was praised but criticism was directed against the orchestra.

-- MISCELLANEOUS 26th Dec. At 11 a.m. Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Vocal solos by Madm. Polk (S) and Miss Kate Thayer (S).

"Endymion" (Alfred Plumpton) (1).

Soloists-Miss Alice Rees (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Signor Verdi (B) .

Conducted by the Composer who wrote the work for the occasion from text arranged by Mr. E. Exon from Keats' poem. It was adjudged a good performance. Orchestral scherzo 'La Siesta de la Senorita" (Fumi) (1). Third Symphony (Mendelssohn) (3).

Signor Alberto Zelman conducted the orchestral numbers. Choristers numbered 500 and the orchestra 80. Attendance was only fair .

-- MISCELLANEOUS 26th Dec. Evening Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Vocal solos by Miss Kate Thayer (S) and Miss Christian (C). 'Songs of Praise" (Elsasser) (1). Composed for the occasion and conducted by the Composer. Soloists - Miss R. Carandini (S), Signora Palma (C), Miss Alice King, Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Signor Coy (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

Overture-"William Tell" (Rossini) (4), Sixth Symphony -C Major (Mozart) (4), Organ Concerto, No.2 (Handel) (1) Mr. Philip Plaisted. Duties of Conductor were shared by Signor Zelman and Mr .Julius Siede.

Press accounts, mostly by way of description, extended to two columns.

-- MISCELLANEOUS 27th Dec. At 11 a.m. Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Vocal solo by Madm. Polk (S) 'Choral Symphony" (Beethoven) (2). Soloists-Miss Alice Rees (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T) , Signor Verdi (B) .. Third Act from 'Tannhauser" (Wagner) (1). Soloists-Miss Alice Rees (S), Signor Coy (T), Signor Verdi (B). Overture-'Meistersinger" (Wagner) (1), Dead March from "Gotterdammerung" (Wagner) (1), March and Chorus (Max Vogrich) (1). Conducted by the Composer who also conducted the other items except the Choral Symphony which was directed by Mr .Julius Herz.

The chorus numbered 400 and the orchestra nearly 90. The performance of the "Choral Symphony" was claimed as the first in Melbourne but incorrectly. The first performance was given by the Society on 24th September 1872.

-- ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (9) 27th Dec. Evening Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Miss Alice Rees (S), Mrs. Cutter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T).

Occasional Overture (Handel) (1).

Press accounts extended to two columns in covering the day's work. As to "Israel in Egypt" one account said "As a choral display, something that Melbourne may feel justly proud of". Mr. Julius Herz conducted the oratorio and Mr. J. Summers the overture.

The Annual Report referred to the reduced attendance at rehearsals, especially during the last three months which was attributed to "the attention given by members to the rehearsals for the late musical festival." To recompense the Society for the loss of revenue usually derived from its Christmas concert, £112 was received from the Festival Committee. The year's income exceeded the expenditure by £61/13/1.

1883

201 (191) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (15) 23rd Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Knight Ashton (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), A member of Society (B).

"The whole of the choral work was highly creditable". Press reports extended to 18".

202 (192) THE SEASONS (Haydn) (3) 31st Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Mr. W. Walshe (T), Herr Hartung (B).

The Choir numbered 250. In a 27" report the "Argus" writer qualified his praise for the performance.

203 (193) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (1) 27th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia. .

Madm. Fannie Simonsen (S) , Mrs. Allen, Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. Wm. Walshe (T), Mr. Thos. Bergin (Bar.), Herr Johannes Emblad (B).

The "Argus" account covered ly2 columns giving a full description of the work. "The choir was admirably drilled, the orchestra the best ever heard in the Town Hall and the manner of the performance a triumph for the Society and Conductor, Mr. David Lee". The work was first performed at the Birmingham Festival during the previous year.

204 (194) MESSIAH (37) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

"The Town Hall was too small for those who sought admission". "The orchestra of the Phil. is now its prime feature...the choral work was magnificently rendered". The outstanding popularity of Handel's "Messiah" is indicated by the fact that a rival performance at the Exhibition Building "drew an immense audience". Mr. Julius Herz conducted and the singers numbered "several hundreds".

The Annual Report made special reference to the performance, "for the first time in the Southern Hemisphere" of Gounod's "Redemption". Two social evenings were held during the year. Mr. Peake was granted nine months leave of absence for the purpose of visiting Europe. Mr. Philip Plaisted undertook the duties of hon. organist in his place. Subscribers' fees rose from £178/4/6 in 1882 to £262/11/0. This increase, with better support from the public resulted in the year's work returning a net profit of £27/0/11. At the end of the year, performing members numbered: Sop. 132, Alto 54, Tenor 44, Bass 43, Instrumentalists 33, total 306.

1884

205 (196) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (2) 11th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Fannie Simonsen (S) , Mrs. Allen, Miss Alice Holland (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. Thos. Bergin (B), Mr. W. F. Sincock (B), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

The Town Hall was "crowded to utmost capacity". The " Argus" report extended to 16", referred to a band and chorus of 350 performers and tendered high praise to both.

206 (197) ELI (Costa) (3) 12th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S) , Miss Christian (C) , Mr. Armes Beaumont (;r), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B), Mr. Thos. Bergin (B), Mr. Bede, Mr. W. Walshe (T) .

The Governor and Lady Loch attended. The Composer died on the 29th April previous and as a tribute to his memory a new arrangement of Chopin's "Funeral March" (1) was played at the conclusion of the concert. A long "Argus" report (23") praised the orchestra and noted that the choir's work was "splendidly performed".

207 (198) JEPHTHA (Handel) (1) 25th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Miss Smith, Mr. Thos. Bergin (B), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

The Governor and Lady Loch and Duke of Manchester were present. The Choir work was "splendidly performed" and there was praise for the Orchestra. Report by the "Argus" covered 23". The Society never repeated the oratorio.

208 (199) THE MESSIAH (38) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

A large attendance included the Governor and Lady Loch. In its 15" account the "Argus" said "the work was never so well performed...especially in the good balance of the chorus".

The Annual Report has not been preserved. A press report of the Annual Meeting (26/2/85) indicated a choir strength of 291, composed: Sop. 133, Alto 70, Tenor 48, Bass 40. Instrumentalists 31. A small profit was shown on the year's work. At the conclusion of business a concert by members was given.

1885

209 (201) CALVARY (Spohr) (2) 3rd Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B), Master Beyers.

A "magnificent attendance" included the Governor and Lady Loch. The "Argus" (15") reported a good performance. No harp player being available in Melbourne, a pianoforte was used as a substitute.

210 (202) MISCELLANEOUS (81) 11th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Vocal solos. Choruses from "Acis & Galatea" (6), "Israel in Egypt" (7), "Samson" (4), "Jeptha" (1), "Judas Maccabeus" (4), "Hallelujah" from "The Messiah" (9). Overtures-"Samson" (3), "Acis and Galatea" (1).

Miss Rosina Carandini (S) , Miss Mary Hume (S), Miss Florence Jobson (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

The programme was to celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of Handel. A "great attendance" included the Governor and Lady Loch. A long account in the "Argus" (22") touched on many aspects of the composer's life and work and referred to the enthusiasm displayed by performers and listeners.

211 (203) MISCELLANEOUS (82) 29th Sep., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"Stabat Mater" (Dvorak), First performance in Australia. Ninety Seventh Psalm (Barnby) (1).

Miss Rosina Carandini (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

"The Town Hall was crowded by an expectant audience". The Governor and Lady Loch attended. "The chorus mustered in great force and in nearly each number showed the finish attained by perfect drill". The "Argus" writer marked the occasion by a 24" report which gave a long descriptive narration of both works.

212 (204) MISCELLANEOUS (83) 1st Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"The Holy City" (A. R. Gaul) (1), First performance in Australia. "For Thee" (Sir W. C. Robinson) (1), First performance. "Grand Symphony" in D Op. 60 (Dvorak) (1).

Miss Mary Hume (S) | Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Allan, Mr. C. M. J. Edwards (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

"For Thee" was specially composed for the Society by Sir W. C. Robinson, Governor of South Australia. In a 24" report of the concert, the "Argus" said "the fine body of vocalists engaged. ..imparted to it a dignity greater than we could gather from the perusal of a single copy". "The Holy City" was composed for the Birmingham Festival 1882. The "Argus" critic was content to describe the work at length without reference to the performance. As to the Grand Symphony, it was said to have been "almost unexpectedly good". The Governor and Lady Loch attended.

213 (205) THE MESSIAH (39) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (Miss R. Carandini) (S) , Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

The Chorus "was full voiced and accurate" and the Orchestra was described as "the strongest in numbers and best in talent which was ever engaged on the same work in Melbourne". Over 40 players of strings were noted. The Governor and Lady Loch were present.

The Annual Report has not been preserved.

1886

214 (206) THE CREATION (Haydn) (20) 23rd Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Madm. Gabriella Boema (S) , Mr. Armes Beaumont (T) Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).

A "full house" .included the Governor and Lady Loch. A good performance. The orchestra numbered 65.

215 (207) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (16) 10th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. W. Parkinson (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).
The audience was "great in numbers". Qualified praise was tendered by the "Argus" report (15").

216 (208) FAUST (Gounod) (1) 29th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Marg., Madm. Gabriella Boema; Siebel, Miss Frederica Mitchell; Martha, Miss Curtis; Faust, Mr. W. Parkinson; Valentine, Mr. Chas. Hasselman; Wagner, Mr. W. Juniper; Mephistophles, Mr. T. B. Browning.
"A large audience". The "Argus" report tendered both praise and criticism for Choir, Orchestra and Soloists, accompanied by an explanation of the difficulties in obtaining competent orchestral players. The "Age" writer was entirely scathing.

217 (209) THE MESSIAH (40) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Madm. Gabriella Boema (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. Robert Kennedy (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).
The "Argus" account (15") said "the performance... altogether highly satisfactory and worthy of a body which has done so much for the advancement of musical taste in Melbourne". Again the Society encountered opposition. On the same night and in the Exhibition Bldg., Mr. Julius Herz conducted a performance of the same work to an audience of 3000. All of the Principals had appeared with the Society.

1887

218 (210) MISCELLANEOUS (84) 8th Apr.*, Theatre Royal. 1st Sub.
"Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (2). "Stabat Mater" (Rossini) (9).
Madm. Gabriella Boema (S), Miss Frederica Mitchell (S), Mr. Robert Kennedy (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).
"A grand attendance". A good performance of both works. The audience had a unique opportunity of hearing and comparing the different treatment of the subject by different composers. This was the only occasion in the Society's history that such an event occurred. Mr. George Peake conducted this and the subsequent subscription concert owing to Mr. Lee's absence in Europe. Mr. Peake's position as Organist was taken by Mr. J. R. Edson who made the first of many appearances as Organist.

-- JUBILEE MUSICAL FESTIVAL 23rd Jun., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.
Given by authority of the Government of Victoria to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee as Monarch. For the occasion the Society joined forces with the Metropolitan Liedertafel (Mr. Julius Herz) and the Melbourne Liedertafel (Mr. Julius Siede). The Society's contribution was the Jubilee Ode "For Fifty Years Our Queen" (Mackenzie) (1). The combined Liedertafels rendered "Victorian Jubilee Ode" (Plumpton), "O Sanctissima" (Sicilian Mariners Hymn), "Warrior's Prayer" and Bacchus Chorus from "Antigone" (Mendelssohn). The combined choirs and orchestra presented "The Hundredth Psalm" (1), "Hallelujah" Chorus (Handel) (10) and concluding item "God Save the Queen".

The sole orchestral number was Finale C Minor Sympathy (Beethoven) (1).

Soloists were Miss Amy Sherwin (S), Madm. Gabriella Boema (S), Mrs. Julius Herz, Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Henry Stockwell (T) and Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

219 (211) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (7) 30th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).
A "great attendance" which included the Governor and Lady Loch. In a 14" report, the "Argus" said "the whole performance was of a very satisfactory kind".

220 (212) THE SEASONS (Haydn) (4) 29th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Mrs. Palmer (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).
"On the whole, a very creditable performance".

221 (213) THE MESSIAH (42) 24th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gordon Gooch (B).
A 16" account in the "Argus" summed up- "much to be said in the way of admiring recognition".

222 (214) THE MESSIAH (43) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 5th Sub.
Principals as before, except that Mr. S. W. M. Lambie replaced Mr. Gordon Gooch.
"The whole performance deserved the favourable recognition it received".

The Annual Report said, inter alia, "The success of the past year has been of a musical nature rather than financial. The Society has suffered an unusually heavy loss, due in great measure to our inability to secure

the Town Hall on Good Friday and to the necessity of giving two concerts at Christmas, which instead of yielding the usual surplus, resulted in a loss." Nevertheless, the Report bore witness that performing members were taking a deeper interest in the welfare of the Society. The Treasurer's Report has not been preserved.

1888

223 (215) CALVARY (Spohr) (3) 30th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Bethel (S), Mrs. Ramsden (C), Mr. C. M. J. Edwards (T), Mr. T. B. Browning (B), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

Generally a good performance vocally. "Mr. Lee was faced by an orchestra who may be said to have been drawn together without rehearsal. Fortunately the best players were free on Good Friday Night from theatrical engagements, and the band responded to the Conductor's baton with decision and musical feeling." Tickets of admission stated "Evening dress politely requested".

224 (216) MISCELLANEOUS (85) 22nd May, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal and violin solos. Choruses from "Jubilee Ode" (Mackenzie) (1), "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa) (7), "Now by Day's Retiring Lamp" (Bishop) (6), "The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (4), "O, Who Will O'er the Downs so Free" (Pearsall) (1), "The Chough and the Crow" (Bishop) (4), "Bright Orb" (Bishop) (5).

Mrs. Bethell (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. C. M. J. Edwards (T), Mr. H. W. Francis (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).

There was no orchestra; accompaniments were provided by the organ. Press reports to 14" indicated generally a good concert.

225 (217) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) 11th Aug., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Elsie, Mrs. Palmer; Ursula, Madm. Christian; Prince Henry, Mr. C. M. J. Edwards; Lucifer, Mr. F. H. Morton; Forester, Mr. W. Juniper.

The performance commenced at 3 p.m. The explanation given by the "Argus" account (28) " ...that time of day being chosen in consequence of the difficulty of securing an audience on account of the orchestra being engaged by the Exhibition Commissioners for six months ... some instrumentalists had to be engaged at the last moment". Despite the difficulties, the account said the Society and Conductor deserved high praise. The "Age" (12) and "Daily Telegraph" (11) were critical.

226 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (86) 4th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Vocal solos and a lecture by Dr. Beaven on "Origin and Progress of Oratorio", "For Thee" (Robinson) (2), Choruses "Kyrie" and "Gloria" (Mozart's Twelfth Mass) (2), "Golden Legend" (Sullivan) (1), "Jubilee Ode" (Mackenzie) (2).

Mrs. Bethell (S), Miss Porrit (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. Wm. Parkinson (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).

The reports noted good choral work.

227 (219) THE MESSIAH (43) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Fanny Bristow (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. W. Parkinson (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B).

Despite performances of "The Messiah" by a large "Centennial International Exhibition Choir" in the Exhibition Building on 24th, 25th and 27th December, "A great audience" thronged the Town Hall. High praise was accorded the Choir but as to an Orchestra of 55 players, qualifications and explanations were necessary.

The Annual Report referred to an increase in subscribers from 284 to 462, but apparently the years work resulted in a financial deficit. Before the Annual Meeting, Sir George Verdon resigned the Presidency on account of ill health. Mr. M. H. Davies (afterwards Sir) M.L.A., Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, was elected in his place. The latter half of the year was affected by the activities of the Centennial Exhibition which are mentioned in the following Chapter.

The Christmas concert was the last conducted by Mr. Lee. According to Mr. Peake, on Mr. Lee's return from Europe "no fresh enterprise was announced nor did it appear that his second trip to England had restocked the Conductor's life with any new ideas or fresh energy." Accordingly the Committee approached Mr. Peake with a request that he allow himself to be nominated as Conductor, but he declined. The request was renewed early in the following year when Mr. Peake agreed. Not willing to submit to opposition, Mr. Lee retired and so closed his long association with the Society. In all, his tenure as Conductor covered 20 years, the longest of any to date and one extending over one fifth of this history. That of itself was a substantial contribution to the development of music in Victoria. Some of Mr. Peake's criticisms in his "Historical Souvenir," appear somewhat harsh when viewed in retrospect and against the background of the difficulties

of the time. It would seem that his greatest contribution to the Society's record was in the sixties" when the Society was maintaining frequent appearances in public and at the same time literally fighting for its existence. His struggles with the Orchestra in those days must have been well-nigh heart breaking and the general circumstances were such as would have appalled all but a dauntless heart. The Annual Reports bear frequent testimony of Mr. Lee's ability, zeal and untiring energy and, combined with diversity in character of the performances given under his baton, indicate a leader qualified to direct the premier musical society in Victoria. It is clear that the presence of such a leader made all the difference between death and survival as far as the Society was concerned. As one of the stalwarts of the past, his name and contribution are held in grateful remembrance.

A summary of works performed during this period of Mr. Lee's conductorship follows:

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	15
Judas Maccabeus	(Handel)	1
Israel in Egypt	(Handel)	1
Jeptha	(Handel)	1
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	4
St. Paul (Mr. George Peake conducted)	(Mendelssohn)	1
The Creation	(Haydn)	3
The Seasons	(Haydn)	2
Calvary	(Spohr)	3
Maritana	(Wallace)	2
The Redemption	(Gounod)	2
Fridoline	(Randegger)	2
Eli	(Costa)	2
Naaman	(Costa)	1
Paradise and the Peri	(Schumann)	1
Uterpe	(C. E. Horsley)	1
Ernani	(Verdi)	1
Faust	(Gounod)	1
The Golden Legend	(Sullivan)	1
Miscellaneous (Mr. George Peake conducted one)		<u>11</u>
		56
Concerts at which the Society assisted:		
Eli		1
Israel in Egypt		1
Miscellaneous		<u>8</u>
		<u>10</u>
		66

CHAPTER IX. CENTENNIAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

To mark the Centenary of Settlement in Australia, the Centennial International Exhibition was opened in Melbourne, on 1st August, 1888, by the Governor of the Colony, Sir Henry Brougham Loch. The celebrations were sponsored by the Government of.. Victoria after the proposal had been put forward in Cabinet by the Chief Secretary, the Hon. Alfred Deakin. For the purpose, the "Permanent Exhibition Building", erected for the 1880 Exhibition was used after extensive additions had been made thereto. Excepting Sundays, the Exhibition remained open for 160 days and closed on 31st January, 1889.

The general direction was vested in a Commission which, in addition to its other plans, arranged for Mr. Frederick H. Cowen (afterwards Sir), an eminent English conductor and composer to visit Melbourne and to take charge of the musical activities of the Exhibition. By arrangement, he selected and brought with him about 15 competent key instrumentalists to form the nucleus of an "Exhibition Orchestra." Meanwhile an "Exhibition Choir" of 700 voices was formed and trained jointly by Mr. Alberto Zelman Sen. and Mr. George Peake the Society's Organist.

In passing, it may be said that the Exhibition exceeded anything of its kind in Victoria, before or since. Similarly the orchestral and choral activities transcended all other musical festivals ever given in Victoria. For this reason, a separate chapter in this volume outlines the nature and extent of the musical feast provided for the citizens of Victoria during the six months of the life of the Exhibition.

The Orchestra comprised 73 players and apart from its contribution to "Choral", "Popular" and other concerts, gave 191 orchestral concerts during which it rendered 91 overtures, 35 symphonies, 14 concertos, 17 "selections" and 95 items described as "miscellaneous". Choral and other concerts (21 described as "popular") brought the grand total to 244 concerts. Twenty-six "Choral" concerts were given, the works performed being (omitting some details of 3 "miscellaneous" programmes).

		Performances
*Ruth	(Cowen)	5
The Messiah	(Handel)	4
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	4
*Sleeping Beauty	(Cowen)	2
Choral Symphony	(Beethoven)	2
The Creation	(Haydn)	2
*Centennial Cantata	(King)	3
Stabat Mater	(Rossini)	2
The Golden Legend	(Sullivan)	2
Choral Fantasia	(Beethoven)	2
*Song of Thanksgiving	(Cowen)	5
*Gallia	(Gounod)	2
Hear My Prayer	(Mendelssohn)	2

*Works marked * were given for the first time in Melbourne.*

The Choir comprised 223 Sopranos, 192 Contraltos, 146 Tenors. (What! exclaim present day conductors) and 147 Bass, a total of 708. Unlike the members of the Orchestra, choristers' services were given gratis. Some recompense was a pass to the Exhibition at all times and an appropriately designed certificate acknowledging such gratuitous service. Mr. Cowen conducted all concerts. For his part in the Festival his fee was £5,000 as well as tokens of appreciation from the Commission, the Orchestra and the Choir. Officially the Society did not take part and continued with its usual public appearances during the Exhibition. Most of the Society's choristers, however, were in the Exhibition Choir. In the circumstances, it is not surprising to read in the Annual Report for 1888- "Owing to the heavy and constant calls made on the time of the members by the Centennial Exhibition Choir, to which nearly the whole of the Society belonged, the rehearsals have not been attended as regularly as in past years..." Mr. Peake acted as Organist in the Exhibition Choir. Statistics appearing in the Official Record are interesting. The total attendance is given at 1,900,000. On the musical arrangements £28,000 was spent; offset by £9,020/14/5 received from admissions to concerts. Figures relevant to the concerts compare, (excluding "Invitation" concerts) :

	No. of Concerts	Attendance	Receipts		Average
Orchestral	191	366,607	£1,500/9/6	1919.	£8/6/7
Choral	26	57,225	6,426/14/5	2201.	247/3/7
Popular	21	27,132	965/2/0	1292.	45/19/2

A notable outcome of the Festival was the continuation of the Exhibition Orchestra, reformed, as the Victorian Orchestra. Unfortunately its life was a short one and will be referred to later. The choral performances noted in this Chapter have not been included in the serial numberings applied to works stated in the Society's record.

CHAPTER X. GEORGE PEAKE'S CONDUCTORSHIP

The new Conductor, at the age of 36, brought to his task musical qualifications of a high order. Born in the year of the Society's foundation, he had, as a lad, achieved public notice as a soprano soloist. Late in the sixties he became a member of the Chorus, then a violinist in the Society's Band. Followed 14 years as the Society's Organist with two appearances as emergency Conductor. Further qualifications were study in voice production in London and audition of leading choirs in England. As a lad, he appeared as a boy soloist at a complimentary concert tendered to Mr. John Russell and thereby established an interesting link with the Society's first Conductor. It will be noted that his progression, Organist-Conductor, was in line with two of his predecessors.

To succeed Mr. Peake, as Organist, Mr. I. R. Edeson was appointed and so commenced a two year tenure of that position. Mr. Henry Curtis was appointed Leader of the orchestra in place of Mr. E. King and so began an occupation of that office, which lasted even longer than Mr. Peake's conductorship, i.e., 22½ years. The course of Mr. Peake's long term will now be followed.

1889

228 (-) NAAMAN (Costa) (3) 19th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. H. Williams (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

The Acting Governor, Sir William Robinson and suite attended. Chorus and Orchestra were stated as "over 400 members". In the case of the former, it was reinforced by ex-members of the late Centennial Exhibition Choir. Its work was praised but the Orchestra received criticism; the pitch of the brass was questioned and the big drum offended at times. The new Conductor, Organist and Leader of the orchestra made their debut together. Mr. Gee made the first of 12 appearances as a soloist.

229 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (17) 28th May, Town Hall. Extra.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont, Mr. Charles Santley (B).

The Acting Governor and suite were in the audience. Press accounts directed some criticism at the Choir, the Orchestra and the Organist; also the late comers. But of Mr. Santley's interpretation of the Prophet there was nothing but praise and that of the warmest. His "performance was a revelation to those who had not heard his interpretation of the music while to those who have heard him in England, it was revival of delightful reminiscences". "A creation rather than an impersonation". Writing of this great singer's appearance with the Society, Mr. Peake said ". . .the most famous baritone of his time. His reading has become traditional, from which no singer makes any serious departure. On this occasion the intense feeling and dramatic power of his interpretation came as a revelation. Besides being a highly cultured musician and composer, he was ever a courteous English gentleman, sympathetic and patient under the most trying conditions; absolutely incapable of bluff or of descending to those little tricks to which some artists resort in order to save themselves from difficulty and trouble. His sense of responsibility as an artist was ever active. He attended all possible rehearsals, would not indulge in any conversation immediately before the concert, and had all baize or carpet removed from the platform. Although the concert was hurriedly prepared, there was no serious blot in the performance".

230 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (18) 30th May, Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance with the same Principals. Press reports indicate a much better performance. Mr. Santley repeated his previous triumph.

231 (220) THE ROSE OF SHARON (Mackenzie) 17th Sep., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Bessie Jukes (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. H. W. Francis (B), Mr. A. H. Gee (B). The "Argus" tendered its readers 22" of preliminary analysis. All papers gave extended reports of the concert, the "Age" account reaching 21". The Choir did fairly well but the Orchestra of 36 professionals and 12 amateurs was considered insufficient.

232 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (87) 19th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos. Choruses from "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (5), "St. Paul" (Mendelssohn) (1), "Calvary" (Spohr) (1) and "Hark, the Horn Awakes the Morn" (Randegger) (1).

Signorina Rebottaro (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Signor E. De Beaupis (P'st), Mr. Henry Curtis (V'st).

A large audience. No orchestra; Mr. Edeson did his best to cover the deficiency by his performance at the organ. Miss Ada Crossley made the first of her eight appearances with the Society as a soloist. Her singing was accorded favourable comment and on her second appearance "was honoured with an encore".

233 (223) THE MESSIAH (44) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Bessie Jukes (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

Large attendance. The engagement of the Victorian Orchestra led to improved orchestral work. The Choir received qualified praise and the Conductor's tempi was questioned at some points.

In the Annual Report, the Committee was pleased to report that the bank overdraft of £214 at the beginning of the year had been reduced to £56 at the close, but liabilities stood at £32. Also noted, "The establishment of the Victorian Orchestra in our midst is a matter for sincere congratulation, for though it necessitated the disbanding of our own amateur orchestra, it will enable us to present our concerts before our subscribers and the general public in a more perfect manner than has hitherto been possible. It is to be hoped, however, that the Victorian Orchestra Committee will be able to see its way to relax some of the more stringent conditions which press upon the musical societies." The new orchestra was an outgrowth from an orchestra composed mainly from players brought out from England by Mr. (after Sir) Frederick Cowan and formed for the purpose of giving performances at the Centennial Exhibition which was opened in 1888. The new body had a short and troubled career which will be referred to later. Strength of the choir was given at 226, "though much larger than last year, it is rather less than anticipated." A partial explanation was tendered in that, "the standard for admission is a high one, over 100 applying for membership having failed to pass the test; your Committee being of opinion that it is better to retain a smaller chorus of first-class voices than to fill vacant seats with members who cannot or will not work."

1890

234 (-) THE MESSIAH (45) 4th Jan., Town Hall. Extra.

Madm. Cecile Bentami (S), Madm. Marian Burton (C), Mr. Henry Stockwell (T), Mr. Charles Santley (B).

235 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (19) 23rd Jan., Town Hall. Extra.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Marian Burton (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Charles Santley (B), Master Horace Stevens (Youth).

236 (-) THE MESSIAH (46) 25th Jan., Town Hall. Extra.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Marian Burton (O), Mr. Henry Stockwell (T), Mr. Charles Santley (B).

The three foregoing "extra" concerts were given under the sponsorship of the Committee of the Victorian Orchestra. For the occasion, the Society augmented its Chorus. The press gave extended reports of a notable series of performances. It was agreed that the contralto and bass parts for principals in "The Messiah" had never been so effectively rendered in Melbourne while in "Elijah" Mr. Santley's rendering of the part of the Prophet "created a profound sensation". At the same performance Master Horace Stevens commenced the first of his many appearances with the Society as boy soloist and distinguished bass soloist; 43 in all.

237 (229) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (3) 4th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

The Victorian Orchestra assisted an augmented Choir; both received praise in extended press accounts. The Orchestra numbered 56 and Choir 260. Mr. Wright made the first of his 11 appearances with the Society as bass soloist.

238 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (88) 5th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos. "The Sun Worshippers" (Goring Thomas) (1), "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (3).

Miss Bertha Rossow (S), Miss Christie Fuller (C), Mr. W. Parkinson (T).

A "crowded attendance" included the Governor and Countess Hopetoun. There was praise for the Choir but the Orchestra was not altogether happy.

239 (231) MISCELLANEOUS (89) 26th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"The Lay of the Last Minstrel" (Hamish MacCunn) (1), "The Cottar's Saturday Night" (A. C. Mackenzie) (1). Both first performances in Melbourne.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Porrit (S), Mr. Robert Kennedy (T), Mr. W. Juniper (B), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

Hall was "well filled". Extended press reports (to 25") generally approved the Chorus but the Victorian Orchestra was too loud at times.

240 (232) THE MESSIAH (47) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

The hall was "crowded". The Victorian Orchestra gave an improved performance but some criticism was directed against the Choir, also against the Conductor's tempi.

The Annual Report recorded a successful year, musically and financially. During the year the Conductor tested each voice in the choir and reported the "general quality of the voices was excellent, and in many instances, exceptionally good". Although the Report is silent on the matter, the activities of the newly formed Victorian Orchestra seriously disturbed the musical world of Melbourne during the year. After the receipt of the second subsidy of £3,000 from the Victorian Government, the committee of the orchestra launched a proposal to form a choir to act with the orchestra in the production of oratorio and other large choral works. While the "Standard" supported the proposal, the "Age" and "Argus" commented unfavourably. The principal choral bodies, headed by the Society, rose in arms. The principal objection was that the orchestra, being in receipt of government subsidy given to assist orchestral music, should confine its activities to such. In the proposal, the choral bodies, particularly the Society, saw an ominous threat to their very existence. Much bitterness prevailed. On representations to the Government, the Premier stated that he would not allow the subsidy to be used for any other purpose than orchestral music. Subsequently the committee of the orchestra and representatives of the choral bodies conferred in an endeavour to achieve a working arrangement, but without success. The ultimate fate of the orchestra will be noted later. The Treasurer's Report for the year disclosed a profit of £130. The Santley concerts returned £136.

1891

241 (233) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (8) 27th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (5), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. H. J. Robinson (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

Large attendance. A creditable performance in which the Choir's part was praiseworthy. The Victorian Orchestra took part. Press reports to 12".

242 (234) MISCELLANEOUS (90) 4th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solo. "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (5), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (4). Overture - "Tannhauser" (Wagner) (1) Conducted by Sir Charles Halle.

Fraulein Marie Fillunger (5), Madm. Elise Wiedermann (5), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Sir Charles Halle (P'st).

Crowded house. Press reports to 21 ". Choral items were chosen by subscribers. Some good choral singing. "A large orchestra had been got together for the occasion but this proved in many ways an unsatisfactory substitute for the one just disbanded" (Victorian Orchestra). Fraulein Fillunger obtained a furor of applause for her rendering of "Die Junge Nonne" (Schubert) and the highest praise was accorded Sir Charles Halle for his solo work in the "Choral Fantasia" and his conducting of the overture.

243 (235) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) (2) 26th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Isabel Webster (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B), Mr. H. W. Francis (B).

A good attendance included the Governor. Considerable difficulty was experienced in gathering a "scratch" Orchestra partly due to prevailing influenza which also affected the Choir. Some good choral work was noted in press accounts to 21 ".

244 (236) THE MESSIAH (48) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Lalla Miranda (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

There was "the annual crush at the Town Hall". While the Choir (150) did "admirably", a "scratch" Orchestra of 30 was "moderately successful". The "Age" referred to the loss occasioned by the disbandment of the Victorian Orchestra and continued "since on ordinary evenings there is even a smaller field to draw upon, the ranks being last illight recruited to some extent from the theatres".

There was much social activity during the year. The Annual Report refers to the President (Sir M. H. Davies) entertaining members and friends at a social evening on 2nd June, when Mr. J. Munro Ross was presented with a gold chain and diamond locket in recognition of his services as Hon. Secretary during the preceding three years; to the Senior Vice President (Hon. J. James McKean) entertaining the gentlemen members on 3rd September, and to a musical evening arranged by members on 30th September. All functions were held in the Athenaeum Hall. The onset of the financial depression of the "nineties" was in

evidence, but had not seriously affected the Society. It is noted, however, that the lowest priced admission, i.e., 2/- was reduced to 1/-. The accounts recorded a loss of £91/14/4 for the year.

During the year, the Victorian Orchestra expired after a short and unhappy existence. The Society was one of the guarantors. Consequently the Society set about re-establishing its amateur Orchestra. Mr. J. R. Edeson the Society's Organist resigned and Mr. G. B. Fentum was elected in his place.

1892

245 (237) MISCELLANEOUS (91) 15th Apr., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

"Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (3) "Engedi" (Beethoven) (4).

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

A good attendance. The Choir acquitted itself with credit, criticism of the Orchestra was accompanied with an explanation of the difficulties of getting one together. Mr. Wood made the first of his 30 appearances with the Society as tenor soloist.

248 (238) ELI (Costa) (4) 16th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Annie Carter (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. J. Andrews (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B), Mr. S. Moyle (B), Mr. A. Harrison (B).

The Governor and Countess Hopetoun attended. Generally the chorus work was "cordially praised" but the Orchestra was described as "altogether unsatisfactory". (Evidently the reformation of the Society's Orchestra was a difficult matter).

247 (-) THE CREATION (Haydn) (21) 31st Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

A large attendance. Choir and Orchestra combined to give a good performance.

248 (240) THE MESSIAH (49) 26th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B).

A good attendance. Press reports to 13" praised Choir, Orchestra and Principals.

The Annual Report referred at length to the prevailing economic depression and indicated that although a decline in subscribers' fees was anticipated, there was no thought of restricting the year's work, accordingly four subscription concerts were planned and given. It was felt that the Society owed a duty to the public and therefore put its courage to the test. Actually, subscribers' fees fell to £273/10/6 as against £414/4/0 received in the previous year and concert receipts recorded a reduction of £160. The year's operations showed a loss of £18/2/0. In October, the President, Sir M. H. Davies resigned after serving in that capacity for four years. At the Annual Meeting, the Hon. James Campbell, M.L.A., was elected to the vacant position. The choir strength was returned as Sop. 83, Cont. 48, Ten. 30, Bass 31, total 192. The re-establishment of the Society's amateur Orchestra was noted with satisfaction.

1893

249 (241) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (20) 31st Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. A. H. Gee (B), Master W. F. G. Steel (Youth).

"A very large attendance". Choir numbered about 140 and despite numerical weakness in tenor and bass Sections received praise for excellent singing. "A capable orchestra" greatly assisted. Master Steele afterwards appeared as the Society's Organist on many occasions, also as Acting Conductor.

250 (242) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) 18th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

"A large and appreciative audience". The Choir was assisted by about 50 male singers from the Royal Metropolitan Liedertafel, trained by Mr. Ernest Wood, "a gentleman who does not approve of society rivalry in the way of art progress". The orchestra strength exceeded 70. "It is a long time since a Melbourne Philharmonic Society Conductor has had such adequate forces under his control and still longer since he made such good use of them". Press accounts extended to 29". There was almost unreserved praise for the performance.

251 (-) MORS ET VITA (2) (Gounod) 25th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Principals as before, except Mr. Charles Saunders (T) in place of Mr. Armes Beaumont.

There was a "crowded house" at the second performance and very favourable reports were recorded.

252 (244.) MISCELLANEOUS (92) 23rd Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos. "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (4), "Galla" (Gounod) (1), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (5). Orchestral-"Benedictus" (Mackenzie) (1), "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (1). First performance in Melbourne.

Miss Minnie Waugh (S), Madm. Gabriella Boema (S), Mr. George E. Howard (C'st), Mr. G. B. Fentum (P'st). "A numerous audience" included the Governor and Lady Hopetoun. Press accounts to 15" indicated that work of Choir and Orchestra was good.

253 (245) THE MESSIAH (50) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Lalla Miranda (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

"The Town Hall was so densely packed as to give one the impression of being in a vapour bath". "For the orchestra it is necessary to make allowances. Few conductors nowadays can reckon on more than a single rehearsal, or two at the outside; and as the instrumentalists are not in the habit of playing together, it is only natural that some things should happen which one could have wished otherwise". Generally the Choir's work was good.

During the year the impact of the commercial depression became more severe. The Annual Report made reference to numerous bank failures and the collapse of many financial institutions but, as to the Society, the effect was that members enthusiastically united in keeping the Society before the public. Four subscription and one extra concert are evidence of the reaction of members. Fifty members were removed from the roll, mainly due to irregular attendance, but special efforts led to the introduction of 60 new members. The death of the President, the Ron. James Campbell, M.L.A., was noted with regret. Sir John Madden, Kt., L.L.D. was elected to the vacant position. A profit of £119/6/8 appears in the accounts. Charges for admission to the Christmas concert were 3/6, 2/- and 1/- as against pre-depression rates of 5/-, 3/- and 2/-.

1894

254 (-) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (3) 23rd Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Madm. Christian (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lamble (B).

Unsettled weather affected the attendance. Good choral work was acknowledged but grave faults were noted in the Orchestra. One critic remarked, "It is highly creditable, no doubt, that in the present condition of the musical world, Mr. Peake should be able to collect an orchestra of 75 players at all". The same critic regretted that the organ differed in pitch from the Orchestra.

255 (-) THE MESSIAH (51) 21st Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Emily Spada (S), Madm. Belle Cole (C), Mr. Philip Newbury (T), Mr. Charles Magrath (B).

The first of two concerts given in conjunction with Madm. Belle Cole Concert Company. An "immense audience" despite the prolonged commercial depression. Praise was extended to an augmented Choir but a "scratch" Orchestra had to be regarded as such. The singing of the four Principals was very warmly commended.

256 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (21) 25th Jun., Town Hall. Extra.

Same Principals as before. "An immense audience". The Choir acquitted itself creditably but conflicting accounts appear as to the Orchestra.

-- CHORAL SERVICE 29th July., Town Hall. Independent Order of Oddfellows. Assisted.

The Choir assisted with choruses from "Mors et Vita" (Gounod) (1).

Collection in aid of Hospital for Sick Children, Immigrant's Aid Society and Mayor of Melbourne Fund realized £50/4/2.

257 (-) THE CREATION (Haydn) (22) 7th Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

Large audience. The work of the Choir was commended and the Orchestra, for the greater part, "was adequate".

-- FAREWELL CONCERT TO MADM. CHRISTIAN 2nd Oct., Town Hall.

The Choir assisted with choruses from "Mors et Vita" (Gounod) (2), "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (4).

258 (-) SAMSON (Handel) (4) 20th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. E. M. Smith (T), Mr. S. W. M. Lambie (B), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

A large attendance. The Choir attained a high level of excellence but with a full knowledge of orchestral matters the critics found little to commend. The press advertisement of the concert notified that the Hall would be "lighted by electric light". Miss McClelland made the first of her 19 appearances with the Society, Mr. Barker the first of 14 and Miss Grace Kemp the first of 11.

259 (-) THE MESSIAH (52) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Bertha Rossow (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. P. C. Josephs (B).

The audience filled the hall. Press reports to 17" agreed on an excellent performance, the Choir excelling itself while the Orchestra was satisfactory.

The dominant note in the Annual Report was again the prevailing commercial depression. Inter alia, it remarked that "enterprise in the matter of art is well-nigh dead; and the tariff of all concert work threatened with a reduction which would make the production of high-class choral works, with an orchestra, an impossibility. The action of the Government in dismissing the professional singing masters did not encourage the community to estimate music at a very high value and the departure of many of our leading singers minimised the drawing power of our concerts." Nevertheless, due to the enthusiastic support of members, the Committee was able to report that six oratorio concerts (with orchestra) had been given and two other concerts had been assisted and, further, it was anticipated that when financial returns had been completed, the deficit for the year would be extinguished. Actually the Treasurer's Report disclosed a profit of £48/18/10. Regretful reference was made to the death of Mr. Edward King, for many years Leader of the Orchestra.

1895

260 (252) CALVARY (Spohr) (4) 12th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss E. M. White (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. E. M. Smith (T), Mr. H. J. Robinson (T), Signor Buzzi (B), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

A large attendance. Press reports to 11" indicated a meritorious performance. The Choir received high marks but the Orchestra had to be content with qualified praise.

261 (-) RUTH (Cowen) (1) 1st Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Alice Esty (S), Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Ida Osborne (C), Mr. R. F. Cunningham (T), Mr. Alec Marsh (B).

A large attendance. Press reports to 11" indicated a tinctly good but the "scratch" Orchestra, with all due allowance, fell far short of the requirements of the score.

-- CHORAL SERVICE, 25th Aug., Town Hall. Assisted.

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

The service was arranged by the Independent Order of Oddfellows in aid of Melbourne charities. The Choir rendered "Gallia" (Gounod) (2) and choruses from Handel's "Messiah" (11).

262 (254) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (10) 18th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

The Governor, Lord Brassey, and suite were included in a good attendance. An augmented Choir of nearly 300 voices received qualified praise. The Orchestra (described as "the bete noir of conductors in Melbourne at the present time") left much to be desired.

263 (255) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (11) 23rd Nov., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance with same Principals. The hall was crowded and an "excellent rendering" was noted.

264 (256) THE MESSIAH (53) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. William Neilson (T), Mr. Edward Farley (B).

A very large attendance. Press accounts to 13" highly praised the Choir while as to the Orchestra it was "in every way more satisfactory than has often been the case lately".

Although the Annual Report was again concerned with the difficulties of the times, it was able to report a successful year musically and stated that the event of the year was the revival of "Israel in Egypt" (two performances) and that it was enthusiastically received. One effect was an unprecedented increase of

performing members; the auxiliary list numbered 100 of whom 50 joined the Society. Subscribers' fees showed a further shrinkage. The accounts showed a deficit of £26/6/1.

Sir John Madden resigned as President and Sir M. H. Davies was elected in his place.

1896

265 (257) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (4) 3rd Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Nellie McClelland (S) , Miss K. Berggy (S) , Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. H. J. Robinson (T), Mr. Henry Rofe (Bar.), Mr. W. G. Barker (B), Mr. W. Juniper (B).
Good attendance. A Choir of about 170 members was well drilled and obtained favourable comment while the Orchestra did praiseworthy service. Press accounts to 12".

266 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (22) 22nd Jul., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
Miss Thudichum (S), Miss Marian McKenzie (C), Mr. Edward Branscombe (T) , Mr. Douglas Powell (B) .
This concert, with the two succeeding comprised an "oratorio festival" in the Exhibition Bldg. The four Principals engaged were members of a visiting English concert company. By arrangement, subscribers were entitled to tickets for any chosen concert which thus took the place of a "subscription" concert. The attendance was good and the Choir did capable work but as to the Orchestra, the "Age" critic noted (12") that the difficulty of securing a competent orchestra was "apparently insoluble" and that some of the lapses at this performance "afforded an opportunity for the ungodly to blaspheme".

267 (-) SAMSON (Handel) (5) 23rd Jul., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
Principals as before with the addition of Mr. W. G. Barker (B).
Excellent attendance. The choral work was again good but as to the Orchestra "it might have been worse but it certainly should have been better".

268 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (93) 25th Jul., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
Vocal solos. "Hymn of Praise" (Mendelssohn) (6), "Hallelujah" from Handel's "Messiah" (12).
Miss Thudichum (S) , Miss Nellie Mcalelland (S) , Miss Marian McKenzie (a), Mr. Edward Branscombe (T), Mr. Douglas Powell (B).
A large attendance included Lord and Lady Brassey and suite. More in sorrow than in anger, two press reports (to 11") tendered scathing accounts as to both Choir and Orchestra. Apparently the ambitious plan to give three concerts in four days did not provide for adequate rehearsal.

269 (-) JUDITH (Parry) (1) 21st Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
First performance in Australia.
Miss Emily Spada (S), Miss Odell Fawcett (a), Mr. Philip Newbury (T), Mr. Henry Rofe (B).
"The hall was hardly two thirds full". On the whole, a good performance with credit for both Choir and Orchestra. In view of the presentation of a new work, press accounts extended to 18".

270 (262) THE MESSIAH (54) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Miss Nellie Mcalelland (S), Miss Odell Fawcett (a), Mr. Rudolph Himmer (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).
The hall was "filled to overflowing". Press accounts to 18" accorded the Choir high marks but reservations were made as to the Orchestra.

The Committee in the Annual Report, offered justifiable congratulations on the presentation of six oratorio concerts with orchestra and (indicative of the times) added, "but for the Society's energy and enterprise, Melbourne during 1896, would have been practically without high-class orchestral concerts with chorus. Test of voices was held; the few who were reclassified accepted the change cheerfully. The death of Sir George F. Verdon, a former President, was noted with regret. Choir strength at 250 was extremely satisfactory. The Treasurer's Report indicated a loss on the year's operations of £33/4/11.

1897

271 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (94) 16th Mar., Town Hall. Extra.
Vocal solos and duets. Choruses from "Mors et Vita" (Gounod) (3) and "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (6), "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn's "Creation") (8) .
Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Nellie Mcalelland (S), Miss Maggie Stirling (S), Miss Grace Kemp (a), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Rudolph Himmer (T), Mr. H. J. Robinson (T), Signor Buzzi (B), Mr. W. G. Barker (B), Mr. Henry Rofe (B).

The concert was tendered as a complimentary one to Mr. George Peake after 14 years as the Society's Honorary Organist and 9 years as Honorary Conductor. A good attendance included the Governor, and Lady Brassey and suite. An "over lengthy programme" was presented in which the well-balanced Choir and adequate Orchestra did good work. It is pleasing to note that the effort realised £150.

272 (283) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (23) 16th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

A "large assemblage" Lord and Lady Brassey attended. Much laudable work by the Choir and the Orchestra.

-- DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT, 22nd Jun., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Mr. J. Kendall (T), Mr. Henry Rofe (B).

"Hallelujah" (Handel) (13), "Rule Britannia" (Arne) (1), "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn) (9), "The Old Hundredth" (2).

The concert was given to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria by the Society, Melbourne Liedertafel and Royal Metropolitan Liedertafel, the three Conductors sharing the duties, i.e., Mr. George Peake, Mr. August Siede and Mr. Ernest Wood respectively. "An immense assemblage" passed through the turnstiles and the proceeds, amounting to £170, were passed to the Infectious Diseases Hospital. Lord and Lady Brassey attended. The singing of "The Old Hundredth" by combined choir and audience began on receipt of the Queen's signal from London. According to the "Argus" report, it was sung "with intense fervour". There was no orchestra.

273 (264) THE CREATION (Haydn) (23) 6th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

A good attendance. An excellent performance by both Choir and Orchestra.

274 (265) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (4) 26th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Gladstone Wright (B).

A very large audience. Choir and Orchestra combined to give an excellent performance; the former numbering 250 and the latter 60. Rates for admission-reserved at 3/6, balcony and chairs 3/-, chairs and south gallery 750 at 2/-, 500 seats at 1/- described as "at a tariff impossible in any part of the world under ordinary conditions". Mr. Wade made the first of his 26 appearances as a principal.

275 (266) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (5) 5th Nov., Town Hall. Extra.

A repeat performance with same Principals and described as a "thoroughly creditable performance". The hall was crowded by an audience who took advantage of admission "one shilling to all parts of the hall"; a rate rendered possible by the gratuitous services of Principals and Orchestra.

276 (267) THE MESSIAH (55) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mrs. Palmer (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (c), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

A large and enthusiastic audience. On the whole a good performance but faulty singing at some points was noted. The Orchestra was given good marks.

Again a creditable year's work which closed "with an actual profit (£43/9/5) for the first time for several years past". During the year an old idea was revived of introducing lady performers to the orchestra. Regretful reference was made to the deaths of Sir W. J. Clark, a former Patron and of Mr. David Lee a former Conductor. A moonlight bay trip on the "Ozone" was a great success as were the Society's socials held in the Hibernian Hall.

1898

277 (268) SACRED CONCERT (95) 8th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos, trios and quartette. No choral items; no orchestra.

Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (c), Miss Winnie Waugh (S), Miss Ethel Mercer (V'st), Mr. Wm. Neilson (T), Mr. W. T. Barker (Harp), Mr. Claude Harrison ('cel'st), Mr. A. H. Spence (T), Mr. G. B. Fentum (Org), Mr. Henry Curtis (V'st), Miss Nellie McClelland (S).

"Largely attended". In view of arrangements to be noted, a concert on Good Friday night was planned without choir or orchestra.

278 (270) THE MESSIAH (56) 9th Apr., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Madm. Albani (S), Miss Sara Berry (c), Mr. Orlando Harley (T), Mr. William Paul (B).

This and the succeeding concert was given in conjunction with Williamson & Musgrave to permit of the appearance of Madm. Albani, referred to as a world famous prima donna. "A vast assemblage" was noted.

Press reports to 18" tendered unstinted praise to the great soprano. The chorus singing was described as rather uneven while the Orchestra was "far better than one has a right to expect, seeing the difficulty there is with this department on a night when the theatres are open".

279 (270) ELIJAH (24) 11th Apr., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Same Principals as before. "Another great concourse".

The highest praise was accorded Madm .Albani. Mr. Paul was a capable "Elijah". Improved choral work was praised and the Orchestra was adjudged capable.

280 (271) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) (3), 26th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Overture-"Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (2). Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (C), Mr. William Neilson (T), Signor A. T. Rebottaro (B), Mr. A. Harrison (B).

"A numerous attendance". The critics disagreed as to the character of the performance; one said the Orchestra was capable and the Choir equal to the various choruses; another attacked Choir, Orchestra and Principals.

281 (272) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (9) 22nd Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Maggie Stirling (S), Miss Odell Fawcett (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

A large audience included Lord and Lady Brassey. A very good performance. Mr. Horace Stevens made his first appearance as an adult soloist and, on the whole, was favoured by the critics.

282 (273) THE MESSIAH (57) 26th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Maggie Stirling (S), Miss Ida Osborne (C), Mr. William Neilson (T), Mr. R. Livingstone Nichol (B).

A full house included the Governor, the Bishop of Melbourne and the Mayor. The Chorus received high marks and the Orchestra was described as "excellent". Press accounts reached 11".

The highlight of the year was the "magnificent performances of Madam Albani in 'The Messiah' and 'Elijah' generally speaking it will be admitted that her oratorio performances have never been surpassed if equalled in this Colony", noted the Annual Report. It also noted that the decision to admit ladies to the Orchestra proved a wise one, the performances of the present members fully justifying their inclusion." A fine upright grand piano was obtained, due to the generosity of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Henry Buck. The Rules were again revised. The choir strength was shown at 260. A loss of £13/11/10 appears in the year's financial accounts.

1899

283 (274) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (6) 31st Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Nellie Mcalelland (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (a), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A very large audience". Special praise for the choral part and valuable work by the Orchestra was acknowledged.

284 (275) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (12) 25th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Florence Towel (S), Miss Grace Kemp (a), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor were included in a good attendance. A decidedly meritorious performance.

285 (276) MISCELLANEOUS (96) 14th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Two vocal solos. "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" (Coleridge Taylor), First performance in Melbourne. "The Ruins of Athens" (Beethoven) (1). Overture - "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (3).

Miss Mary Conly (S), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

Large attendance. The Choir achieved "a genuine artistic success" while the Orchestra did good serviceable work. Miss Conly made the first of her 18 appearances with the Society as a soloist.

286 (277) MISCELLANEOUS (97) 14th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert, except that the orchestral item was omitted and Miss Marian Tudenhope contributed a violin solo.

The attendance was disappointing. As to the performance, the critics disagreed as to its merits.

287 (278) THE MESSIAH (58) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Mary Conly (S), Miss Emelie Stevens (a), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).

Notwithstanding oppressive heat, the hall was filled to utmost capacity. A good performance despite the conditions.

Another year of satisfactory work, musically, but the Committee had to report another financial deficit (£21/0/7). The Annual Report mentions a return to a former custom, i.e., representation of subscribers on the Committee. Members of the Choir and Orchestra presented copies of "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" and "The Ruins of Athens" to the Society, Regretful reference was made to the death of Mr. W. Juniper who joined the Society about 1855. For about 40 years he was a loyal chorister and sang as bass soloist on 23 occasions.

1900

288 (279) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (25) 13th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Mary Godwin (C), Mr. Hector Lightfoot (T), Mr. William Paul (B).
"The Town Hall was packed to the doors". A fine performance. Excellent choral work, with the Orchestra playing "far better than usual".

289 (-) THE DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (1) 10th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
First Performance in Victoria.
Miss Mary Conly (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Signor A. T. Rebottaro (B), Mr. T. E. Jones (B).
An immense audience. 'Speaking generally, the performance was exceedingly careful and accurate and of a sort that reflected great credit upon all concerned. Great pains had evidently been taken in preparing the work'. Press reports were lengthy; up to 17".

290 (-) THE DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (2) 14th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.
Repetition of previous concert. " ..was listened to and enjoyed by a large audience". A favourable report.

291 (283) ELI (Costa) (5) 18th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Miss Minnie Waugh (S), Miss Emelie Stevens (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. T. E. Jones (B), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
"A very large audience. ..with one or two trifling exceptions, well up to the mark throughout".

292 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (98) 21st Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
"Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (4), Solos and choruses from "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (7).
Madm. Slapoffski (S), Miss Fanny Lyndhurst (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. W. G. Barker (B).
A very large audience. The Chorus did well in "Stabat Mater" and in the oratorio choruses but the Orchestra was only "moderately successful". The difficulty in securing a full and efficient orchestra was acknowledged and attributed to the fact that two operas were running in two theatres and, presumably had first call on professional players.

293 (285) THE MESSIAH (59) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.
Madm. Slapoffski (S), Miss Ida Osborne (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
"Immense attendance". Press accounts were at variance. In an 11" report, the "Herald" was sarcastic while the "Argus" story was generally favourable.

The last Annual Report for the nineteenth century began on a happy note. After congratulating members on the highly satisfactory position of the Society it said, "The closing year of the century will be memorable in the annals of the Society, both musically and financially. Berloiz' great composition, 'The Damnation of Faust' was given for the first time in Victoria with great completeness, considering the resources of the State, and received by the public with marked enthusiasm, probably due in some measure to the occasional performance of a portion of the work by the Royal Metropolitan Liedertafel. Financially the tide of success has reached a higher watermark than any previous year since 1880. In 1888, the deficit had grown to between £200 and £300, which, owing to the serious depression and the necessarily expensive nature of our concerts, the Society could only hope to overtake gradually. It is therefore with extreme gratification that we announce that the result of the year's transactions is a clear profit of £142, the highest for 20 years, and that the Society will start the new century with a larger library and a credit balance—a circumstance unknown in the history of the Society for two decades, or within the memory of more than a fourth of the present members." Acknowledgments were extended to the daily press for valuable assistance in publishing extensive notices of new works and in particular to the 'Age' for the excellent Musical Notes, "now appearing thus recognising a public requirement which the Society has frequently voiced."

The death of Queen Victoria was noted with regret.

1901

294 (286) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (5) 5th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Grace Miller-Ward (S), Miss Maude White (S), Miss Allie Mattinson (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. W. Trathen (T), Mr. D. J. Dunlop (Bar.), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. W. Harrison (B).
"A crowded house". Both "Age" and "Argus" accounts tendered generous praise as to work of both Choir and Orchestra. Miss Mattinson made the first of her 33 appearances as a contralto soloist. Later she became Mrs. J. Gregor Wood.

-- CONVERSAZIONE, 7th May, Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Part of Commonwealth Celebrations. Sponsored by the Government of Victoria during the visit of Duke and Duchess of York in connection with the opening of First Federal Parliament. A choir of 600 voices rendered "A Song of Thanksgiving" (Cowen) (1), "Hail, Bright Abode" (Wagner's "Tannhauser") (4), "And the Glory" (Handel's "Messiah") (5), "Hallelujah Chorus" (14). An augmented orchestra (100) rendered "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (4), "Fingal's Cave" (Mendelssohn) (1), "Meistersinger Overture" (Wagner) (1).

The choir comprised the Society's chorus, Royal Metropolitan Liedertafel and Melbourne Liedertafel; the duties of Conductor being shared by Mr. George Peake, Mr. Ernest Wood and Mr. August Siede.

295 (-) DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (3) 10th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Minnie Waugh (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Signor A. T. Rebotarro (B), Mr. Henry Rofe (B).

The Choir was assisted by St. Paul's Cathedral Choir boys and an augmented Orchestra. Adjudged a good performance in the only press report available.

296 (-) DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (4) 13th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance with same Principals. The audience was described as "enthusiastic".

297 (289) MISCELLANEOUS (99) 25th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Ruins of Athens" (Beethoven) (3) , "Lay of the Last Minstrel" (McCunn) (2) .

Miss Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Allie Mattinson (C), Mr. Armes Beaumont (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

A "fairly large attendance" included the Countess of Hopetoun, the Lieutenant Governor, Sir John Madden and Lady Madden. The "Argus" report of 10" considered the performance generally excellent; the Orchestra "adequate". Mr. Armes Beaumont concluded his long and distinguished connection with the Society as tenor soloist. In all he appeared on 67 occasions; easily the record. In writing of him, Mr. Peake said, "By his splendid voice, and comprehensive study, including a wide range of oratorio, operas and English Ballads, Mr. Beaumont, as an Australian singer, stood alone, and unrivalled. Throughout the whole of his career he never failed to receive the highest honour, the fullest appreciation, and the grateful admiration of the public generally. Recollections of his frank, genial nature and manly style, so characteristic of his public life, will be ever associated with delightful memories. His somewhat unique experience of retaining the goodwill and sympathy of a generous and grateful public long after retirement from public life, is in itself a splendid testimony to the power and influence of his work".

298 (290) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) (4) 30th Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Mdlle. Antonia Dolores (S), Miss Allie Mattinson (C), Mr. H. J. Floyd (T), Mr. Reginald Gooud (B).

The Orchestra presented for the first time in Melbourne Ballade for Orchestra in A Minor (Coleridge Taylor) (1). The choral work was described as "fair" and the Orchestra's as "generally good". Mdlle. Dolores achieved a distinct triumph and was accorded the highest praise.

299 (291) THE MESSIAH (60) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Mdlle. Antonia Dolores (S), Miss Allie Mattinson (C), Mr. Frederick C. Nicholls (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"An immense audience, filling every seat and some of the gangways". Press accounts to 11" adjudged the performance excellent; the Orchestra "fairly good". Mdlle. Dolores "was a delightful singer, a thoughtful musician and a reverent interpreter".

In the Annual Report, the Committee was pleased to record a successful year musically, but deplored the fact that in a community of nearly half a million, only 170 were found willing to avail themselves of the privilege of securing eight admissions for one guinea to a series of concerts costing £700. "How to improve this state of affairs is a difficult problem, nor is the outlook very promising. The miserable conditions under which music is taught in our State Schools affords but little hope as regards the rising generation; nor do the Churches (formerly the custodians of music and musical education) give much encouragement." The impending departure of the Hon. Secretary (Mr. Henry Buck) for Europe led to an appreciative record of his

services. The death of a former Vice President for many years, the Hon. James McKean, was noted with regret. The Treasurer reported a profit of £20/3/3.

1902

300 (292) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (26) 28th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Minnie Waugh (S), Miss Emelie Stevens (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
The attendance was "very large". The critics qualified their praise.

301 (293) MISCELLANEOUS (100) 24th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
"Death of Minnehaha" (Coleridge-Taylor) (1), First performance in Australia. "The Heavens are Telling" (10) and Parts I & 2 "The Creation" (Haydn) (5) .
Madm. Slapoff.skl (S), Mr. A. Palamountain (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
Press accounts ran to 11" and warmly commended the merits of the new work. The performance, however, was accorded qualified praise -with an explanation in regard to the Orchestra; the difficulty of securing competent players.

302 (294) MISCELLANEOUS (101) 9th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Vocal solos. Two choruses from "The Golden Legend" (Sullivan) (2), One chorus from "Judas Maccabeus" (Handel) (8), "Inflamatus" (Rossini's "Stabat Mater") (2) , Violin Concerto (Mendelssohn) (1), Symphony in D (Dvorak) (1).
Madm. Slapoffski (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Alberto Zelman Jun. (V'st) .
A large attendance included the Governor and Lady Clarke. The Choir was credited with good work. Mr. Alberto Zelman received high marks for his playing in the Violin Concerto.

303 (295) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (8) 17th Nov., Town Hall. .4th Sub.
Mdlle. Antonia Dolores (S), Miss Emilie Kefford (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
The Town Hall was "largely attended". Two press accounts took two different views of the performance varying from generally good to, in some respects, exceedingly bad. Both agreed, however, as to the excellence of Mdlle. Dolores part. One report referred to Mr. Wood's singing of five parts - "in his small syndicate of five characters".

304 (-) THE MESSIAH (61) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.
Mdlle. Antonia Dolores (S), Miss Allie Mattinson (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
"A great crowd. ..filled every corner of the hall" to hear the Society's jubilee year performance. While the "Herald" and "Age" commented favourably, the "Argus" was extremely critical of the annotations in the programme, the text chosen and the Chorus. All agreed on the excellence and charm of the part taken by Mdlle. Dolores. A full page flashlight photograph appeared in "The Leader" and a lesser one in "Punch".

The Annual Report records a successful year, musically and financially, despite "a general depression in the community (a very severe drought was experienced) and the intense excitement of the Melba boom." The completion of fifty years of continuous existence as a Society prompted the Committee to tender the following survey. "Comparing 1903 with the first two or three decades of the Society's existence, one cannot fail to be struck with the varied conditions and different criticisms which are now experienced. The elimination in some degree of reliance on friendship and social friendship and social influence, in favour of greater dependence on business principles is at once evident, and proves conclusively, that in musical matters the State has completely emerged from the limited environment and influence of village life, into the larger conception and atmosphere of national existence, while as regards criticism, keener musical perception and high literary ability are equally apparent. Whether the increased duty and labour of management will not involve the Society in larger expenditure will probably require consideration at no very distant date, for the Institution can scarcely expect the unbroken period of such excellent honorary Secretarial management as it has had for many years past to last for ever. "In reference to musical criticism, its present tendency will probably compel the adoption of a much higher standard of general musical ability and efficiency than obtains either in our own or kindred societies the world over. Whether Melbourne is strong enough to supply the demand for highly cultured choral singers, without inducements of a more attractive nature than an ordinary society can offer, is a consideration that will need attention. The free passes at the 1888 Exhibition, to one of the most magnificent displays ever held in the Southern Hemisphere, induced many singers of professional ability to join the chorus, and, in a lesser degree, the Society's association with Albani, and the State Jubilee concerts, acted in a similar manner. As, however, no Society can possibly hope to offer a continuance of such attractions, the question naturally arises whetuer criticism is not making impossible demands. Of this we feel assured, that if such claims are not impossible, the Philharmonic Society will rise to the occasion, and, if experience, energy and enthusiasm, count for

anything, it will merit and achieve success." The death of Sir Frederick Sargood, one of the Society's keen supporters in the early days was noted with regret. A profit of £111/12/11 appears in the Treasurer's Report.

1908

305 (297) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (7) 10th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Madm. Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Ida Osborne (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

The audience filled the hall and included the State Governor Sir G. Sydenham Clarke, Lady Clarke and suite. Press accounts differed sharply in some respects. The "Age" said "The performance in general may be accorded high praise though the solo vocal parts were not its strongest feature". The "Argus" said "The choral portions were given...with a notable deficiency in balance of tone and precision of attack".

306 (298) MISCELLANEOUS (102) 16th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Vocal solos. "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (5), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (6), Fifth Symphony-"Lenora" (Raff) (1).

Miss Reba Rangan (S), Mr. W. A. Peterkin (B).

Inclement weather affected the attendance. Press accounts to 11" adjudged the Brahms item meritorious but had little to say as to "Choral Fantasia". Mr. Peterkin a visiting English soloist received high marks.

307 (299) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (13) 29th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Ballade for Orchestra" (Coleridge-Taylor) (2).

Miss Isabel Webster (S), Miss Reba Rangan (S), Madm. J. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A gratifying attendance". Press accounts extended to 13" and three offered high praise to the Chorus which had been augmented to "300 voices".

308 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (27) 24th Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Madm. Nellie McClelland (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. W. A. Peterkin (B).

"An enormous crowd at the Town Hall, far more than the building would comfortably hold. ..all the stairways in the balcony were laid under requisition". Press accounts were extended in every case - attaining a maximum of 18". The critics were qualified in their references to the Choir and to Mr. Peterkin. The Orchestra did "useful work". Of Miss Crossley's part the critics had nothing but praise.

309 (-) THE MESSIAH (62) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Elsie Davies (S), Miss Ada Crossley (C), Mr. H. J. Floyd (T), Mr. W. A. Peterkin (B).

A very hot night but a good attendance. The Choir did well - "better than for many past Christmas days". "The orchestra, though by no means faultless, did capital work".

While reporting a successful year musically, the Annual Report had to record a financial deficit of £270 on the year's working. In doing so, the Committee commented on the fee of £300 paid to Miss Crossley (two appearances) as against 8 or 9 guineas paid ten years earlier. The Committee appears to have been unduly optimistic in making the arrangement which so adversely affected the finances. The Report noted that, "it was unable to celebrate the Jubilee Year in a manner befitting the occasion."

1904

310 (-) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (6) 1st Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Elsie Davies (S), Miss Maude White (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Mr. James Wade, Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

Short press accounts acknowledged good choral work and allowed "barring several minor details, the orchestra did its work faithfully and well". One critic remarked "The work is one which is not likely to live or to be heard of much beyond the quarter century which has now nearly elapsed since it was first composed". As far as the Society is concerned, only one subsequent performance was given.

311 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (103) 21st Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" and "Death of Minnehaha" (1) and "Ballade for Orchestra" (Coleridge-Taylor) (3).

Miss Marguerite Henderson (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Signor A. T. Rebottaro (B).

Because of torrential rain which seriously affected the attendance of performers and public, this concert was known as the "Deluge Concert". An extended reference will be found in the notes at the end of the year.

312 (304) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (28) 2nd Aug., Town Hall. Extra.
Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Madm. J. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Watkin Mills (B).
Two long press accounts (one to 17") were at variance in some respects but it would appear that the Choir gave a good account of itself. There was little to cavil at as regard the Orchestra. Despite the effects of a cold and "our very high pitch" Mr. Mills gave an impressive rendering of the part of the Prophet.

313 (305) SAMSON (Handel) (6) 29th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Miss Reba Rangan (S), Miss Edith Tranter (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. W. Trathen (T), Mr. Watkin Mills (B).
A 14" account by the "Argus" said the Choir "did better than usual" but there was a good deal of criticism of the Orchestra's part. Mr. Mills' singing was of such outstanding merit "as to make the rest of the performance sound a little perfunctory".

314 (306) THE MESSIAH (64) 26th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. H. J. Floyd (T), Mr. William Roberts (B).
"The enthusiastic manner with which each number was received showed that in the judgment of the audience at least...the best traditions of the Society were well sustained". Miss Reid made the first of her 17 appearances as a soloist and Miss Rogers did likewise in respect to 20. As the Town Hall organ was undergoing repair, Mr. Jenkin presided at a cabinet organ.

The Annual Report noted that, "Musical interest excited by the visit of the great Polish pianist, Paderewski, and also by the Watkin Mills Company, somewhat minimised the attention given to local enterprise." Also, "On the occasion of the. second concert, the Hood gates of heaven were opened, with the result that one half of the members and the greater part of our usual audience were unable to navigate the street waters. Like the pelican in the wilderness, the Society had a very small audience, the enthusiasm of the public having oozed away apparently in pedestrian aquatics before reaching the city. It is extremely gratifying to be able to state that at this 'Deluge Concert' the performance was quite equal to the finest yet given by the Society - a remarkable fact, and one which speaks volumes for the enthusiasm and ability of those members present." The accounts for the year showed a deficiency of £60116/2 despite the enrolment of 58 new subscribers and a donation of £100. Performing members on the roll numbered: Sop. 90, Alto. 63, Tenor 29, Bass 41, Total 223. Orchestra, 24 of whom 19 were ladies.

1905

315 (307) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (8) 21st Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
"A full house". Generally a good performance, according to the "Age" and "Argus" accounts. Owing to the organ being under repair, Mr. Fentum presided at a cabinet organ.

316 (-) DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (5) 1st Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
Miss Lillian Reid (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Henry Rofe (B), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).
A "large audience" included Her Excellency Lady Northcote. Press criticisms varied from severe to caustic - both as to Choir and Orchestra. The reports prompted Mr. Peake to write to the press, explaining that the organ was not available and there was no rehearsal in the Town Hall. St. Paul's Cathedral Choir boys assisted.

317 (309) MISCELLANEOUS (104) 4th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Vocal and instrumental solos. "Benedictus" (Mackenzie) (2), "Inflamatus" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater" (3), Two choruses from "The Golden Legend" (Sullivan) (3), Chorus from "Samson" (Handel) (5). Overture- "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (5), Ballade for Orchestra (Coleridge-Taylor) (4).
Miss Eileen Castles (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. A. C. Bottoms (B), Herr Louis Hattenbach (C'st).
"A large audience". Choir and Orchestra "did well". It is worthy of note that the three vocal soloists were Bendigonians. Mr. Bottoms made the first of 10 appearances as a soloist.

318 (310) THE MESSIAH (64) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Miss Elva Rogers (0), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Charles Rosenthal (B).
The Town Hall was "well filled". Critics agreed on a good performance; the "Argus" writer noting that instead of 130, the Choir should have included "twice that number". Mr. Charles Rosenthal, a Sydney singer was accorded high praise.

The Annual Report referred to financial difficulties. 'With a population that practically remains stationary, the musical portion does not increase and as each style and form of composition has a public...that portion that supports oratorio is necessarily small. Now, the more this small musical community is exploited by visiting artists, the more difficult it becomes for musical societies to exist. .More than one impresario has been ruined by the large fees demanded by star artists and the Society is suffering from a similar experience.' The year's accounts showed a loss on the year's concerts of £178/9/3 with a deficiency of £61/17/5 overall. Choir members surrendered their privilege tickets for the "Messiah" concert. The triennial test was conducted with satisfactory results. The Rules were revised, one change providing for the financial year to end on 31st October, instead of 31st December, as heretofore.

1906

319 (311) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (29) 13th Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Violet Mount (S), Miss Elva Rogers (O), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

The Town Hall "was packed to the doors. The great attraction was Mr. Andrew Black". "Though there was only a cabinet organ and some 40 members were away holiday-making ...the chorus also deserves its mead of praise". Of Mr. Andrew Black "It may be said at once that he more than fulfilled the highest expectations that had been formed. From first to last, he sang as a man inspired". In all, he appeared with the Society on 10 occasions.

320 (312) THE APOSTLES (Elgar) (1) 14th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. A. C. Bottoms (B), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

"Every part of the Town Hall was crowded". Extended press accounts - to 14" - commented on the new work as well as the performance. As to the latter, they were at variance. Judged as a first performance, one said "hearty praise may be bestowed." Another-" Artistically, the performance was a failure". A third was "in between". The Annual Report claimed a successful performance. The renovated organ was used at which Mr. Edwin H. Lemare presided.

321 (313) THE CREATION (Haydn) (24) 25th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Violet Mount (S), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

"Very large audience". The Choir gave an excellent account of itself but the Orchestra was hardly so successful. Mr. Black's singing was accorded the highest praise.

The Annual Report covered the ten months ending 31st October, and in it the Committee expressed satisfaction with the results for the period, particularly in regard to the first Australian performance of "The Apostles". The accounts disclosed a nett profit of £121/7/4.

322 (314) THE MESSIAH (65) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Cecilia John (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

"A packed audience". Generally an excellent performance in which all sections shared. Mr. Black's "glorious singing was decidedly a feature of the concert". An augmented Orchestra comprised 20 Strings, 4 Oboes, 4 Bassoons, 2 Horns, 2 Flutes, Trumpet, Organ, Drums and Piano (for Harp's part) .

1907

323 (315) CALVARY (Spohr) (5) 29th Mar. *, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Martha Bruggeman (S), Miss Grace Kemp (C), Miss Cecilia John (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. H. J. Floyd (T), Mr. A. C. Bottoms (B), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

Crowded audience. As the result of a special membership campaign, an augmented Choir gave a performance which pleased the critics in reports which extended to 13". Improved orchestral work was also acknowledged. The work itself came in for some criticism.

324 (316) MISCELLANEOUS (105) 23rd Jul., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" and "Death of Minnehaha" (Coleridge-Taylor) (2). Ballade for Orchestra (Coleridge-Taylor) (5).

Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Mr. Edgar Marsden (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

The hall was "well filled". A large Choir received good marks in the press accounts which extended to 10". The Orchestra also received a favourable mention.

325 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (106) 27th Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Vocal and instrumental solos. Chorus from Costa's "Eli" (1), "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn's "Creation") (11), "Sweet and Low" (Barn by) (1), "Hail Bright Abode" (Wagner's "Tannhauser") (5), "Intlammatu" (Rossini's "Stabat Mater") (4), Overture-"Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (6), Violin Concerto (Mendelssohn) (2)"

Miss Lillian Reid (S) , Madm. McClelland (S) I Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. A. C. Bottoms (B), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. Alberto Zelman Jun. (V'st), Miss Una Bourne (P'st), Dr. W. G. Price (Organist), Melbourne String Quartette.

The hall was "well filled" for the occasion; a Complimentary Concert to Mr. George Peake in recognition of his long association with the Society -the last 18 years as Conductor. All performers gave their services gratis, including the Orchestra which numbered 52. During the interval, Sir M. H. Davies, K.B. (President) presented Mr. Peake with a laurel wreath which Mr. Peake feelingly acknowledged. The financial result amounted to £143/5/9.

326 (317) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) (5) 22nd Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Hay (T), Mr. A. C. Bottoms (B).

A creditable performance. The Choir did excellent work and the Orchestra was "adequate". "The ranks of the chorus have rarely been more fully or more capably filled".

The Annual Report noted that at the beginning of the year, the Choir was divided in two parts and named "Reds" and "Blues" for the purpose of a membership campaign. Urged on by friendly rivalry the campaign began and resulted in the addition of 103 choristers and 113 subscribers. The "Reds" proved winners and in conformity with the terms of the competition were entertained at a musical competition and supper by the vanquished "Blues".

Also noted in the Report was the initiation of "Captains" of the various sections of the Choir, principally to attend to the seating of membes and to take care of new members; a plan which still operates.

The year's work showed (financially) a credit of £57/7/1. Regretful reference was made to the death in Sydney of Mr. J. C. W. Nicholson, one of the Society's Vice Presidents. During his long connection with the Society, he presented a number of musical works.

327 (318) THE MESSIAH (66) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Doris Carter (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Hay (T), Mr. Charles Rosenthal (B).

Notwithstanding the "stifling heat" the Town Hall was crowded. Due to illness, Mr. Peake was unable to conduct and his place was taken by Mr. Alberto Zelman Jun. whose energy and skill had much to do with the performers success in contending with the atmospheric conditions. A fine performance with cordial praise from the critics; one of whom referred to the high pitch of the organ - "a full semitone above what Handel intended".

1908

328 (319) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (30) 15th Apr., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Madm. Clara Butt (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Kennerly Rumford (B).

A large audience included Sir John and Lady Madden. The press honoured the occasion by long reports to 18". The Choir's work was adjudged excellent and there was praise for the Orchestra. Of the two notable Soloists (on their first trip to Australia) Madm. Clara Butt was accorded the warmest praise. Her singing of "O, Rest in the Lord" produced an effect "almost electrical". Mr. Kennerly Rumford gave a fine rendering of the Prophet but hardly met the. exacting requirements of the part.

329 (320) THE MESSIAH (67) 17th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Madm. Clara Butt (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Kennerly Rumford (B).

Every seat was occupied. Again the Choir did excellent work whilst the Orchestra did its part capably. Madm. Clara Butt was accorded the highest praise as on her first appearance. Mr. Kennerly Rumford's musicianship was accounted of the highest order but physical limitations stood in the way of a convincing interpretation of the bass part.

330 (321) THE KINGDOM (Elgar) (1) 10th Aug., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

The press accorded the new work long reports - to 18" - which were, for the greater part, descriptive. One summed up thus - "The chorus and orchestra deserve praise, but rather of the 'mixed' order. There was a

terrible falling away from grace in part of the 'Pentecost' section - grace in this sense signifying intonation; but the bulk of their work was capably done, the difficult 'confusion of tongues' episode being bravely grappled with".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 2nd Sep. Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

"Hail Bright Abode" (Wagner's "Tannhauser") (6) , Chorus from Sullivan's "Golden Legend" (4), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (15), Overture-"Tannhauser" (Wagner) (2).

The occasion was "Reception and Grand Concert" in honour of the visit of Rear Admiral Sperry and the Officers of the United States Atlantic Fleet. A combined choir of 900 voices comprised the Philharmonic Society, The Victorian Choral Festival Society and The Women's Choir; Conductors: Mr. George Peake, Mr. Frederic Beard and Mrs. Peterson respectively. Riley's Military Band contributed 8 numbers. The Society approached the Government of the day and was largely instrumental in securing the musical celebration.

331 (322) THE SEASONS (Haydn) (5) 17th Nov., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Mr. Arthur Andrew (T), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

A crowded audience included Lady Gibson-Carmichael. Three press reports agree that Choir and Orchestra gave an indifferent performance. Mr. Thomas made the first of 12 appearances as a soloist.

The Annual Meeting was held on 8/12/08. The Annual Report said, inter alia, "Owing to various causes the difficulties in obtaining an Orchestra, increased with each concert. Tour Committee note with pleasure the attempt which is being made to form a permanent orchestra and heartily commend it to the good will and favour of our subscribers." The reference was to The Lady Northcote Trust Fund which was established earlier in the year. Thus appears another effort in the direction indicated but 41 years were to elapse before the long-cherished dream was realised in Victoria. The number of subscribers reached 394; "the greatest...for some years past". The financial accounts showed a profit of £99/14/0. After 15 years as President, Sir M. H. Davies resigned to the Society's regret. Sir John Madden was elected in his place. During the year a new choral society was formed under Mr. Frederic Beard with the title "Victorian Festival Choir." For a time it appeared that the Philharmonic Society would have a serious rival, but the expectation was not realised. The new body occasionally joined with the Society in public celebrations and appears to have finished its life shortly after the First World War.

332 (323) THE MESSIAH (68) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Murielle Woods (C), Mr. Arthur Andrew (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"The usual crowded house". Press reports to 14" were at variance. "Rather tame and unsatisfactory performance" with criticism of the Orchestra. Another "The performance takes rank with the best; at any rate of more recent years" with a favourable reference to the Orchestra.

1909

333 (324) THE REDEMPTION (Gounod) (7) 9th Apr.*, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Evelyn Scotney (S) , Miss Margaret Caraher (S) , Madm. J. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

The hall was "filled to the doors". On this occasion the critics agreed on praise for the performance; one remarking that the "sopranos must have outnumbered the rest of the choir put together". Miss Scotney, on her first appearance with the Society, was accorded a favourable notice; albeit not without some criticism of her voice.

334 (325) MISCELLANEOUS (107) 31st Jul., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Maggie Smith (S), Mr. Arthur Andrew (T) , Miss Bella Whitley (V'st) .

Motet "Hear my Prayer" (1), "Hymn of Praise" (7), Violin Concerto (3), Overture "Ruy Blas" (1).

"Large audience". The concert was planned "in commemoration of the birth of Mendelssohn", consequently all of the items were of his composition. Press reports reached 14" and were generally favourable. The Orchestra was described as "fairly capable" -the performance "eminently respectable but hardly a great one". Mr . Peake had an attack of faintness at the end of the performance and stopped beating time.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 23rd Oct., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

This was the first of two concerts given by Madm. Melba at which the Society assisted. The assistance was restricted to the choral accompaniment in Madm. Melba's singing of "Inflammatus" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater" (5), while the male section of the choir accompanied Mr. Frederick Ranalow in "Homeward Bound" (1) and "The Old Superb" by Villiers Stanford (1). The Annual Report said "The most notable event of the year has been the appearance of the Society with 'The Queen of Song', Madm. Melba ...at the two concerts given by her in the Exhibition. Those who took part will ever remember the spectacle presented by the enormous audiences, and the brilliancy of the performances. ...Madm. Melba has very generously promised

to sing for the Society on her next visit to Australia". The promise was subsequently confirmed in writing but it has always remained a matter of regret that the association of Australia's greatest singer with its premier Choral Society was never achieved.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 30th Oct., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.
Repetition of previous concert.

335 (326) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (14) 26th Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
"Ballade for Orchestra" (Coleridge-Taylor) (6).

Miss Millie Tree Chapman (S) , Miss Maggie Smith (S), Miss Myrtle Tanner (C), Mr. Philip Newbury (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

"The chorus did excellent work". On the whole the Choir's work "was a distinct success". Mr. Philip Newbury, an English tenor received high praise for his limited part. Mr. Fred Collier made the first of his 16 appearances as a soloist with the Society.

In view of the now well-established Saturday half and full holiday, it is of interest to quote from the Annual Report. "Taking advantage of the Saturday half-holiday movement, the Committee thought for this important event (the 3rd sub. concert) they would test Saturday evening. While the audience was a large one, the Town Hall was not filled to its utmost capacity as it should have been, and the Committee feel, therefore, that Saturday evening is not the best evening on which to hold the Society's concerts. At the Annual Meeting (30/10/09) a project for the establishment of the Society's own music hall was (after many years) revived. The President. Sir John Madden warmly commended the plan. Unfortunately. like former efforts, nothing came of it. The Hon. Auditors, Messrs. J. P. Bainbridge, F.I.A.V. and E. Holmes. A.I.A.V., resigned and Messrs. W. T. Venman. A.I.A.V., and B. H. Ox lade, A.C.P.A., were elected in their places. Dr. Charles Harris (on a visit to Australia) addressed the meeting relative to a scheme of "musical reciprocity within the Empire," and foreshadowed the visit of the Sheffield Choir. The year's accounts showed a net profit of £3/10/4.

336 (324) THE MESSIAH (69) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"An enormous audience". Judged a good performance despite "the high pitch adopted (intensified almost a further half-tone by the extreme heat of the hall) In order to make the use of the organ possible". Press accounts to 13". Efforts to avoid applause during the performance were only partly successful.

1910

337 (328) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (9) 25th Mar.*, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A good audience". A praiseworthy performance -"the orchestra was good, the choir better ." A request on the programme to abstain from applause during the performance was successful.

-- MEMORIAL SERVICE, 20th May, Parliament House Steps.

In respect to the death of King Edward VII. The Society took part. Massed bands and choirs sang "Oh God Our Help in Ages Past", "Nearer My God to Thee" and the National Anthem. Professor Franklin Peterson and Mr. W. A. Laver shared the duties of conductor.

338 (329) THE APOSTLES (Elgar) (2) 6th Jul., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Eileen O'Brien (S), Madm. J. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. Henry Thomas (B), Mr. D. J. Dunlop (Bar.).

"The Town Hall was wretchedly cold and draughty." The critics agreed that the Choir was excellent. "In the final number to Part 1 the large audience got as fine a sample of choral singing as they have heard for many a day". The Orchestra's work was good in parts and, as usual, it had to be judged having regard to the perennial difficulties in obtaining professional players.

339 (330) RUTH (Cowen) (2) 25th Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Emilie Stevenson (S) , Miss Maggie Smith (S) , Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. James Wade (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

The critics agreed that the work itself had little merit but disagreed as to the performance. The " Age" account - speaking of the Choir, said "one of the tamest functions they have ever given" with the Orchestra "suffering from the same complaint". The "Argus" declared "a good performance". The "Herald" reported "meritorious on the whole".

The Annual Report explained that the absence of the names of distinguished artists during the year was due to the Committee finding it "impossible to consider fees ranging from £50 to £300". On the occasion of the death of King Edward VII, a letter of condolence was forwarded through the State Governor and the Society took part in the Funeral Service held on the Parliament House steps on Friday, 20th May. Also noted was the heavy loss sustained through the death of Mr. Charles Lavers; for many years an active member of the Committee. Mr. Charles Gardiner resigned as Treasurer and Mr. C. H. Tranter undertook the duties of that office. Losses were sustained on all concerts; the accounts for the year showing a total debit of £125/18/9.

340 (331) THE MESSIAH (70) 26th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Gertrude Winkelmann (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. Oswald Rippon (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

"A crowded audience which packed the Town Hall almost to suffocation". The Choir's work was adjudged excellent but the Orchestra was below strength; due to the performance taking place on Boxing Night, with the theatres open and claiming the usual complement of instrumentalists. Despite request on the programme, the audience frequently applauded. Mr. Andrew Black's singing was "at once a delight and a lesson".

1911

341 (340) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (3), 14th Apr.*, Town Hall, 2nd Sub.

Miss Gertrude Winkelmann (8), Madm. J. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

Thirty five years had elapsed since the previous performance. On this occasion the Town Hall was filled by an audience which "by its reverent demeanour and abstinence from applause showed its genuine appreciation of the devotional character of the work". The Chorus was not thoroughly familiar with the work though a good deal of merit attached to the performance. The music and words of 5 chorales were printed on the programmes for the audience to sing "but not many ventured to do so".

As "a memento of the Society's first performance in the twentieth century", all who took part subscribed their names on a large prepared memorial. The signatures show -Orchestra 52, Sop. 60, Alt. 39, Ten. 27, Bass 30. Total of Choir 156. One of the signatories, Miss M. E. Pittman, is still an active member of the Choir; another signatory is Mr. W. B. Rashleigh, the present Secretary. (*Written 1953*)

342 (333) MISCELLANEOUS (108) 21st Jun., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal and instrumental solos. "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (6), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (7), "Recessional" (Dykes) (1), "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar) (1), Chorus from Mackenzie's "Jubilee Ode" (3), Violincello Concerto (Haydn) (1). Overture-"Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (7). Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. Alex. Camphausen (B), Miss Una Bourne (P'st), Mr. Louis Hattenbach (C'st). The programme states "Coronation Concert" with some items "appropriate to the Coronation of H.M. King George V and Queen Mary on 22nd June 1911". "The weather rather interfered with the audience". A successful concert.

The "Miscellaneous" concert in June proved to be Mr. Peake's last as Conductor. In the circumstances the inclusion in the programme of Brahms' "A Song of Destiny" "seemed almost prophetic in its significance". Marked signs that his health was undermined led to his resignation at the age of 58. When he laid his baton down, he had following 14 years as the Society's Organist - established a record by his 22½ years as Conductor which, incidentally, has since been exceeded by the present Conductor, Sir Bernard Heinze. However, his direction of 114 of the Society's concerts (all but one given during his tenure) stands as the record.

The summary of works presented by him which follows and the notable number of "first performances" in Australia, Victoria and Melbourne *See Appendix for the Society's full list.* constitute an impressive record which speaks for itself. In surveying the record, it should be remembered that it covered nearly ten years during which the severe financial depression of the "nineties" seriously affected all musical activities in Melbourne and greatly curtailed the normal enterprise of the Society. As already noted, he acted as Organist to the great Festival Choir at the Centennial Exhibition under Frederick Cowen in 1888/89. For many years he was a notable teacher of music in Melbourne and for a long period was President of the now 82 year old Musical Society of Victoria. In all, his contribution to musical development in Melbourne was outstanding. In the Society's story he holds a notable and honoured place by virtue of his capacity, his dignity and long service.

Summary of works given under George Peake's direction:

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	27
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	14
Mors et Vita.	(Gounod)	9
Israel in Egypt	(Handel)	5
Redemption	(Gounod)	5
Damnation of Faust	(Berloiz)	5
The Creation	(Haydn)	4
The Golden Legend	(Sullivan)	4
Samson	(Handel)	3
Judas Maccabaeus	(Handel)	2
Eli	(Costa)	2
Calvary	(Spohr)	2
Ruth	(Cowen)	2
The Apostles	(Elgar)	2
The Rose of Sharon	(Mackenzie)	1
Judith	(Parry)	1
St. Paul	(Mendelssohn)	1
The Kingdom	(Elgar)	1
The Seasons	(Haydn)	1
Naaman	(Costa)	1
St. Matthew Passion	(Bach)	1
Miscellaneous		<u>22</u>
		115
Assisted at ("Miscellaneous")		<u>9</u>
		124

Mr. Alberto Zelman Jun. conducted one performance

First Performances:

In Australia: "Mors et Vita", "Judith", "Death of Minnehaha", "The Apostles", "The Kingdom".
 In Victoria: "Damnation of Faust".
 In Melbourne: "The Rose of Sharon", "The Cottar's Saturday Night", "The Lay of the Last Minstrel",
 "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast". Orchestral - "Land of the Mountain and the Flood",
 "Ballade for Orchestra".

CHAPTER XI. ALBERTO ZELMAN'S CONDUCTORSHIP

To fill the vacancy caused by Mr. George Peake's retirement, Mr. Alberto Zelman, Jun. was appointed. He needed no introduction to the public or the Society. Son of a long-resident and well-known musician and conductor (Mr. Alberto Zelman Sen.) he was literally born into and grew up in a musical atmosphere and his connection with the Society dated back to his boyhood days. At the time of his appointment as the Society's Conductor, he was a noted violinist and a teacher of the violin at the University Conservatorium, also a member of the University Board of Examiners in Music since 1906. Other and earlier activities included association with the Marshall-Hall Conservatorium and the foundation - with other enthusiasts - of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, an amateur body which, later, was regularly associated with the Society in its concerts. When the Victorian Professional Orchestra came into being in 1910, Mr. Zelman, by unanimous consent, conducted its first two concerts. Enough has been said to indicate the new Conductor's back-ground. To all of this was added a capacity to take pains, unbounded enthusiasm and musical conception of a high order. Further, he brought to his new task a possibly greater acquaintance with the orchestral necessities than any of his predecessors. Such a combination of talents qualified him to meet the stirrings in the musical world which were seeking higher planes of musical interpretation and performance. This Chapter will note how the Conductor and Society met the challenge of the times and combined to present works which revealed a marked improvement in standard of performance; a progression in which choir and orchestra went happily hand in hand.

1911

343 (334) MISCELLANEOUS (109) 31st Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Vocal solos. Choruses from "Mors et Vita" (Gounod) (4) and Sullivan's "Golden Legend" (5). Overtures- "Dowie Dens O' Yarrow" (McCunn) (1), Dance of the Symphs" (1) and "Hungarian March" (1) from Berloiz's "Faust" (1), "Midsummer Night's Dream" (Mendelssohn) (3) .
Miss Lillian Reid (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).
"Town Hall filled". A successful concert; praise for both Chorus and Orchestra. "Mr. Zelman conducted with immense vigour, and was evidently clear as to what he wanted and succeeded in getting it".

The year was notable because of the visit in July of the Sheffield Choir, under Dr. Frederick Coward; an event to which the Annual Report made special reference. "The concerts given by this celebrated combination. ..were an object lesson to all choristers in their attack, attention to light and shade, interpretation and general ensemble. Without a doubt choral singing will be the better for their visit." Members benefited in another direction by purchasing £111 worth of concession tickets for the "Messiah", "Dream of Gerontius" and "Damnation of Faust". Mr. Peake's long and faithful service was duly acknowledged. Owing to the demolition of the Assembly Hall, arrangements were made for rehearsals in the upper room of the Melbourne Athenaeum - "The want of a proper hall for rehearsal is greatly felt." The accounts for the year showed a loss of £38/11/7.

344 (325) THE MESSIAH (71) 25th Dec., Exhibition Bldg. 1st Sub.
Miss Lillian Reid (S), Mdlle. Voluntas Ranzenberg (C), Mr. John McCormack (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B). Opportunity was taken to secure as principals, two members of the Melba Opera Company on tour in Australia. Miss Elva Rogers, who had been engaged for the contralto part, graciously stood aside to permit the engagement of a visiting contralto. Mr. John McCormack came with an established European reputation. For the occasion, the Victorian Festival Choir (trained by Mr. Frederic Beard) joined forces with the Society's chorus and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra "came again to the front after a lengthy spell". There was "an enormous audience" estimated at "five or six thousand". Press reports reached 16" and spoke in high terms of the performance. "The greatest success of the evening was the orchestral work. Mr. Zelman deserves the warmest congratulations for letting us hear, for the first time, the beauty and power of Handel's scoring for the band". Mdlle. Ranzenberg's performance "was of high merit" and Mr. McCormack's singing was a delight. Altogether a triumph for Mr. Zelman who conducted "with immense vigour".

1912

345 (326) THE CREATION (Haydn) (25) 5th Apr.*, Exhibition Bldg. 2nd Sub.
Miss Reba Rangan (S), Mr. Arthur Harrison (T), Mr. A. C. Bartlemann (B).
It is interesting to read that the honours went to the Orchestra although it was noted that the Choir was ill balanced, due to absentees during the Easter holiday period. Mr. Zelman conducted with great enthusiasm and "got some very fine effects".

346 (327) MISCELLANEOUS (110) 23rd Jul., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Vocal solos. "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (7), "The Death of Minnehaha" (Coleridge-Taylor) (2), Overture - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (6), Prelude to Third Act "Die Meistersinger" (Wagner) (1), "Kaiser Marsch" (Wagner) (1).

Miss Maude Harrington (S), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A very large audience". The concert was given as testimonial to Mr. George Peake in recognition of his many years of service to the Society. Choir and Orchestra acquitted themselves with credit. At the interval the President, Sir John Madden referred to Mr. Peake's long association with the Society. On coming forward to acknowledge Sir John's remarks, Mr. Peake received an ovation.

347 (330) CHARACTERUS (Elgar) 22nd Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

"A large audience". The critics agreed that the performance was an excellent one with full recognition of Mr. Zelman's ability as Conductor. Again the Orchestra received high marks - "An excellent orchestra of some 75 players rendered the whole performance complete". Mr. Andrew Black "who sang the name part in the first performance in Leeds" was warmly praised for a flawless performance. "Our local baritones. ..have a perfect exemplar". Press accounts up to 17".

348 (329) THE MESSIAH (72) 17th Dec., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Beryl Bennie (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C), Mr. Oswald Rippon (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

The hall was fined. A very good performance; the work of the Choir "an outstanding feature". "A capable and enthusiastic Orchestra, which, on the whole, got through the important accompaniment with accuracy and at times...with real distinction, some of the pianissimo effects being beautifully managed".

349 (330) THE MESSIAH (73) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

The principals were as in previous concert. The audience was larger and more enthusiastic. Reports indicate a performance in advance of the first. The Orchestra again distinguished itself.

1913

350 (-) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Each) (4) 21st Mar.*, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Horace Stevens (E), Mr. C. H. Ledward (E), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T).

"A very large audience". Not a perfect performance but a meritorious one -taking a line through all the press accounts. 'The new Conductor showed his metal in handling a few awkward situations".

No Annual Meeting was held in 1912, consequently the Report presented to members on 9/9/13 had much information to impart. It was announced that the constitution of the Society had undergone an important change-the Society had been "registered under the Companies Act and altogether put on a sounder business basis. The subscribers are now members equally with the performing members." In this regard, the legal advice and assistance of Sir Robert Best, M.H.R., was thankfully acknowledged. As a result of the Complimentary Concert tendered to Mr. George Peake, the Committee were enabled to hand to him a cheque for £125. In addition, Mr. Peake was elected Life Honorary Conductor and Vice President. The Committee's recommendation of Mr. Alberto Zelman as Conductor was approved and Mr. Zelman's energy and enthusiasm in his new post were acknowledged. In 1912 he was married to Miss Maude Harrington, a soprano soloist of note; the event being marked by a presentation. After a long association of 22 years as Hon. Organist and accompanist at rehearsals, Mr. C. B. Fentum resigned. A move was made to tender an appropriate acknowledgement but Mr. Fentum indicated that he would prefer not receiving anything in the form of a presentation. The vacant position was filled by the appointment of Mr. W. F. G. Steele, Organist and Choirmaster of Scots Church, Melbourne. Another to resign was Mr. J. Y. Bilsborrow an officer of the Society for 22 years during which he acted as Assistant Secretary. A cheque for £25 was a slight recognition of long and arduous service. Regretful reference to the death of several members were recorded. Those mentioned were - Sir Matthew Davies, President of the Society for many years; Mr. William Smith, Librarian for ten years, also Librarian of the Melbourne Athenaeum and a well-known figure in Melbourne; Mr. J. R. A. Milligan a recent member of the Committee; Mr. Armes Beaumont, an outstanding tenor in Melbourne for many years and one whose record in connection with the Society has been duly noted. Also noted, "Mr. Zelman has reconstructed the Society's amateur orchestra and rehearsals are held every Monday evening in Furlong's Rooms, Royal Arcade, Bourke Street." New Rules consequent on the altered constitution of the Society provided for the financial year to end on 30th June each year, which operates to this day. The

accounts tendered covered "the period from 1st Nov. 1911 to 30th June, 1913". and showed a transfer of profit to "Accumulated Fund" of £107/18/7 which stood at £601/12/4.

351 (-) THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (Wagner) (1) 1st Jul., Auditorium. 1st Sub.

Miss Maude Harrington (Senta), Miss Violet Somerset (Mary), Mr. Charles Ledward (Captain), Mr. Hector Goldspink (Erik), Mr. Edwin Hooke (Steersman), Mr. Andrew Black (Van der Decken).

"A large audience applauded the efforts of the performers with great heartiness". The work of the chorus was "excellent" but while the orchestra was commended for various phases, the work was "too difficult for, what was in the main, an amateur body". Mr. Andrew Black's singing was warmly praised and high marks were given to the Conductor. Mr. Edwin Hooke made the first of his 13 appearances with the Society as soloist.

For this and the following concert, the opera was selected to mark the centenary of the birth of the Composer.

352 (-) THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (Wagner) 5th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert with same Principals. "A more effective performance".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 4th Sep., Town Hall (Monthly Municipal Concert).

Organ, vocal and violin solos. The Society assisted with "Moonlight" (Fanning) (1), "Sweet and Low" (Barnby) (2), "In This Hour of Softened Splendour" (Pinsuti) (1), Chorus from Sullivan's "Golden Legend" (6), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (17).

353 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (111) 12th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Violet Clark (S), Miss Elva Rogers (C). Mr. Arthur Andrew (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

Vocal solos. "Go Song of Mine" (Elgar) (1), "Choral Symphony" (Beethoven) (3), Overture "Euryanthe" (Weber) (4).

The Choir was praised for its limited but excellent work but the Orchestra "was, for the most part unequal to the task of handling such a magnus opus as Beethoven's masterpiece...."

354 (335) THE MESSIAH (74) Dec. 20th, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Mrs. F. W. G. Steele (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

"A good performance in which brilliance was achieved with possible loss in other directions". The good work of the Choir was acknowledged while the Orchestra was adjudged "fairly satisfactory". Mr. Bertram E. Johnston made the first of 11 appearances as a soloist.

355 (336) THE MESSIAH (75) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert "before an overflowing house". An improved performance. "Owing to the sudden indisposition of Mr. Bertram Johnston there were no tenor solos sung during an otherwise very satisfactory rendering...."

1914

356 (337) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (10) 7th Apr., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Mabel Thompson (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A vigorous and interesting performance". "It is a pleasure to record the distinct progress the Philharmonic Society has made during the past few months as a choral body". "The orchestra (remembering that it was nearly all amateurs) played capitally".

357 (338) MORS ET VITA (Gounod) (11) 10th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert with same principals. A large and appreciative audience. "The same gratifying and stimulating results noted in connection with Tuesday's rendition".

The Annual Report for the year 1913-14 was presented at the Annual Meeting held on 29/9/14. It referred to the "Diamond Jubilee" of the Society and to the two performances of "The Flying Dutchman" given to mark the occasion but, unfortunately, the loss thereon was £166/11/8. Also, to mark the attainment of 60 years as a musical body, Mr. Peake, at the request of the Committee wrote a survey of the Society's activities which was published under the title "Historical Souvenir" at 1/-. The 35 page booklet (illustrated) is an interesting and informative sketch and had been freely drawn upon by the present writer. During the year, the "Council of Melbourne Musical Societies" was formed with the declared objectives (a) To stimulate interest in music generally, (b) The registering of concert dates to prevent overlapping, (c) The securing of a library to be available to any recognised society at a nominal fee, and, (d) The taking of united action in the case of any

public musical celebration. The establishment of a library was not attained, but over the years the Council has functioned usefully in regard to (b) and (d). Mr. R. J. Oehr, the Society's Secretary, was appointed Honorary Secretary on formation and held the position till his death in 1943. He was succeeded by the present Secretary, Mr. R. E. V. Church. The Society was represented on formation and has continued the connection to the present time. Due to the long range booking now necessary to secure the Town Hall, there is little call on the Council nowadays. In respect of the projected visit of the late King George VI., the entertainment authorities of the State Government consulted with the Council's officers.

Noted with regret was the death on Christmas Day of Mr. J. Hudson Marsden, one of the oldest members and a former Secretary. Also noted with regret were the deaths of Professor Franklin Peterson (Ormond Professor of Music) and Mr. Ernest Wood, Conductor Royal Melbourne Liedertafel. Due to business reasons, Mr. J. Munro Ross relinquished the office of Treasurer and was succeeded by Mr. H. Maurice Davies, L.L.M. The Hon. Assistant Organist, Mr. V. E. Galway, resigned and his place was taken by Mr. H. Welsford Smithers. Mr. Claude Smith (in addition to his office as Librarian) was appointed Hon. Assistant Secretary. Financial Accounts showed a loss of £161.

358 (-) DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (6) 14th Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Margaret Murdoch (Marg.), Miss Wyn Macoboy, Mr. Philip Newbury (Faust), Mr. C. H. Ledward (Mephis.), Mr. Hilliard McDougal (Brander).

"A large audience and much enthusiasm". Press accounts to 9" credited the Choir with good singing; the Orchestra - in view of the acknowledged difficulties of the score - received good marks. Mr. Zelman's watchfulness and skill did much to hold the performance together.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 10th Sep., Auditorium. Assisted.

Madm. Melba (S), Madm. Maggie Stirling (C), Miss Ellen Terry (Elocutionist), Mr. Fred Collier.

The Society joined forces with the Victorian Festival Choir for Madm. Melba's Patriotic Concert. Choral Nos. "The Empire Flag" (Mackenzie) (1), "Britons Alert" (Elgar's "Caractacus") (1). Orchestral-"Pomp and Circumstance March" (Elgar) . Combined chorus and audience sang "The Old Hundreth" (3), "Rule Britannia" (Arne) (2).

Great enthusiasm prevailed. "Music lovers received many inspiring impressions" particularly in the combined singing. "Madm. Melba sang with great beauty of tone and impeccable vocalisation". "The greatest night of my career" declared the Prima Donna. (Press account). Mr. Alberto Zelman and Mr. J. J. Bailey shared the duties of Conductor .

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 31st Oct., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

This concert was given for the University Red Cross by "massed choirs" and orchestras, the Society taking part. Choral items -"Britons Alert" (Elgar's "Caractacus") (2) , "The Empire Flag" (Mackenzie) (2) , "It Comes from the Misty Ages" (Elgar's "Banner of st. George") (1), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (18), "Pomp and Circumstance March" (Elgar), Ballet Music from "Le Cid" (Massenet).

There was a very large audience. The combined orchestras played the National Anthems of Belgium, Great Britain, France and Russia. Mr .Alberto Zelman and Mr. J. J. Bailey shared the duties of Conductor.

359 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (112) 25th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

No vocal soloists. "The Lee Shore" (Coleridge-Taylor) (1), "On Himalay" and "Awake, Awake" (Bantock) (1), "The Snow" and "Fly Singing Bird" (Elgar) (1), "Flora Gave Me Fairest Flowers" (Wilby) (1), "Awake Sweet Love" (Dowland) (1), "Now is the Month of Maying" (Morley) (2), "Blest Pair of Sirens" (Parry) (1). Overtures - "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (7) and "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" (McCunn) (8).

Introduction to Act V "King Manfred" (Reinecke) (1). Concerto in A Minor (2nd and 3rd Movements only) (Bossi) (1), Mr. W. F. G. Steele, Organist.

"Seldom has the Philharmonic Society been heard to such advantage, while the orchestral playing was distinctly commendable". Press accounts to 10" were in agreement.

360 (339) THE MESSIAH (76) 22nd Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Elsa Warman (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

Despite "muggy" weather, a very large audience. The performance was not so "brilliant" as the previous one but it gained by the difference. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra made its first recorded appearance with the Society. Of its playing, one account states it "gave the Conductor some trying moments but allowing for its amateur constitution, it did the important work allotted to it with credit".

361 (340) THE MESSIAH (77) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert with same principals. On account of atmospheric conditions, the doors were left open throughout the evening. The hall was "crowded to the doors" with a most appreciative audience. "The Chorus and Orchestra were again a feature of the performance".

1915

362 (341) THE KINGDOM (Elgar) (2) 2nd Apr.* , Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Winnie Bradbury (S), Madm. Elva Rogers (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. Robert Parker (B).

The hall was "crowded to the doors". Press accounts to

14" agreed on praising the many excellencies of the performance: Chorus, Orchestra and Principals.

Enthusiasm on the part of Conductor and performers was notable. The "Age" tendered its readers a 24" preliminary notice of the work. In the part of st. Peter, Mr. Parker - an English singer from the Quinlan Opera Company - was an outstanding success.

The Annual Report speaks of the regular attendance at rehearsals by choir and orchestra and the enthusiasm which enabled the presentation of five concerts as well as the responsibility of two other concerts given in connection with the war effort. The advent of the First World War of 1914-18 had already cast its shadow over the musical life in Melbourne and mention is made of the enlistment of six members from the Society. A social evening was held at Sargerit's Cafe on 13th March, 1915; the cost being defrayed by the Vice Presidents. Triennial Test was held after the Easter Concert. Recorded with deep regret were the deaths of Mr. William Swinburne a member for many years and at the time, a member of the Committee; Mr. G. B. Fentum who resigned in 1913 after serving 22 years as the Society's Organist, and Professor Marshall-Hall, Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne University. The Treasurer's Report indicated a profit of £5/7/0 on the year's work.

363 (-) JUDAS MACCABEAUS (Handel) (10) 7th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Lillian Reid (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

The concert was given in aid of the Australian Wounded Soldiers Fund. "The attendance of music-lovers was large and the musical results excellent". Three press accounts agreed on the excellence of the performance. The Governor-General and Lady Helen Ferguson attended. A sum of £144/11/0 was passed to the Fund.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 14th July, Town Hall. Assisted.

A concert given by Mdlle. Antonia Dolores in aid of the French Red Cross Funds. In addition to solos by Mdlle. Dolores and Miss Violet McGregor (V'st) , the Society contributed "Flora Gave Me Fairest Flowers" (Wylbe) (2), "Awake, Sweet Love" (Dowland) (2), "Now is the Month of Maying" (Morley) (3).

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 11th Aug., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

A Patriotic Concert given by Miss Amy Castles to assist the Australian Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Fund. Soloists-Miss Amy Castles, Mr. Walter Kirby (T) and Mr. John Amadio (Flautist). To assist, the Society's Choir and Orchestra joined forces with the Victorian Festival Choir and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The combined forces rendered "Song of the Vikings" (Fanning) (1), "It Comes from the Misty Ages" (Elgar's "Banner of st. George") (2), "Gallia" (Gounod) (3) and Overtures-"Oberon" (Weber) (1) and Ballet Music from "Le Cid" (Massenet) (2). A choir of "400 voices". Mr. Alberto Zelman and Mr. J. J. Bailey shared the duties of Conductor.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 4th Sep., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

A concert in aid of Australian Sick and Wounded Soldiers. Under the auspices of Trades Hall Council and associated bodies. Soloists, choirs and orchestras and conductors were the same as in previous concert except that Mr. George Castles replaced Mr. Walter Kirby. The choral and orchestral items were repeated. In addition, "1500 voices" from the Combined Carlton, Alfred Crescent and South Brunswick State Schools (Mr. T. R. L. Austin, Condr.) contributed five choral numbers. The "Dead March" from Handel's "Saul" (3) was played in memory of Major-General Bridges, late leader of the 1st Australian Division at Gallipoli.

364 (343) MISCELLANEOUS (113) 17th Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

150th Psalm (Franck) (1), "The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (5), "In These Delightful Pleasant Groves" (Purcell) (1), "Music When Soft Voices Die" (Bantock) (1), "Summer is Gone" (Coleridge-Taylor) (1), "The Banner of St. George" (Elgar) (4), Chorus from the "Golden Legend" (Sullivan) (7). Overtures-"The Hebrides" (Mendelssohn) (2) , Introduction to Part 3 from "Le Deluge" (Saint Saens) (1) and "Britannia" (Mackenzie). First performance in Melbourne.

No principals were engaged. A very successful concert which the critics warmly praised with a word of commendation for Mr. Zelman's direction.

365 (344) THE MESSIAH (78) 21st Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Elsy Treweek (S), Miss Violet Somerset (C), Mr. Percy Blundell (T), Mr. Peter Dawson (B).

A "very large audience". The "Argus" account of 11" extended warm praise for the Choir's part and a special commendation as to the Conductor. While Mr. Dawson gave a capable rendering of the bass part some criticism accompanied the critics comments.

366 (345) THE MESSIAH (79) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Annual Christmas performance with same principals except Mr. Fred Collier replaced Mr. Peter Dawson. "Town Hall was crowded to the doors which were left open throughout the evening". "Choruses on the whole went excellently thanks to the enthusiasm of the members and brilliant guidance exercised by the Conductor".

1916

367 (356) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (31) 18th Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Minnie Waugh (S), Miss Ivy Phillips (C), Mr. George English (T), Mr. Andrew Black (B).

Press accounts (3) to 11" agreed as to an excellent performance reflecting credit on all sections. Exception was taken to the frequent applauding on the part of the audience. Mr. Andrew Black was warmly praised for his interpretation of the Prophet. "An object lesson for all young singers".

368 (357) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (32) 21st Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night performance with principals as before.

A large audience. "Very satisfactory results".

369 (348) THE APOSTLES (Elgar) (3) 18th Jul., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Madm. Minnie Grime (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Oswald Rippon (T), Mr. A. C. Bartleman (B), Mr. Fred Collier (B), Mr. Howard White (B).

The performance was "a most creditable one". There was praise for Principals, Choir and Orchestra although it was noted "much rather uneven work by the orchestra". Mr. Howard White made a great deal out of his part and the Conductor's contribution was warmly praised. "The performance was received with reverential acknowledgment by a very large audience".

The year's record of seven concerts and appearances at three others represents a substantial effort during the second year of World War 1. The Annual Report mentions the names of five additional members who had enlisted for active service, with regretful reference to Mr. H. W. Taylor, who had died of wounds. Mr. E. R. Peacock, a Vice President had left to assist in Y.M.C.A. work at the Front. Also noted with regret was the death of Dr. D. Mc Officer, a Vice President for 11 years. The Year's accounts showed a profit of £98/7/1 and the Accumulated Fund at £544/7/11.

370 (349) MISCELLANEOUS (114) 21st Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

"Moonlight" (Fanning) (2), "There Rolls the Deep" (Parry) (1), "The Call of the Breeze" (Forester) (1), "The Snow" (2) and "Fly, Singing Bird" (Elgar) (1), "Last Post" (Stanford) (1), 150th Psalm (Franck) (2), "John Gilpin" (Cowan) (1). Orchestral-"Dowie Dens O' Yarrow" (McCunn) (2), "A Solemn Melody for Strings" (Davies) (1), "The Nutcracker Suite" (Tschaikowsky) (1).

No principals were engaged. General praise for all sections with special mention of the Conductor.

371 (350) THE MESSIAH (80) 19th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Madm. Marguerite Henderson (S), Miss Clara Serena (C), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T), Mr. Robert Hamblett (B).

The choruses were "magnificently sung", "great enthusiasm prevailed", "...but the chief credit for last night's performance goes to the Philharmonic choir which earned fresh laurels under Mr. Alberto Zelman's skilful direction".

372 (351) THE MESSIAH (81) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas performance with same principals. To a crowded audience, the Society repeated its triumphs of the previous performance.

1917

373 (352) THE CREATION (26) 2nd Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Mary Conly (S), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

A meritorious performance earned praise for Choir and Orchestra, although there were occasional lapses in the orchestral section. The reports of "Table Talk" and "Punch" were in agreement with those of the three dailies.

374 (353) THE CREATION (27) 6th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night performance of previous concert. In spite of the "severity and inclemency of the weather, there were very few vacant seats. ..." "The concert was successful from every point of view".

375 (354) MISCELLANEOUS (115) 3rd Jul., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

"Flora Gave Me Fairest Flowers" (Wilbye) (3), "The Silver Swan" (Gibbons) (6), "In These Delightful Pleasant Groves" (Purcell) (2), "Go, Song of Mine" (Elgar) (2), "Spring Wind" (Bath) (1), "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (8), "Last Post" (Stanford) (2), Orchestral – Air and Two Gavottes from the Suite in D (Bach) (1). Piano Concerto No.1 in B Flat Minor (Tschaikowsky) (1), "L'arlesienne" (Bizet) (1).

Miss Jessie Masson (P'st) was the only soloist. Despite the change from "heavy" to "light" music, press reports agree on an excellent concert with much enjoyable singing.

The Annual Report referred to the high standard of the Chorus and Orchestra in the six concerts given during the year, and the painstaking efforts of the Conductor. The Entertainment Tax made its first appearance but in the circumstances of the time, the Committee decided not to make a protest as to its application to the Society. Mention is made of the enlistment for Active Service of three additional members; one of whom is still an active member of the Chorus - Mr. D. S. Garland. Noted with deep regret was the name of Mr. E. A. Pearce who was killed in action. Mr. W. H. Smithers resigned as Assistant Organist and Miss Isabel Adams was elected in his place. The Treasurer's Report is not available.

376 (355) THE GOLDEN LEGEND (Sullivan) (6) 1st Oct., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Pauline Bindley (S), Miss Gladys McDowell (C), Mr. Rufus Ferguson (B), Mr. Arthur Andrew (T).

"Throughout the choral singing was worthy of high praise. The Orchestra generally did satisfactory work, in spite of a few misadventures".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 24th Nov., Town Hall. Assisted.

Mdlle. Antonia Dolores (S), Miss Jessie Masson (P'st), Mr. Alberto Zelman (V'st).

"Ring Out Wild Bells" (Fletcher) (1), Chorus from Handel's "Samson" (6), "Awake Sweet Love" (Dowland) (3), "Now in the Month of Maying" (Morley) (4), "Hallelujah" (Handel) (19).

The concert was given in association with Mdlle. Antonia. Dolores in aid of The Blind Disabled Soldiers of Victoria. Concert arrangements were made by Falkiner Smith management.

377 (356) THE MESSIAH (82) 18th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Elsy Treweek (S), Miss Ivy Phillips (C), Mr. Percy Blundell (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

"A crowded audience". "On many occasions last night the chorus singing was magnificent and it never fell below the standard we have learned to expect from the Society". Orchestra did capital work". Press accounts to 11".

378 (357) THE MESSIAH (83) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night performance with same principals as before. "The Town Hall was scarcely large enough to hold all who wished to hear the second performance...." "The performance generally was a fine one".

1918

379 (358) ST. PAUL (Mendelssohn) (9) 29th Mar.*, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Elsie Davies (S), Miss Violet Somerset (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. A. C. Bartleman (B).

"Some remarkably fine singing...." "A capable orchestra which was equal to most demands".

380 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (116) 16th Jul., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

"Since My Tears and Lamenting" (Morley) (1), "Can You Sew Cushions" (Bantock) (1), "The Mountain Streamlet" (Rimsky-Korsakof) (1), "John Gilpin" (Cowan) (2), "Blest Pair of Sirens" (Parry) (2), "News from Wydah" (Gardiner) (1). First performance in Melbourne. Overture to "Oberon" (Weber) (3), "Adagio" from New World Symphony" (Dvorak) (1), Entr'acte and Ballet from "Rosamund" (Schubert) (1).

A very successful concert with special praise for the Choir. "News from Wydah" caused something of a sensation and it had to be repeated. No principals were engaged.

The Annual Report is not available. A press account of the Annual Meeting (8/10/18) noted that Sir Robert Best, K.C.M.C., who presided, referred with regret to the death of Sir John Madden, a former President of the Society. Also, he stated, that the Society had held its own during a trying period. Although subscriptions from members amounted to £340/3/0 the total loss on concerts during the year was £243/18/8. In recognition of the valuable work performed by the Treasurer, Mr. W. M. Stewart, he was elected a Life Member.

381 (360) MISCELLANEOUS (117) 2nd Nov., Town Hall. Extra.

"Sweet and Low" (Barn by) (3), "Call of the Breeze" (Forrester) (2) , "News from Wydah" (Gardiner) (2) , "John Gilpin" (Cowan) (3), Chorus from "The Banner of St. George". (Elgar) (5). Overture - "Merry Wives of Windsor" (Nicolai) (8), Minuet in A for Strings (Boccherini) (1), "Prelude to Eve", "Entr'acte Sevillana" from Massenet's "Don Cesar de Bazan" (1).

The Choir was warmly praised while the Orchestra received favourable mention. "Some technical blemishes were noticeable in the overture; and in the other items there were some things absent that should have been present and other things present that should have been absent. But that life-giving quality - enthusiasm, thanks to Mr. Alberto Zelman's brilliant conducting – made amends for many shortcomings...." Signor Guido (T) was the only soloist.

382 (361) MISCELLANEOUS (118) 30th Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

"The Spirit of England" (Elgar), First performance in Melbourne. "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" (Coleridge-Taylor) (3), 150th Psalm (Franck) (3), "Rule Britannia" (3) in Arne's original form with Mr. Browning Mummery (T) as soloist. Second Movement from Fifth Symphony (Glazounov) (1), Nocturne from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Mendelssohn) (1). Mr. Mummery was the only soloist. The signing of the Armistice on the 11th November which led to the end of World War I was recognised by the choice of two items in the programme. The printed programme bore an "In Memoriam" notice in respect of "Mr. J. A. Foster, member of the choir, killed in action". The Choir gave a good account of itself while the Orchestra was described as "adequate".

383 (362) THE MESSIAH (84) 19th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Gertrude Johnson (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. William Roberts (B). "Performance highly creditable. ..the choir, as is usually the case, won first honours. ..the orchestra did its work capably". "Mr. Alberto Zelman conducted with skill and resource. ..his tempi in "The Messiah" vary considerably from those which are traditional - and not always to the advantage of Handel's masterpiece. It may be admitted that Mr. Zelman's readings are virile and spirited but sometimes they lack dignity and repose".

384 (363) THE MESSIAH (85) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas Night performance with same principals as before. Again, a highly successful performance.

1919

385 (364) ELIJAH (33) (Mendelssohn) 15th Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Mary Conly (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T), Mr. Robert Hamblett (B).

On the whole an excellent performance. "The choral portions were mostly admirable". "The orchestra played with commendable accuracy".

386 (365) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (34) 18th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert with same principals on Good Friday night. "A large and appreciative audience" included the Governor-General and Lady Helen Munro Ferguson. "The performance was a complete success".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, Sunday, 6th Jul., Town Hall. Peace Celebrations.

The concert was arranged as part of the Peace Celebrations by the Commonwealth Government as "Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings of Peace after the War of 1914/18". For the occasion the following bodies and Conductors joined forces - Melbourne Philharmonic Society (Mr. Alberto Zelman) , Victorian Festival Choir (Mr. J. J. Bailey) , Royal Victorian Liedertafel (Mr. Mansley Greer), Melbourne Orchestral Society (Mr. J. W. Dawson), Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (Mr. Alberto Zelman), Musicians Union Orchestra (Mr. Fritz Hart), University Conservatorium Orchestra (Prof. W. A. Laver).

"The Heavens are Telling" from Haydn's "The Creation" (12), "Thanks be to God" from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" (4), "Hallelujah" from Handel's "Messiah" (20). Overture to "Egmont" (Beethoven), Angelus from Massenet's "Scenes Pittoresques", "A Solemn Melody" (Davies).
There were no soloists.

387 (366) MISCELLANEOUS (119) 22nd Oct., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Minnie Waugh (S) was the only soloist. Psalm 29 (1), "The Spirit of England" (2), "The Banner of St. George" (1), Orchestral-"Sursam Corda" (1), "Chanson de Nuit" (1), "Chanson de Matin" (1).
A decidedly "Elgar" programme; all of the numbers being from the pen of Sir Edward Elgar. A successful concert which met the general approval of the critics.

The influenza epidemic which swept the world towards the end of World War I, led to the postponement of the fourth concert from July to October and to the holding of the Annual Meeting in February, 1920, according to the Annual Report. It is noted from other records that early in 1919 rehearsals were cancelled for a period and when resumed were limited to 20 members at a time. The Entertainment Tax and its application to the Society and other kindred bodies led to many protests. Nevertheless the Society's efforts to obtain exemption failed. During the year, the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir William Irvine was elected President and re-elected at the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer's Report showed a loss of £19/3/3 for the year which reduced the Accumulated Fund to £589/6/6.

388 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (120) 25th Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Solos by Signor A. Balboni (T), "Can Ye Sew Cushions" (2) and "On Himalay" (2) (Bantock), "Ring Out Wild Bells" (Fletcher) (2), Choruses from "St. Paul" (Mendelssohn) (2), "The Golden Legend" (8), 150th Psalm (Franck) (4). Suite for Orchestra (Massenet) (1), Ballade Overture "Ship of the Fiend" (McCunn) (1), Irish Tune from County Derry (Grainger) (1), "Dance of the Sylphs" (2) and Hungarian March (2) from Berloiz's "Damnation of Faust".

"The choral work of the evening was excellent...the choir has developed conspicuously during recent months ...although quite as much may not be claimed for the orchestra, Mr. Zelman secured several effective interpretations of the various instrumental numbers".

389 (368) THE MESSIAH (86) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Bessie Martin (S), Madm. A. Harrison (C), Mr. Oswald Rippon (T), Mr. Ernest Sage (B).
Attendance was excellent. "Putting aside some shortcomings, a splendid effort - brilliant where it should be brilliant and, for the greater part, finely emotional" ("Argus"). At their best they (the choir) were magnificent; there was life and flexibility and real intelligence" ("Age"). Good orchestral work was noted in the press accounts to 11".

390 (369) THE MESSIAH (87) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas Night performance with the same principals to a full house. The triumph of the previous performance was repeated in the presence of an extremely enthusiastic audience. One report described the enthusiasm as "natural and justifiable". "Mr. Zelman was always an interesting and inspiring Conductor".

1920

391 (370) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (35) 30th Mar., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Miss Florrie Gordon (C), Mr. Albert Emery (T), Mr. Leslie McCallum (B).
Press accounts were somewhat at variance. The "Age" said "the chorus did some admirable work, which reflected the greatest credit on their Conductor, Mr. Alberto Zelman. And the orchestra was equal to most of the demands made upon it, though the brass at times seemed somewhat out of the picture". The "Argus", while acknowledging that the chorus "which was always good, was on this occasion, in many ways excellent", described the orchestra's work as "only so so" and, in reference to the Conductor, "he apparently believes not in the subtle touch nor in a great variety of tone colour. ..."

392 (371) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (36) 2nd Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday Night performance with same Principals.

"Last night's rendering was characterised in the main by the same leading features. ..("Age"). At the interval (according to the "Herald") Mr. Zelman publicly expressed himself strongly as to the "Argus" criticism of the orchestra in the previous performance. "Nothing to his mind could be more contemptible..." After referring to the work done that night, he said, "they did not ask for praise but encouragement they looked for, and justice they demanded" (applause).

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 28th May (A'noon) Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

"State Reception to Prince of Wales". No less than 12 musical city societies and various suburban societies joined forces for the occasion -Melbourne Philharmonic Society and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (Mr. Alberto Zelman), Melbourne Orchestral Society (Mr. J. W. Dawson), Melbourne Choral Union (Mr. E. Tippet), Metropolitan Competitive Choir, Victoria Festival Choir and Victorian Postal Union (Mr. J. J. Bailey), Musicians' Union Orchestra (Eziko Kost) , Royal Victorian Liedertafel (Mr. Mansley Greer), Students of Albert Street Conservatorium (Mr. Fritz Hart), University Choral Society and University Conservatorium Orchestra (Professor W. A. Laver).

Choral items -"The Empire Flag" (MacKenzie) (3), "It Comes from the Misty Ages" (from Elgar's "Banner of St. George) (2), "Thanks be to God" (from Mendelssohn's "Elijah") (5), "The Heavens are Telling" (from Haydn's "Creation") (13), "Rule Britannia (Arne) (4), "Hymn of Welcome" (Laver) (1), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (21). Orchestral-Overture "William Tell" (Weber) , "Fete Boheme" from "Scenes Pittoresque" (Massenet).

Professor W. A. Laver was Chairman of the Musical Committee and Mr. R. J. Oehr Secretary.

The Annual Report had but five concerts to record, and its story was among the briefest. It indicated that "the profits from "The Messiah" and "Elijah" concerts are gradually improving the financial standing of the Society." This was borne out by the Treasurer's report which showed nett profit for the year, £230/19/0, transferred to "Accumulated Fund" which stood at £820/5/6. Annual Meeting was held on 10th November.

393 (372) THE BEATITUDES (Franck) (1) 21st Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

First performance in Melbourne.

Miss Franceska Duret (S) , Miss Violet Somerset (S), Madm. A. Harrison (C), Mr. Philip Newbury (T), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. A. C. Bartlemann (B), Mr. Claude Schilling (B), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

"It was an event of the first artistic importance. ..." "In spite of the foregoing (certain lapses) Mr. Zelman never conducted more skilfully, nor carried through a difficult evening's works more successfully. He certainly exhibited the beauties of this remarkable composition in a manner that no technical shortcomings obscured". The "Age" (8") and "Argus" (6") while noting certain blemishes, warmly praised the performance. Orchestra "occasionally, even frequently, did good work". Two Bendigonians were among the principals. Mr. Norman Bradshaw made the first of his 13 appearance with the Society as soloist.

394 (373) THE BEATITUDES (Franck) (2) 26th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

An "enthusiastic audience which filled every part of the Town Hall". The Governor-General and Lady Munro Ferguson attended. "The second performance was even better. ...and the orchestra often rose to almost inspired moments and at its worst, was never bad enough to really obscure the beauty of the composition".

395 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (37) 26th Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Elsy Treweek (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Oswald Rippon (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

All accounts agree on a very fine performance with Mr. Horace Stevens "the outstanding feature of the performance. "Mr. Zelman skilfully conducted what was a really memorable performance".

396 (-) CARACTACUS (Elgar) (2) 25th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Mr. Robert Hamblett (B), Mr. Philip Newbury (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).

Three press reports agree on an excellent concert; "well up to Philharmonic standards". As to the Chorus ... "best of all they showed feeling". Another account speaks of "joy in their work". The Orchestra "did almost consistently good work and at its best, played very well indeed".

397 (-) CARACTACUS (Elgar) (3) 30th Nov., Town Hall. Extra.

Repetition of previous concert with same principals. "Mr. Zelman repeated his success of last week".

398 (377) THE MESSIAH (88) 21st Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Mrs. Alberto Zelman (S), Miss Winnie Mayberry (C), Mr. Percy Blundell (T), Mr. Ernest Sage (B).

All accounts agree on a good performance with the Chorus scoring the honours with "warmth, precision and a greatly improved enunciation". A very large audience.

399 (378) THE MESSIAH (89) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night performance with same principals. The notice "House full" was posted before the concert commenced. The Choir's work again stood out in a fine performance.

1921

400 (379) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (38) 21st Mar., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Madm. Mary Conly (S), Madm. Elva Rogers (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B).
A meritorious performance. "In fact the whole of the forces under Mr. Alberto Zelman's baton may be congratulated on the high standard of the singing and playing". Mr. Fred Collier received high marks for his portrayal of the Prophet.

401 (380) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (39) 25th Mar. *, Town Hall. Extra.
Good Friday night performance. "An immense audience and Mendelssohn's sacred masterpiece was listened to with close attention and obvious pleasure by all who were present".

Congratulations were offered in the Annual Report for the first performance in Melbourne of "The Beatitudes". It was stated that "the Society is receiving the support that it deserves." During the year the Conductor and Secretary gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Taxation and subsequently Vice President, Sir Robert Best drafted a suggested clause to provide for the exemption from Entertainment Tax so far as musical societies were concerned. Regretful reference was made to the passing of Mr. Andrew Black, the noted English basso who had appeared with the Society as soloist. The Treasurer's Report showed a nett profit of £2/7/11 which was transferred to the Accumulated Fund, making the latter £822/13/5. At the Annual Meeting (7/9/31) the Chairman Mr. J. Lang announced that Mr. J. Munro Ross had presented to the Society a complete score and orchestral parts of "The Dream of Gerontius".

402 (-) THE DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berloiz) (7) 13th Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Miss Franceska Duret (Marg.), Mr. H. A. Howett-Worster (Meph.), Mr. George English (Faust), Mr. Joseph Foster (Brander).
Three press accounts (to 11") agreed that a difficult work was performed with credit. Due praise was given for the orchestral playing ("most of them amateurs"). "The greatest bulk of the credit for the comparative success ...must be laid at the feet of Mr. Alberto Zelman... his unbounded enthusiasm alone makes the Philharmonic performances what they are, worthy of the distinguished history of this venerable Society".

403 (382) MISCELLANEOUS (121) 15th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
"Musicmakers" (Elgar), First performance in Melbourne. "Blest Pair of Sirens" (Parry) (3), "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (8), "News from Wydah" (Gardiner) (3), "Homage to Sachs" from Wagner's "The Mastersinger" (1). Overture "The Hebrides" (Mendelssohn) (3), "Dance of the Apprentices" from Wagner's "The Mastersinger" (1).
The only soloist, Madm. Gregor Wood, contributed one item.
There was some criticism of "News", mainly on account of faulty intonation but the other numbers were accorded good marks.

404 (383) THE MESSIAH (90) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Madm. Mary Conly (S) , Miss Dorothy Eyton-Jones (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. J. D. Brownlee (B).
"A very large attendance" included the Society's Patron, the Governor-General, Lord Forster and Lady Forster. "The performance was heard with great attention. .. and received with enthusiasm. ...Much of the (choral) singing was impressive, some brilliant and, occasionally, a little too enthusiastic. ...'For Unto Us' was, unfortunately, encored" despite Mr. Zelman's reluctance to repeat it. Of the soloists, Madm. Conly "carried off the honours". Mr. Brownlee, who made the first of his 8 appearances with the Society, "gave a particularly promising performance". At the close, Sir William Irvine (President) on behalf of the Society tendered a presentation to Mr. Zelman in view of his impending departure for a tour of England and the Continent.

405 (384) THE MESSIAH (91) 24th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.
Christmas Eve performance with the same soloists. It was "on lines rather more serious than have been followed in recent years. A better and deeper mood was struck in the Passion music." The Orchestra was commended for some "impressive work". "Mr. Zelman conducted with much skill and Mr. Steele was at the organ". At both concerts the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra supported the Choir and the association was to continue during the period of Mr. Zelman's Conductorship.

1922

406 (385) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (40) 11th Apr., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Madm. Mary Conly (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Bertram Johnston (T), Mr. Robert Hamblett (B).

A large audience listened attentively; "a large proportion followed the singing, score in hand". Due to the absence in Europe of Mr. Alberto Zelman, Mr. W. F. G. Steele, the Society's Organist, conducted this and subsequent concerts during 1922. Press reports to 8" agree on a meritorious performance. Mr. Steele came through with credit. "The chief defects of his interpretation were the too rigid tempo he adopted and his inability to get any very expressive nuances out of his forces". Mr. Hamblett was criticised for turning more than half-way to the chorus during the Baal scenes: "he sang to them". Miss Isabel Adams took Mr. Steele's place at the organ and so continued for the rest of the year.

407 (386) ELIJAH (41) 14th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.
Good Friday night performance with the same soloists.
The press did not report the performance.

The Annual Report refers to leave of absence granted to Mr. Zelman to enable him to proceed on a tour of Great Britain and the Continent and expressed the Committee's appreciation of Mr. John W. Dawson's control of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, also Mr. Steele's direction of the Easter concerts during Mr. Zelman's absence. The Report noted - "The Society assisted in a complimentary concert (details are not available) to Mr. Zelman and the Committee augmented the proceeds by adding £100 to them." (Choir members and subscribers also contributed to a presentation) .Also noted in the Report-" An amendment of the Income Tax Act may be made whereby musical societies will be exempt from Income Tax. We think that they should also be exempt from Entertainment Tax". (Note: The first mentioned exemption was attained in the following year but it was not until 1945-46-after various applications - that release from Entertainment Tax was obtained). Mr. Claude Smith, Assistant Secretary, was laid aside by a severe illness. Members combined to make him a presentation. The year's accounts showed a loss of £5/0/2 which reduced the Accumulation Fund to £817/13/3.

408 (387) MISCELLANEOUS (122) 31st Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.
Vocal solos. "The Revenge" (Stanford) (1), "The Sunworshippers" (Thomas) (2) .Overture "The Hebrides" (Mendelssohn) (4), "Unfinished Symphony" (Schubert) (1).

Miss Franceska Duret (S), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T).

Two press reports (to 10") agree that the choral items were indifferently rendered - with criticism as to pitch and interpretation. Mr. J. W. Dawson conducted the orchestral items which were creditably performed but in the choral accompaniments lapses were noted.

409 (388) KING OLAF (Elgar) (1) 28th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.
Miss Ella Nichol (S), Mr. J. Gregor Wood (T), Mr. Henry Thomas (B).

A satisfactory performance. Credit was given to all parts but the Orchestra was charged with playing too loudly at times.

410 (389) THE MESSIAH (92) 19th Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.
Miss Annie Caddell (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T), Mr. J. D. Brownlee (B).

A meritorious performance. "Mr. Steele richly deserves admiration. ...He had no easy task and had to deal with a choir dangerously convinced (perhaps) of its knowledge of the work, and he had to control: an orchestra containing some rather wayward material. ...we do not at present possess in Melbourne an orchestra of a really reliable type, capable of playing in time and in tune". Mr. Brownlee was "musicianly and interesting in the bass solos".

411 (390) THE MESSIAH (93) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas Night performance with the same principals to "a large and appreciative audience". Much interest and some discussion followed the Committee's request to the audience "to refrain from applause during the performance of this work". Two press reports took different views as to the matter.

1923

412 (391) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (42) 27th Mar., Town Hall. 4th Sub.
Miss Dorothy Humphreys (S), Miss Eileen Pascoe-Webb (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Joseph Foster (B).

"A generally excellent performance. ...Of the three performing elements -chorus, orchestra and principals, the chorus was easily first". "The orchestral work was satisfactory in the main. Mr. Alberto Zelman ...showed much skill and enthusiasm".

413 (392) ELIJAH (43) 31st Mar.*, Town Hall. Extra.
Good Friday night performance. Only press report noted "a crowded audience".

Mr. Steele's efficient direction of the musical affairs of the Society during most of the year (owing to Mr. Zelman's absence in Europe) was acknowledged in the Annual Report, especially his conduct of the Society's first performance of "King Olaf." The members of the Choir showed their appreciation by subscribing to a testimonial for Mr. Steele which was augmented from the Society's funds. Satisfaction was expressed as to the arrangement by which the Australian Church in Russell Street was made available for rehearsals. (Note: This arrangement has continued to the present day). The Christmas concerts (2) attracted the largest attendance since the memorable performance of "The Messiah" with John McCormack in 1911 in the Exhibition Building." The resultant profit and other revenue increased the Accumulated Fund by £196/16/9 to £1014. At the Annual Meeting (18/9/23) the Chairman, Mr. E. R. Peacock, advocated the setting aside of funds to obtain "a building that would be a temple of music... Here began another effort in the direction of the Society providing a Dome" for itself and music generally. The idea took definite shape in the ensuing year with results that will be noted. The return of Mr. Zelman was indicated by his direction of the Easter concerts. On arrival in Melbourne he and Mrs. Zelman received an enthusiastic reception at Spencer Street Station. The reception was followed by an official welcome in the Melbourne Town Hall, which was jointly arranged by the Society and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra of which he was the Conductor. An enjoyable evening was spent when the members of both bodies contributed musical items. Opportunity was taken by the Society to make a presentation to Mr. Steele (already noted) while the members of the Orchestra did likewise in regard to Mr. Dawson.

Musically, Mr. Zelman's tour was of great interest. In Gennany he had the honour of conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Society in a programme comprising the "New World Symphony" (Dvorak), Overture "In the South" (Elgar) and the "Nutcracker Suite" (Tschaikowsky). Mrs. Zelman was the soloist. His initial reception took place in "the most chilling silence I have ever experienced", but at the conclusion of the first number he was warmly applauded and recalled three times. The remainder of the programme was conducted in a friendly atmosphere with several recalls at the conclusion. Mrs. Zelman excelled herself and was well received. Remembering that 1923 was soon after World I, the "chilling silence" was understandable but it is gratifying to note that musical appreciation triumphed over racial antagonism. Subsequently in London, Mr. Zelman conducted a concert of the London Symphony Orchestra in Queens Hall. Of his meeting with Sir Edward Elgar, he said: "I found him to be a most charming genial English gentleman."

414 (-) FAUST (Gounod) (2) 24th Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Mrs. Alberto Zelman (Marg.), Miss Violet Semple (Martha), Miss Marie Stewart (Siebel), Mr. Victor Baxter (Faust), Mr. Haig Jackson (Valentine), Mr. Alexander Raff (Meph.), Mr. Frank Davies (Wagner).

Four press accounts agree on the excellence of the work of the Chorus with good marks for the Orchestra. "The choir excelled itself; indeed the choral portions of the work were among the most vital and interesting parts of the whole performance. ...The work of the orchestra was, on the whole, eminently satisfactory". "Mr. Zelman was, as ever, an alert and inspiring Conductor". Mr. Raff made the first of his 13 appearances as soloist. A very sad incident has to be noted. Just before Mr. Haigh Jackson sang "The Death of Valentine", Mr. James Milton, first bassoon in the orchestra suddenly collapsed and was carried off the platform dead. It was generally thought at the time that he had merely fainted and the performance proceeded without a break. After the concert was over, the news was circulated and greatly shocked the audience.

415 (-) FAUST (3) 28th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Second performance to a crowded audience. Mr. Henry Thomas, at short notice, took the part of Mephistopheles owing to the illness of Mr. Raff. Another good performance with the Choir predominant.

416 (-) FAUST (4) 30th Jul., Town Hall. Extra.

Third performance.

-- THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS.

A performance had been planned and advertised for November but "in view of the trains and trams not running to time table owing to the Police strike, it was resolved to postpone the concert indefinitely". This is the first record of the postponement of an advertised concert.

417 (396) THE MESSIAH (94) 18th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Olive Tolstrup (S), Miss Victoria Anderson (C), Mr. John Price (T), Mr. Francis Halls (B).

Four press reports indicate a moderately successful performance but a crowded audience was not in a critical mood. The printed programme requested the audience to refrain from applause during the performance. A large proportion complied with the request but some disregarded it with the result that "after almost every item, there was a depressing trickle of applause". Miss Anderson made the first of her 10 appearances as soloist.

418 (397) THE MESSIAH (95) 22nd Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance. A large audience included the Governor-General and Lady Foster and suite. "Marked improvement in most respects was shown. ..the aspects of the work which afforded most enjoyment were the buoyant choral singing...." Mr. Zelman's request to refrain from applause during the work was honoured; the audience paid a fine tribute at the end.

419 (398) THE MESSIAH (96) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night performance. Mr. Alexander replaced Mr. Francis Halls who had been engaged by the Sydney Philharmonic Society. The press did not report the performance.

1924

420 (399) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (44) 15th Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Annie Caddell (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Edwin E. Hooke (T), Mr. Haig Jackson (B).

A large audience. Press accounts to 9" had much praise for the Choir and its Conductor. "The Orchestra, after an ambiguous opening chord. ..played the overture very effectively. ...Their work elsewhere was curiously uneven; at its best, it was very good indeed; at its worst, it was somewhat disorderly". The "Sun" said "Tenors are short on the Philharmonic market and when the loud noises were on, they were henpecked to the point of obliteration by the multitudinous sopranos. In the quieter parts they demonstrated a rather remarkable capacity for keeping up the pitch, for which they must be greatly commended". Mr. Haig Jackson did not measure quite up to the requirements of the part of the Prophet.

421 (400) ELIJAH (45) 18th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night performance with the same Principals.

There was a crowded audience. "An exceedingly fine rendition of this oratorio".

422 (401) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (1) 21st Jun., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Essie Ackland (C), Mr. T. H. Downie (T), Mr. Leslie MacCallum (B).

Generally a good performance though, at times, the emotional quality was lacking. There were good marks for the Orchestra. " ...the performance made a deep Impression on the huge audience and it is a pity there is to be no repetition".

For the first time three performances of "The Messiah" were given in December, and each was largely attended. The resultant profit was about £400 and was mainly instrumental in the addition of £349/17/10 to the Accumulation Fund, making it £1329/10/1. Seven concerts in the year indicated an active, hardworking Society and an appreciative public. Immediately following the Annual Meeting (16/9/24), an Extraordinary General Meeting was held at which revised Articles of Association were adopted on the motion of the Chairman, Sir Robert Best (one of the Vice Presidents). Included in the Articles was provision for a Property Board; a move to facilitate the carrying out of other resolutions which were also carried. Briefly they related to an ambitious proposal to raise funds for the building of a handsome Philharmonic Hall at an estimated cost of between £125,000 and £155,000. The moving spirit was Mr. E. R. Peacock, one of the Vice Presidents, who presented a financial scheme and architect's plans prepared at his own expense. To raise funds, it was proposed to invite subscriptions for seats in the proposed hall at £100 each for a 99 years lease thereof. To further the scheme, a Building Committee was elected and £1,000 of the Society's funds were earmarked for the purpose.

423 (402) THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (Wagner) (3) 19th Aug., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Madm. A. Goosens-Viceroy (Senta), Miss Dorothy Murdoch (Mary), Mr. Leslie MacCallum (Van Der Decken), Mr. S. Laslett-Exton (Erik), Mr. J. H. Richards (Daland), Mr. W. L. Taylor (Steersman).

Despite the difficulties in presenting such a work, four press accounts agreed that it was a meritorious performance. All sections received a meed of praise. The "Argus" said "...Mr. Alberto Zelman deserves the thanks of both the musical public and of Richard Wagner himself for arranging the very successful concert performance".

424 (403) THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (4) 23rd Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance with the same principals. A crowded audience. "Every moment was enjoyed. ..the chorus singing being excellent. ..and the orchestral playing eminently satisfactory".

425 (404) ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Handel) (15) 19th Nov., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Preceded by "Ballade in A Minor" (Coleridge-Taylor) (7).

Miss Mabel White (S), Miss Violet Semple (C), Mr. Albert E. Emery (T), Mr. Alexander Raff (B), Mr. A. R. Loveless (B).

The "Age" report said, inter alia, "Last night's performance cannot but be regarded as disappointing. ..the instrumental work was much below the usual standard". Some choruses were praised, others criticised. The Principals also fell short of success. The "Argus" account went much further. After conceding that the Orchestra did admirably in the Balade - "neither the chorus nor the orchestra nor the principals (with one or two possible exceptions) showed any real knowledge of the work in hand", and proceeded to even sharper criticism. Members conceded that the performance was below standard but certainly not to the extent of the "Argus" report.

426 (405) THE MESSIAH (97) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Amy Castles (S), Miss Victoria Anderson (C), Mr. Norman W. Bennett (T), Mr. Thexton Morphett (B). "The Town Hall was nearly filled with a deeply appreciative audience." Press reports to 10" gave qualified praise for the Choir and some criticism of the Orchestra. Miss Castles was not altogether successful - "One had oratorio from the point of view of the operatic singer".

427 (406) THE MESSIAH (98) 23rd Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Second performance with the same principals. "Again a very large audience". An improved performance.

428 (407) THE MESSIAH (99) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night performance. "For the third time there was a full house". The performance was excellent throughout". The same Principals appeared.

1925

429 (408) ELIJAH (46) 10th Apr.*, Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Madm. Mary Conly (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. T. H. Downie (T), Mr. Alexander Raff (B). "A great audience". Press reports indicate fine choral singing. "There were, in fact, many inspiring moments. Some of these were provided by the choir". "A feature of the performance was the excellent assistance given by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra". Mr. Raff "gave a greatly improved performance" and the other Principals were given high marks.

The Annual Report noted the destruction of the Town Hall by fire in January and the necessity of holding the Easter concert in the Exhibition Building which was arranged "with some trepidation", also that suggestions relative to the choir seating in the new hall had been laid before the City Council. The Report stated that the resolutions passed at the previous Annual Meeting with regard to the projected Philharmonic Hall had been confirmed at a further Extraordinary Meeting held in April and that the Articles of Association had been amended; A Philharmonic Hall Company had been registered, "and will take the place of the Property Board"; A Board of Directors (9) of the new company had been elected. The Society's congratulations were extended to Sir Aaron Danks (one of the Vice Presidents) upon being knighted by H.M. The King. Triennial test was held and the Admission Committee's Report disclosed a satisfactory state of the Choir. On the Committee's recommendation, several members were retired. The Treasurer's Report revealed a loss of £34/7/11 after payment of £71/6/4 "preliminary expenses re Philharmony Hall" and that Accumulated Fund stood at £1329/10/1.

430 (-) LOHENGRIN (Wagner) (1) 10th Aug., Auditorium. 1st Sub.

Miss Annie Caddell (Elsa) , Miss Vera Bedford (Ortrud) , Mr. Radcliffe Hawley (Lohengrin), Mr. Alexander Raff (The King), Mr. Edgar Fortesque (Count), Mr. Ernest Thompson (Herald) .

"A very large audience". All reports tendered praise as to sections of the work of Choir and Principals and pointed out various deficiencies. The Orchestra was rated short of rehearsal and, in one instance, was described as "the villain of the piece. ..not that it failed to achieve good and even brilliant results in places". An accurate and informative programme with the full text was appreciated by listeners.

431 (-) LOHENGRIN (Wagner) (2) 12th Aug., Auditorium. Extra.

Repeat performance with same Principals except Mr. Radcliffe Hawley who was absent through illness. There was "a packed house". "As a result of the experiences on Monday evening, the celebrated work was rendered with added efficiency and impressiveness". In the absence of Lohengrin "Mr. Zelman performed the amazing feat of singing the arduous title role as well as conducting the chorus of 250 voices and the orchestra of 80 instrumentalists and so saved the situation. The conductor's voice and his enumeration of the words was perfectly audible and satisfactory. ...Mr. Zelman ...was enthusiastically applauded throughout the evening".

432 (411) THE CREATION (Haydn) (28) 7th Dec., Auditorium. 2nd Sub.

Miss Violet Jackson (S), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T), Mr. Alexander Raft (B).

"An immense and enthusiastic audience". Generally a meritorious performance. Some "very creditable choral singing" but comment as to the weight of the orchestral playing.

433 (412) THE MESSIAH (100) 22nd Dec., Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Miss Dorothy Humphreys (S), Madm. Clara Butt (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Kennerly Rumford (B).

A vast audience listened to the Society's hundredth performance which "was remarkable for the devotional spirit which pervaded the whole of the performance - choir, orchestra and soloists alike responding to the sublime beauty and dignity of the music and the grandeur of the text". Madm. Clara Butt's singing was very impressive and she and her husband "by the clarity and naturalness of their enunciation emphasised the beauty of the words as well as of the music".

During the interval, Sir Robert Best on behalf of the members presented Mr. Alberto Zelman with a laurel wreath to mark his 30th appearance as Conductor as well as the Society's hundredth performance of the oratorio.

434 (413) THE MESSIAH (101) 25th Dec., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.

Christmas night presentation with the same Soloists.

"The performance was wholly successful throughout. Mr. Alberto Zelman conducted, and much praise is due to him for the care and skill which he devoted to ensure a performance of exceptionally high merit". This was the Society's first concert to be broadcast.

1926

435 (414) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (47) 2nd Apr. *, Exhibition Bldg. 4th Sub.

Madm. Mary Conly (S), Miss Victoria Anderson (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Roy Warren (B).

"Thousands of people flocked to the Exhibition Bldg. last night". The "standard of the chorus work was of a consistently high level". "The orchestral music was capitally done on the whole". Madm. Conly maintained her high reputation as a singer of oratorio while Mr. Roy Warren, if not equal to a full declamation of the part of the Prophet, gave a capable account. This was the Society's second concert to be broadcast. At the interval, the Conductor announced over the air that the broadcast was made without fee and invited listeners to make a contribution to the Society's funds. An appreciable sum was subsequently received.

The Annual Report referred to Mr. Zelman's 'heroic and unique act of singing the whole of the solo tenor part' in the 'Lohengrin' concert which has already been noted. The Secretary, Mr. R. J. Oehr, was granted 9 months leave of absence to make a trip overseas and left in January. During his absence, Mr. D. N. Connal capably attended to the secretarial duties. A sign of the times was the permission given to the broadcasting of the Society's concerts for which appreciation was expressed by listeners in all States of the Commonwealth and New Zealand. Permission was given without fee or reward except as was tendered voluntarily by some listeners. In reporting on the activities of the Philharmonic Hall Company, it was stated that a deputation waited on the Premier, requesting the grant of a site upon which to erect a music hall. A reply indicated that while the Government was sympathetic; "the request could not be acceded to." The failure to secure a site was a death-blow to the project to secure a hall for the Society's use. The project, launched so hopefully, was abandoned and steps were taken to legally wind up the Philharmonic Hall Company. So ended another of the serious attempts by the Society. Incidentally, after a century of continuous existence, the Society is still without a "Home" and Melbourne without an appropriate music hall. It is of interest to note that the block of ground south of the Yarra River sought by the Society has since been reserved (with adjacent ground) by the Government as a site for the erection of buildings devoted to cultural purposes. The handling of the project led to an unfortunate cleavage in the Committee and a regrettable outcome was the resignation of several valuable officers: Mr. J. Munro Ross, Vice President, Mr. W. M. Stewart, Hon. Treasurer, Rev. J. H. Dabb and Mr. John Lang. Mr. Ross had been connected with the Society since 1881 in various capacities and Mr. Stewart had been Treasurer since 1919. Mr. W. B. Rashleigh was appointed to Mr. Stewart's place. The Treasurer's Report showed a loss of £19/10/11 and Accumulated Fund at £909/6/2 after meeting an advance to the Philharmonic Hall Company. After the winding-up of the Company, a sum approximating to the advance was refunded a few years later.

436 (-) FAUST (Gounod) (5) 19th Jul., Auditorium. 1st Sub.

Miss Elsy Treweek (Marg.), Miss Viola Morris (Siebel), Miss Violet Semple (Martha), Mr. W. J. Cadzow (Faust), Mr. Ernest Sage (Val.), Mr. Alexander Raff (Meph.), Mr. Arthur Homer (Wagner).

In the absence of Mr. Zelman through illness, the direction devolved upon Mr. W. F. G. Steele, the Society's Organist. Press reports to 9" agree on a good performance with excellent choral and orchestral work

although the latter's accompaniments were considered too heavy at times. In a good cast of Soloists Miss Elsy Treweek (who sang without a score) was outstanding. Mr. Alexander Raff was commended as was Mr. Steele's direction. Mr. Zelman who sat in the gallery as a spectator was accorded an ovation.

437 (-) FAUST (Gounod) (6) 26th Jul., Auditorium. Extra.
Repeat performance with same Principals.

438 (-) FAUST (Gounod) (7) 28th Jul., Auditorium. Extra.
Third performance with the same Principals. As might be expected, the second and third performances showed marked improvement on the first in all respects. The attendances were good and listeners were very appreciative. Miss Treweek again delighted her hearers, the Choir members thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the Orchestra settled down to more effective work.

439 (416) THE MESSIAH (102) 20th Dec., Auditorium. 2nd Sub.
Madm. A. Goosens-Viceroy (S), Miss Ida Walker (C), Mr. Norman Bennett (T), Mr. Ernest Sage (B).
An "impressive" performance. "The work of the welltrained Choir was throughout vigilant, spirited and pure in tone". "The orchestra accompanied with due regard to effect in the choruses. The soloists were not so highly favoured". "Miss Adams capably supplied the organ part on a small reed instrument. Mr. Zelman was commended for his part but the speed of his tempi was commented upon, unfavourably. The Soprano Soloist from Sydney, Madm. A. Goosens-Viceroy was also commended.

440 (417) THE MESSIAH (103) 25th Dec., Exhibition Bldg. Extra.
Christmas night performance with the same Principals.
Press accounts indicate a good performance which followed closely the interpretation of the previous concert. Mr. Zelman was accorded praise, albeit his tempi in some choruses was criticised.

Members of the Society had no premonition on Christmas night that Mr. Zelman had conducted his last concert. After the usual break in January he resumed rehearsal - "Elijah" for Easter-but suddenly became ill and died on 3rd March, 1927, aged 52; the only Conductor to die in office. By his death the musical world of Melbourne lost an enthusiastic and acknowledged leader and the Society a talented Conductor. Many members attended the funeral to the Box Hill Cemetery, after a service at the Independent Church, Collins Street. at which he was choir-master. Into his all-too-brief life he compressed an immense amount of work and study. Founder of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestral League, the Melbourne String Quartette and British Music Quartette, he found time to preside over the Musical Society of Victoria and to take part in other musical activities. As already noted, he came to the Society fully qualified as an orchestral conductor and any deficiencies as a choral leader were soon surmounted. Although his tenure of 16 years as the Society's Conductor saw but two major choral works introduced to Melbourne, it should be borne in mind that it covered the disturbed years of the First World War and after. Nevertheless, his record with the Society is an extremely impressive one - both as to versatility and quantity - as will be seen from the subjoined summary. In retrospect. it is clear that his talents met in full the urge for higher standards in musical conception and performance and he certainly advanced the Society along the lines indicated. The obtaining of large audiences at double and triple performances of 'The Messiah' and double performances of 'Elijah' bespeaks more than a high public appreciation of those works. *In this connection, the respective seating capacities of the former and present Town Hall should be borne in mind. Excluding the organ gallery in each case -Old Town Hall, 1758. Present Hall 2650.* The Society remembers him with deep gratitude and affection; an undoubted musician and Leader who gave to his office "full measure, pressed down and running over." A summary of works covered by this chapter follows.

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	31
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	15
The Flying Dutchman	(Wagner)	4
Lohengrin	(Wagner)	2
The Creation	(Haydn)	4
Damnation of Faust	(Berloiz)	2
Caractacus	(Elgar)	3
Faust	(Gounod)	3
The Beatitudes	(Franck)	2
Mors et Vita	(Gounod)	2
st. Matthew Passion	(Bach)	1
The Kingdom	(Elgar)	1
The Apostles	(Elgar)	1
The Golden Legend	(Sullivan)	1

Judas Maccabaeus	(Handel)	1
Israel in Egypt	(Handel)	1
St. Paul	(Mendelssohn)	1
The Dream of Gerontius	(Elgar)	1
Miscellaneous		13
89		
Assisted at other concerts:		
In aid of War Funds	4	
Municipal Concert	3	
Official Peace Celebrations	1	
Visit of Prince of Wales	1	
Memorial Service	1	<u>10</u>
		99
Conducted by Mr. W. F. G. Steele:		
Elijah (Mr. Zelman absent in Europe)		2
The Messiah (Mr. Zelman absent in Europe)		2
King Olaf (Mr. Zelman absent in Europe)		1
Miscellaneous (Mr. Zelman absent in Europe)		<u>1</u>
Faust (Mr. Zelman ill)		<u>103</u>
		<u>108</u>

On Sunday afternoon, 13th March, in the Auditorium, a memorial service was held. The building was filled by an audience, all saddened and some tear-stained, intent on paying a tribute of respect and affection for Mr. Zelman. The Rev. J. E. James of the Collins Street Independent Church delivered an appropriate address in which he said that it was fitting that the tribute being paid to the life and work of Mr. Zelman should be paid chiefly in music. The Society's Choir and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra joined forces in rendering "O, Gladsome Light", from Sullivan's "Golden Legend" (9), "He, Watching over Israel" and "He Shall Give His Angels Charge Over Thee" from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" (6), "The Righteous Shall Enter Into Glory Eternal", a chorus from Gounod's "Mors et Vita" (5) (Soloist-Miss Annie Caddell). The Orchestra played Adagietto from "L'arlesienne Suite" (Bizet) (1). Mr. George Peake was the Conductor.

CHAPTER XII. BERNARD HEINZE'S CONDUCTORSHIP (1)

The unexpected death of Mr. Alberto Zelman placed the Committee in a position of great difficulty, especially as the Easter concert was but six weeks distant. After careful consideration, Professor Bernard Heinze, Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne University, was approached and he agreed to the suggestion to conduct a performance of "Elijah" as had been planned and which work was in rehearsal.

Although formally introduced to the Choir, the Professor was far from being a stranger. Born at Shepparton, Victoria, he had made his musical debut at the early age of 9 as a violinist at a concert in the Melbourne Town Hall, in 1903. His education at St. Patrick's College, Ballarat and the Melbourne University was followed by musical studies at the Royal College of Music, London; Schola Cantorum, Paris, (where he received the Degre Superieur) and studies in Berlin under Willy Hess. During the First World War, he answered the Call and served as a commissioned officer in the Royal Artillery of the British Army from 1915 to 1920. Returning to Australia he was appointed to the academic staff of the Melbourne University in 1924; during which year he made his debut as Conductor of an orchestra-The University Symphony Orchestra. The following year saw him elevated to the coveted Ormond Chair of Music at the Melbourne University.

Up to this point, the Professor's experience had not included control of choral performances. However, the Committee felt that this lack of experience was not an insuperable barrier, but rather one that would be surmounted. Subsequent association with the Society amply justified the Committee's expectations. After the Easter concert there was no thought, but to confirm the tentative arrangement and thus the Professor began his long and, on the whole, extremely happy association with the Society. Steadily surmounting the difficulties and dangers attendant on the conduct of a large choral body in combination with a large orchestra, he proceeded from strength to strength. In the process and apart from other achievements (to be enumerated), he established a record of length of service beyond that of any of his predecessors. Very appropriately, the Society's completion of a century of continuous service as a musical body found Sir Bernard directing its musical activities and, it is confidently hoped, to even greater achievements. The long, happy and fruitful association of Society and Conductor over 27 years will be unfolded in the following pages.

1927

441 (418) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) 15th Apr.*, Exhibition Bldg. 3rd Sub.

Miss Annie Caddell (S), Miss Victoria Anderson (C), Mr. Syd. L. Exton (T), Mr. Raymond Ellis (B).

An "enormous attendance". Though not without faults, the performance was described as "well up to Philharmonic standards". Two accounts had much praise for Mr. Raymond Ellis; one noted that his rendition of the Prophet "recalled the interpretations of Andrew Black and Horace Stevens" but a third remarked "His Elijah can hardly be called convincing". All commended the new Conductor's first appearance with the Society - "Professor Heinze has shown beyond doubt that his power and facility in the art of conducting embraces the choral as well as the purely orchestral forces. ...To his marshalling of so many performers and welding them into an active organic whole, the performance owed its success".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 28th Apr., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Reception to the Duke and Duchess of York by the Government of Victoria. Fourteen choirs and four orchestras combined to render choral and orchestral items. Choral numbers were "An Australian Anthem" (Wm. G. James) (1), "Hail Bright Abode" from Wagner's "Tannhauser" (7), "The Heavens Are Telling" (Haydn's "Creation") 1.14), "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (22), "Thanks Be to God" and "Be Not Afraid" (Mendelssohn's "Elijah") (7). Six Conductors shared the duties of direction – Professor Bernard Heinze, Dr. A. E. Floyd, Mr. Mansley Greer, Mr. Graham Burgin, Mr. George English and Mr. Wm. G. James. The Society's Choir was strongly represented.

442 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (123) 27th Jun., Auditorium. 4th Sub.

"Requiem" (Brahms) (1), Pianoforte Concerto in A Major (Mozart) (1), Overture "Ruy Blas" (Mendelssohn) (2).

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Mr. Frank Thomas (B), Miss Margaret Sutherland (P'st) .

Good attendance. Press reports indicated insufficient rehearsal as to both Choir and Orchestra and a performance that did not reach the requirements of the "Requiem". Miss Sutherland's playing of the Concerto received unstinted praise. The "Argus" report referred to Professor Heinze as "an enthusiastic and skilful Conductor". With this concert, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's association with the Society came to an end.

The Annual Report noted the passing of the Society's Conductor, Mr. Alberto Zelman, with profound regret. Also noted was the Society's good fortune in securing the services of Professor Bernard Heinze as Conductor. Mr. H. Welsford Smithers was appointed to assist the Conductor. On his departure to take up a position in New York, Mr. W. F. G. Steele, Deputy Conductor and Organist was accorded a farewell social and was handed a cheque in appreciation of his services. Mr. R. J. Oehr returned from a world tour in September and was tendered a "welcome home." The Treasurer's Report disclosed a loss of £481/11/1 due mainly to the "Messiah" concert resulting in a loss instead of the usual substantial profit. The loss was attributed to a very hot night and the fact that the performance was broadcast. The Accumulated Fund stood at £427/15/1.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 25th Aug., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Vocal solos, choruses and orchestral items in a programme in aid of "The Million Shilling Appeal for Permanent Orchestra". The Society's Chorus joined with other choral bodies in rendering "Be Not Afraid" and "Thanks Be to God" from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" (8) and "Hallelujah" from Handel's "Messiah" (23) Professor Bernard Heinze and Mr. Fritz Hart shared the duties of Conductor.

443 (420) MISCELLANEOUS (124) 30th Nov., Auditorium. 1st Sub.

"Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" and "Death of Minnehaha" (Coleridge-Taylor) (3) , "Choral Fantasia" (Beethoven) (9).

Miss Viola Morris (S), Mr. John D. Sullivan (T), Mr. H. Sanderson (B), Miss Margaret Sutherland (P'st). On the whole, an excellent performance of the Hiawatha numbers; praise far outweighed blame. Professor Bernard Heinze conducted throughout with "authority and easy mastery". Miss Margaret Sutherland was commended for her solo work in the "Fantasia" which received little note from the critics. Orchestral support was rendered by the University Symphony Orchestra which so continued for 5 years.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 15th Dec., New Town Hall. Assisted.

Concert given by the City Council to mark the opening of the new Hall. In a programme of vocal and instrumental solos, the Choir assisted with an excerpt from "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" (Coleridge-Taylor) (1).

444 (421) THE MESSIAH (104) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Ella Kingston (S), Miss Victoria Anderson (C), Mr. Joseph Hislop (T), Mr. Oliver King (B). The new hall was filled to capacity. Little was said as to the hall's acoustics. The performance received both criticism and praise. Surprise was expressed at the Conductor's action in placing "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth" before the "Hallelujah" and finishing the performance at that great chorus. Mr. Joseph Hislop's rendering of the tenor solos and Mr. Oliver King's of the bass solos were specially praised. During the interval the Choir presented Professor Bernard Heinze with a laurel wreath. Owing to the absence of an organ, Mr. H. Welsford Smithers officiated on a temporary instrument.

445 (422) THE MESSIAH (105) 24th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night rendering with the same Principals.

"The performance was again on a high standard with some improvements in the chorus and orchestral work". The "Argus" report continued "Much comment, some of it a trifle acrimonious, and even censorious, has been caused by the fact that Professor Bernard Heinze chose to conclude the performances both on Saturday and on the previous Tuesday with the 'Hallelujah' chorus. As a matter of fact this procedure deserves commendation.

446 (423) MISCELLANEOUS (125) 6th Apr.*, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Solos and choruses from "Mors et Vita" (Gounod) (5), Good Friday Music (1) and the Grail Scene (1) from "Parsifal" (Wagner). Claimed to be first performance in Melbourne.

Miss Muriel Cheek (S), Mr. Norman Bennett (T), Mr. Raymond Ellis (B) ; in the Grail Scene Mr. Raymond Ellis and Mr. Alexander Raff as Amfortas and Gurnemanz respectively.

The Society was commended on making a decided change for its Easter concert. All accounts agree on the excellence of the whole performance. "Great praise is due to Professor Bernard Heinze and his collaboration in the choir, orchestra and soloists. ..." A press correspondent disputed the claim as to first performance in respect to the Grail Scene music, stating that it was performed 30 years earlier by the Melbourne Liedertafel under Mr. H. J. King.

447 (424) MISCELLANEOUS (126) 27th Jun., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

"Ode to a Grecian Urn" (Holst). First performance in Melbourne. "A Song of Destiny" (Brahms) (9), "The Banner of St. George" (Elgar) (3). Orchestral - Three Dances from the music to "Henry VIII" (German) (1).

The Society was again commended on its choice of items. The Brahms number was "on the whole, admirably done". Elgar's composition was given "to the complete satisfaction of the enthusiastic audience" and as to Holst's setting of Keats' poem "Professor Bernard Heinze and the Society deserve credit for the degree of success obtained". The "Henry VIII" dances "went with a splendid swing and it was clear that the audience found them very comforting after Mr. Holst's enigmas". Their inclusion was intended as a recognition of the well-deserved honour of knighthood recently conferred on the Composer by H.M. The King. "A Song of Destiny" was given in memory of the late Sir Aaron Danks, a generous benefactor of the Society and Vice President 1909-1928.

"During the year" the Annual Report noted "The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra...intimated that they could not continue to play at the Society's concert owing to the difficulties in the way of rehearsals, etc...." The Committee forwarded a letter conveying their appreciation of the services of the orchestra over many years. The Committee then approached the University Symphony Orchestra who agreed to be associated with the Society in regard to orchestral services; the first combination taking place, as recorded, at the first subscription concert. Also noted was the Committee's regret that the new Town Hall is not altogether suitable for concert purposes, mainly because of insufficient and improper seating for the Choir. And this, notwithstanding efforts by the Musical Societies during the rebuilding to induce the City Council to observe suggestions put forward. Also recorded was "the very great loss sustained in the death of Sir Aaron Danks, K.B., a Vice President for 19 years and a generous benefactor to the Society." The triennial test of voices was held and a few members were retired. Due mainly to a falling off of subscriptions, the year's accounts showed a loss of £201/7/1 although all concerts, save the Christmas concerts, showed substantial losses. Accumulated Fund declined to £226/8/0.

448 (425) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (49) 15th Sep., Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Dorothy Humphreys (S), Miss Isabel Biddell (C), Mr. Norman Bennett (T), Mr. John Brownlee (B). Press reports extended to 19". The Choir's work was praised in parts; criticised in others. Generally the reports considered the orchestral performance held many faults. Taking David Ffrangeon Davies and Horace Stevens as standards, the "Argus" view was that "Mr. John Brownlee's admirers and well-wishers may well feel that he is in some ways fitted to join this great succession but not on the terms of the performance on Saturday evening". Other accounts gave a much more favourable version.

449 (426) DAMNATION OF FAUST (Berlioz) (8) 25th Sep., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Elizabeth Pinschof (Marg.), Mr. Gregor Wood (Faust), Mr. Walter Kingsley (Meph.), Mr. James M. Hill (Brander).

The work was chosen as a result of a plebiscite of the Choir. More than one press report referred to insufficient rehearsal and a performance which suffered accordingly. "Professor Heinze strove to impart a regulated animation to the drama. ...His efforts were responsible for such success as was attained. ...the unequal rendition aroused no great amount of enthusiasm".

450 (427) THE MESSIAH (106) 18th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Dorothy Humphreys (S), Miss Dawn Harding (C), Mr. Robert Harper (T), Mr. Thomas George (B). During the absence oversea of Professor Bernard Heinze, Mr. W. F. G. Steele conducted this and the following concert. His conduct of both was highly commended. Press accounts to 14" generally spoke well of the work of Choir and Orchestra. Mr. Robert Harper, a tenor from Sydney, was accorded very high praise. Mr. Thomas George Undertook the bass part at short notice but was approved by the audience.

451 (428) THE MESSIAH (107) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night performance with the same Soloists except that Mr. Victor Harding replaced Mr. Thomas George. "Great enthusiasm was shown by the large audience". As in the previous performance, Miss Isabel Adams "filled in the organ parts on a reed instrument".

1929

452 (429) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (50) 26th Mar., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Evelyn Scotney (S), Miss Gertrude Hutton (C), Mr. Colin Thompson (T), Mr. Herold Kyng (B). Press reports to 14" while extending praise to the Chorus pointed out various shortcomings, particularly in a false start in "Yet Doth the Lord See It Not" which "Professor Heinze found it expedient to start again, then secured one of the finest offerings of the night". "The orchestra, once an independent entity, has now .learnt to accommodate itself to the chorus and to accompanying soloists with a very fair amount of consideration". Madm. Evelyn Scotney sang the soprano role "with every sense of fervour and refinement". Qualified praise was extended to the part of the Prophet.

453 (430) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (51) 29th Mar.*. Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night rendition with the same Soloists.

"Professor Heinze conducted the programme, securing from his numerous forces a praiseworthy rendition of Mendelssohn's glorious work. The vast audience showed every sign of appreciating the oratorio".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 10th Jun., Wilson Hall. Assisted.

An orchestral and choral concert given by the Chancellor of the University of Melbourne as a farewell to the Commissioner-General for Australia in U.S.A. and Mrs. Herbert Brooks. The Choir assisted with "As Torrents in Summer" from "King Olaf" (2) and "It Comes from the Misty Ages" from "The Banner of St. George" (6) both Elgar compositions.

454 (431) HIAWATHA (Coleridge-Taylor) (1) 9th Jul., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Madm. Joy McArden (S), Mr. Edwin Beachcroft (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

The Society's first performance of the trilogy. Press accounts reached 12" and all acclaimed the singing of Mr. Harold Williams. "Singing from memory, he lived the part, giving positively electrical force and intensity to many passages". Madm. Joy McArden was commended. "At certain points the chorus and orchestra did really good work" but criticism as to tone colour, articulation and rhythm were noted. It was the first of Mr. Williams' 10 appearances with the Society as a soloist.

The Annual Report again referred to the unsatisfactory seating for the choir at the Town Hall - "Despite numerous representations to the City Council, nothing has been done." To aid the "Million Shilling Fund" for the establishment of a permanent orchestra in Melbourne, members of the Society gave an American Tea in Melba Hall in July by which £26/5/0 was raised. During the year several short programmes of miscellaneous items were broadcast from the Australian Church on rehearsal nights (Tuesdays). Particulars are stated in the Appendix. Financially, the year's work showed a loss of £197/6/0 due mainly to a loss of £244/10/7 on the first subscription concert and reduced profit on the second. Accumulated Fund declined to £29/2/0.

455 (432) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (52) 10th Aug., Town Hall. Extra.

Madm. Mary Conly (S), Madm. Gregor Wood (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

The outstanding feature of the performance was Mr. Harold Williams' portrayal of the Prophet. Singing entirely from memory he dominated the scene but never degenerated into the theatrical. Praise for the Choir was qualified although an improvement on the Easter performance was noted. Miss Isabel Adams presided efficiently at the organ.

456 (433) MISCELLANEOUS (127) 28th Sep., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Overture - "The Marriage of Figaro" (Mozart) (2), Pianoforte Concerto No.4 in G Major (Beethoven) (1), Choral Symphony (Beethoven) (4).

Miss Merna Stewart (S), Miss Cecily Kelly (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Robert Nicholson (B), Mr. Edward Goll (P'st).

The concert was given jointly with University Orchestra's final concert of the celebrity series 1929. The audience completely filled the hall. "The Ninth Symphony is too unfamiliar in Melbourne to expect an adequate performance. Despite the imperfections of the rendering, the grandeur of Beethoven's conception could be readily estimated". The Society was commended for presenting the Symphony. Praise was accorded the other items on the programme.

457 (434) THE MESSIAH (108) 21st Oct., Town Hall. Extra.

Miss Dorothy Humphreys (S), Miss Adele McKay (C), Mr. Edwin Hooke (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

Press accounts to 12" noted a good performance although defects were observed, including "the traditional wrong notes in 'He Trusted in God' did not fail to make an appearance". In an acknowledged strong caste of Soloists, Mr. Harold Williams was highly commended. "The huge audience was stirred to great enthusiasm, particularly after "The Trumpet Shall Sound" with Mr. Percy Code as trumpeter. This air has not been heard for a long time and when some years ago it was attempted, the audience was sorry that the trumpet did sound". Mr. Steele at the organ gave a fine finish to the performance.

458 (435) THE MESSIAH (109) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Violet Jackson (S), Miss Adele McKay (C), Mr. Russell Callow (T), Mr. Robert Nicholson (B).

"A large attendance -receptive and responsive". "The choir at its best sang splendidly. There was a genuine thrill, for example, 'Glory to God'. ...The enunciation was almost always excellent". "The University Symphony Orchestra is becoming acquainted with the work and thus qualifying itself for giving an efficient reading". All the Soloists received high marks and Mr. Percy Code again thrilled with his obligato to "The Trumpet Shall Sound". Mr. Steele's work at the organ was highly praised.

1930

459 (435) MISCELLANEOUS (128) 15th Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Good Friday Music (2) and Grail Scene from "Parsifal" (2) (Wagner), "Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (5).

Mr. Robert Nicholson (Gurnemanz and Titurel), Mr. Alan Mitchell (Parsifal), Mr. Nicolai Nadejine (Amfortas), "Stabat Mater". Miss Mona Nugent (S), Miss Freda Colquhoun (C), Mr. Alan Mitchell (T), Mr. Nicolai Nadejine (B).

Of the "Stabat Mater" the "Age" account of 10" noted "The combined forces under Professor Heinze gave – on the whole a reverent exposition, estimating its inspirational quality and making many telling effects in the beautiful choruses. Reserved and rapturous phases were well distinguished" with high marks for the Soloists. As to the Good Friday Music - "though commendable, the Good Friday performance will doubtless improve on last night's rendering". Of the Grail Scene a generally favourable report. "The orchestra too often fell below its best level during the evening". The "Argus" account, after noting "a remarkably scanty audience" and some good work, was highly critical of the performance as a whole.

460 (436) MISCELLANEOUS (129) 18th Apr.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night concert. Repetition of previous programme with same Soloists. The "Age" account indicated a greatly improved performance in all respects. "The audience appeared to feel that no more appropriate or consoling music could be heard at the close of a solemn day than the inspired strains of the "Parsifal" excerpt and Dvorak's beautiful setting of "Passion Hymn". Unfortunately, the Easter concerts resulted in a loss of £182/16/4.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 26th Apr., Town Hall. Assisted.

A concert given by the University Symphony Orchestra in aid of unemployed musicians. Mr. Henri Penn played the Pianoforte Concerto in B Flat Minor (Tschaikowsky). The Choir rendered "For Unto Us a Child is Born" (8) and "Hallelujah" (24) from "The Messiah" and "As Torrents in Summer" from Elgar's "King Olaf" (4).

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 15th Jul., Town Hall. Assisted.

The University Symphony Orchestra's third celebrity concert. The Choir assisted with "The Night is Calm" from Sullivan's "Golden Legend" (11) and "Inflamatus" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater" (7) with Miss Florence Austral as Soloist.

461 (437) FAUST (Gounod) (8) 29th Jul., Auditorium. 4th Sub.

Miss May Craven (Marg.), Miss Violet Jackson (Siebel), Miss Dawn Harding (Martha), Mr. Victor Baxter (Faust), Mr. C. J. Gardiner-Bradley (Val.), Mr. Herold Kyng (Meph.), Mr. Harold G. Murphy (Wag.).

Overall a good performance as a concert rendition - judging from the press accounts extending to 13".

Generally the Soloists were given high marks. Professor Heinze conducted with authority and brought about some fine climaxes although "his tempi were not always well judged".

During the year Mr. H. Welsford Smithers resigned and

Mr. W. G. James was elected in his place. Mr. R. J. Oehr completed 25 years service as Secretary of the Society. The Annual Report recorded with great regret the death of Mr. W. F. G. Steele the Society's Organist which took place during choir practice at Scots Church of which he was organist. Mr. Steele served the Society for 16 years and at times acted as Conductor. His long service and the fine quality of his service is remembered with gratitude. Financially, the year was a disappointing one; a loss of £214/18/3- "principally due to the heavy loss on the Easter concerts and, to some extent, to the decrease in subscriptions". Accumulated Fund shrunk to £10/13/9. It should be noted that the effect of the financial depression of the "thirties" was affecting the Society as all other public bodies in Melbourne. The concert given in April "in aid of unemployed musicians" was a sign of the times.

462 (438) MISCELLANEOUS (130) 15th Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

The Society joined forces with the University Symphony Orchestra in its third Celebrity Concert 1930 Series. The programme was entirely Wagnerian and the press recognised it with accounts to 13". It was intended to give the whole of the third act of "Tannhauser" but the indisposition of the Tenor (Mr. O. F. Sobell) led to the rendering of the chief solos and final chorus only. To atone for the regrettable cuts, "Elizabeth's Greeting to the Hall of Song" was inserted before the final number. Good work and work not so good were noted as to both Orchestra and Chorus; both lapsed at times. Madm. Orf-Solscher's singing made a distinct and favourable impression.

Act III Tannhauser (less tenor part) (1), "Spinning Chorus and Senta's Ballad" from "The Flying Dutchman" (1), "Hail Bright Abode" from "Tannhauser" (9), "The Valkyrie" from "The Ring" and "Elizabeth's Greeting to the Hall of Song" (1). Overture-"Rienzi" (1).

Madm. Alice Orf-Solscher (S), Mr. Ernest Wilson (T).

463 (439) THE MESSIAH (110) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Madm. Alice Orf-Solscher (S), Miss Myra Hardenack (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Norman Menzies (B). Press accounts to 14" indicated a fine performance in respect to all sections, the choruses in many instances received very warm praise. "Professor Heinze, conducting with unremitting care secured numberless effects intensifying the deep feeling of the work". In a good caste Madm. Orf-Solscher was highly commended. Miss Isabel Adams accompaniments "added a final touch of splendour to this memorable Christmas performance". Mr. Dudley made the first of his 13 appearances as a soloist.

1931

464 (440) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (53) 3rd Apr. *, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Alice Orf-Solscher (S), Dame Clara Butt (C), Mr. Colin Thomson (T), Mr. Kennerly Rumford (B). All press accounts (to 11") agree on a very fine performance and an audience, that taxed the seating capacity of the hall to the utmost, thought so too. Apart from an early lapse on the part of the tenor; Conductor, Soloists, Choir and Orchestra shared in the acclamation. Twenty three years earlier the two distinguished visiting Soloists had appeared with the Society in the same parts. Again Dame Clara Butt thrilled a vast audience, particularly in "O, Rest in the Lord" for which she received a prolonged ovation. Mr. Kennerly Rumford's interpretation of the part of the Prophet was greatly admired.

At the Annual Meeting, Professor Bernard Heinze protested strongly against the application of Amusement Tax to prices of admission to the Society's concerts. The Annual Report, in explaining the presentation of 3 subscription concerts instead of 4, stated that "Cavalleria Rusticana" had been put into rehearsal for a fourth concert but the hopes of obtaining a visiting celebrity soloist were not realised. "A broadcasting choir of 60 voices has been formed for broadcasting". Regretful reference was made to the deaths of Dame Nellie Melba and Mr. W. A. Drummond, a member of the Committee. The financial accounts showed a profit of £77/13/11. Subscriptions fell to £166/18/8-indicative of the financial depression. In an effort to meet the financial position, the Conductor and Secretary each volunteered to forego a part of his honorarium for the year and the Auditors donated their fees. Mr. A. M. Nicholas accepted the position of President of the Society. Congratulations were tendered to the Conductor upon the conferring on him of a Fellowship of the Royal College of Music.

465 (441) MISCELLANEOUS (131) 26th Sep., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Vocal solo.

"Cavalliera Rusticana" (Mascagni) (1), "Senta's Ballad" from Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" (2), "Kermesse Chorus" from Gounod's "Faust" (2), Overture to "Oberon" (Weber) (4).

Miss Leonora Scott (S), Miss Isabel Biddell (C), Mr. Ernest Wilson (B), Mr. Horace White (T).

Press reports rated the opera as of uneven merit although it was noted that the audience found the performance enjoyable. Mr. White undertook the tenor role at short notice and was favourably mentioned. Miss Biddell took the solo part in "Senta's Ballad". Miss Isabel Adams presided at the organ. The Orchestra received high marks for the overture.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 11th Nov., Town Hall. Assisted.

An "Empire Concert" given by The Council of the Combined Empire Societies and arranged and conducted by Professor Bernard Heinze. The National Broadcasting Orchestra augmented by members of University Symphony Orchestra rendered "Pomp and Circumstance March" (Elgar) and "Largo" for Organ, Harp and Strings (Handel). The Society contributed "The Banner of St. George" (Elgar) (4) and assisted community singing of patriotic songs. Mr. William McKie played two organ solos.

466 (432) THE MESSIAH (111), 25th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Emilie Hooke (S), Miss Adele McKay (C), Mr. Horace White (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B).

Generally a good performance, according to press reports to 11". "Praiseworthy elasticity and animation" were shown although irregular tempi was noted by one, while another remarked that "temperate tempos were restored by Professor Heinze ...and the results showed in reverential yet musical quality in certain choruses such as the Philharmonic Society has not often achieved in the past decade".

1932

467 (433) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (54) 25th Mar. *, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Alice Orf-Solscher (S), Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B).

The hall was filled. All reports note much excellent work in all sections. One writer who referred to "Rough and ready vigour and few fine points" was taken to task by a press correspondent who claimed, inter alia,

that the Society had given "a fresh and vivid rendering of a somewhat hackneyed work". Mr. Newstead Rush was commended likewise Madm. Orf-Solscher who assisted the Sopranos in the concerted items and "evinced a degree of artistic unselfishness extremely rare among concert singers".

468 (444) MISCELLANEOUS (132) 11th Jun., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Overture-"Marriage of Figaro" (Mozart) (3), "Nights in the Garden of Spain" (Manuel de Falla), First performance in Australia, The Choral Symphony (Beethoven) (5).

Madm. Orf-Solscher (S), Miss Anne Harvey (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. J. Alexander Browne (B), Mr. John Symons (P'st) .

The concert was given in conjunction with the University Symphony Orchestra (3rd of 1932 Series) .In the Choral Symphony "not all the singers or players could keep up the pace adopted, but the finale. ...sent a thrill of joy throughout the audience which no one present is likely to forget". The two purely orchestral numbers found favour. "A vast audience" was present and demanded an encore from Mr. John Symons after his pianoforte part in the Falla item.

Despite the fact that the Treasurer's Report disclosed a loss on the year's work, Professor Bernard Heinze declared at the Annual Meeting that the Society could look back on the last year as one of the most successful in its history .He regretted that ccin Australia, we subsidised sugar, wheat, gold, everything in fact but the spiritual things like music and art." It was announced that the late Dr. A. V. N. Anderson (a former member and a supporter) had left one-ninth of his residuary estate to the Society .The Annual Report noted, "Special programmes have been performed from the broadcasting station by the Society's broadcasting choir of 60 voices", also that at the fourth concert "an audience that completely filled the Town Hall". The loss on the year's work, £128/17/11, was mainly due to a loss of £131 on the first concert and reduced profits on the "Messiah" and "Elijah" concerts and a further falling in the subscribers list, attributed principally to the prevailing depression.

469 (445) MISCELLANEOUS (133), 12th Nov., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Grail Scene from "Parsifal" (4), Act II "Tannhauser" (1) including "Hail Bright Abode" (10), Act III "Lohengrin" (1).

Madm. Alice Orf-Solscher (S), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Franz Giljohann (Bar.), Mr. Alexander Raff (B).

An entirely Wagnerian programme. "Very commendable work was achieved by the Philharmonic Choir, especially in the "Tannhauser" chorus. The more delicately expressive writing in "Parsifal" was also impressive. ..."The Principals were commended for good performances, likewise the Orchestra. "The fact that one soloist performed in German and the other in English gave a comical impression of unreality in the love scene from Lohengrin".

470 (-) THE MESSIAH (112) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Emilie Hooke (S), Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. John Brownlee (B).

"The choruses were vitalised by a commendable warmth of feeling and glorious effects were heard in the 'Hallelujah' chorus and concluding numbers. The soloists gained by allying with their artistry a becoming reverence, and the orchestra, aided by Mozart's accompaniments coloured the oratorio while giving adequate and reliable support to the singers. The experienced hand of Isabel Mat thews at the organ strengthened the appeal of the music". Of Mr. John Brownlee as the Baritone Soloist - "His finely resonant voice and mastery of style gave distinction to all his work".

471 (-) THE MESSIAH (113) 24th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas performance with the same Soloists which "drew a very large and captivated audience. Many who had heard the oratorio earlier in the week came again to double their pleasure. ..." "An increased intensity on the part of all the performers over their prior efforts created exceptional interest from the overture and first vocal numbers which very soon led to enthusiasm on the part of the audience. A vital artistry took possession of soloists, chorus and orchestra for which Professor Heinze may be primarily regarded as responsible". With this concert, the association of the University Symphony Orchestra with the Society came to an end.

1933

472 (447) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (55) 14th Apr. *, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Phoebe Barton (S), Miss Elsie Woolley (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Alan Eddy (B).

The performance was given "under the shadow of a common sorrow for it had been announced that Mr. George Peake ...had died on the previous day". At the age of 79 (identical with that of the Society) passed one who had contributed generously to the cause of music in Melbourne and had given long and distinguished service to the Society. For a time it appeared that the concert might be given without an

orchestra because of higher fees demanded by the Musicians Union. However, congratulations were offered "on securing an orchestra in these precarious days even though sections of the band seemed at times unaccustomed to the treatment of music associated with religious themes". Nevertheless press accounts to 15" found much to praise in the performance. Despite some difficulties in his upper register, Mr. Alan Eddy's rendering of the part of the Prophet found considerable favour.

The year closed with the presentation of three concerts instead of the customary four. The work for a fourth concert was put in rehearsal but failure to secure one, then another visiting celebrity as a soloist led to the abandonment of the projected performance. An adjustment with subscribers as to subscriptions was made accordingly. Early in the year, the Society noted with interest and pleasure the marriage of Prof. Bernard Heinze. Regretful references were made in the Annual Report to the deaths of Mr. E. R. Peacock, Vice President and Committeeman, Mr. R. Hamilton Russell F.R.C.S., Vice President and Mr. George Peake, Vice President and Life Conductor. Appropriate minutes were placed on record as to the services of the deceased members. Grateful acknowledgement was made of the President's action in guaranteeing the Society against loss in respect to the first concert. The accounts showed a profit of £14/1/11.

473 (448) HIAWATHA (Coleridge-Taylor) (2) 19th Aug., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Phyllis Dickinson (S), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B).

Generally a good performance of the trilogy in all respects. A "full orchestra " was announced. One press report remarked "What a delight it was to hear a full orchestra in the concert hall once more! The members appeared to enjoy their part in the performance". Except for being a little weighty at times it was credited with excellent work. The hall was not filled and a financial loss was recorded.

474 (-) BRAHMS-WAGNER FESTIVAL (134) 24th Oct.-4th Nov. 2nd Sub.

The Festival comprised six concerts conducted by Prof. Bernard Heinze; four in Wilson Hall and two in the Town Hall. The Society assisted -24th Oct. Act III from "Lohengrin" (2) 28th Oct. Act III from "The Flying Dutchman" (1) 31st Oct. Spinning Chorus and Senta's Ballad from "The Flying Dutchman" (3), Madam Alice Orf-Solscher Soloist. 2nd Nov., The Grail Scene from "Parsifal" (5).

475 (450) THE MESSIAH (114) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Violet Jackson (S), Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. Norman Bradshaw (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B).

Generally a good performance. "The chorus gave great satisfaction to the audience" and some choruses were specially noted for their fine rendering. One writer observed "He Trusted in God" had an infective vitality and came off capitally". Professor Heinze kept the orchestra well in hand. It was unfortunate that frequent applause seriously broke the continuity of the work". Press accounts reached 14".

1934

476 (450) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (56) 27th Mar., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Freda Treweek (S), Miss Mabel James (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

Singing entirely from memory and with splendid assurance and dramatic force, Mr. Horace Stevens gave a masterly interpretation of the part of the Hebrew Prophet and "made a profound impression. ..it was a noble conception". Not since the days of Charles Santley and Andrew Black had such an "Elijah" been heard in Melbourne. Press accounts to 12" had only praise and that of the warmest. Good choral and orchestral work was noted while Mrs. Mat thews' handling of the organ was commended. "Professor Heinze conducted with vigilance and resource". Rows of empty seats did not speak well for Melbourne's culture.

477 (451) ELIJAH (57) 30th Mar.*, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night rendition with the same Soloists. The hall was "filled to overflowing" while hundreds were turned away. An enthusiastic audience listened to an improved performance in which Mr. Horace Stevens repeated his triumph of three nights earlier. On this occasion it was his 39th appearance with the Society as a soloist. How his memory must have stirred when he recalled that 44 years before, as the Youth, he had appeared in the same oratorio with the great Charles Santley whose rendering of the part of the Prophet "created a profound sensation" and in a remarkable cast that included Mrs. Palmer (nee Miss Rosina Carandini), Madm. Marian Burton (principal Contralto of the Sims Reeves Concert Company) and Mr. Armes Beaumont, the foremost Tenor of his day. Memories indeed!

The Annual Report noted that Professor Bernard Heinze and the Secretary had been appointed to Centenary Celebrations Music Committee. Also that Mr. Frederick Earp had occasionally taken charge of rehearsals and that Miss Mollie Wingrove had for the space of three months taken the place of the Society's accompanist when absent through illness. The Treasurer's Report indicated a loss of £88/14/5.

478 (452) MISCELLANEOUS (135) 25th Jul., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

"An Australian Symphony" (Evans) (1), "Hinemoa" (Hill) (1), Overture to "Oberon" (Weber) (5), Ballet Music from "Candlelight" (James) (1).

Miss Isolde Hill (S), Mr. T. Downie (T), Mr. A. C. Bartleman (Bar.), Mr. F. G. Lumsden (B).

An Australian Composers' Concert. Three composers appeared and conducted their own compositions - Mr. Lindley Evans, Mr. Alfred Hill and Mr. William G. James. Mr. Hill also conducted the Overture. "Hinemoa" was "competently and enthusiastically performed" with the composer's daughter in the name part. "An agreeable performance" of the ballet music was noted. Mr. Evans was not quite so successful. There were many empty seats.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 4th Nov., Como Park (Sunday a'noon). Assisted.

Sydney Myer Musical Commemoration arranged by the Centenary Celebrations Council. Members of the Society's Choir assisted in a large choir which rendered "And the Glory" (9) and "Hallelujah" (25) from Handel's "Messiah", "The Heavens Are Telling" from Haydn's "Creation" (15), "Gloria" from Mozart's Twelfth Mass (4), "Land of Ours" (Margaret Sutherland) (1), "Australia, Happy Isle" (Lindley Evans) (1).

The Conductors were Prof. Bernard Heinze, Mr. Fritz Hart, Miss Margaret Sutherland, and Mr. Lindley Evans.

479 (453) THE MESSIAH (115) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Freda Treweek (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B).

In a 13" report the "Age" writer noted, inter alia, "The solo and chorus singing last night had many touching and glorious moments. ...The orchestra opened with a noble effort in the overture and depicted a beautiful starlit scene in the Pastoral Symphony. ...The audience entered deeply into the performance and expressed its gratitude to the performers in frequent applause". The work of Mrs. Isabel Matthews at the organ was acknowledged with appreciation. While pointing to good features of the performance, the "Argus" report was disposed to be critical. Other accounts voted a good rendering. A full professional Orchestra did capable work. Miss Jones made the first of her 24 appearances as a Soloist.

480 (454) THE MESSIAH (116) 25th Dec., Town Hall. Extra.

Christmas night rendering with the same Soloists. An improved performance was noted. "The soloists. ...and the choir brought feeling animation. ...The audience was the gainer by the devotion displayed".

1935

481 (454) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (58) 16th Apr., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Mona Nugent (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Cadzow (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"Throughout the work the audience heard from Mr. Stevens a sincere and living oratory expressed in dignified and melodious song. The audience rose to enthusiasm over the artist's singing. ...The Philharmonic chorus accepted its important share with alert interest and the orchestra gave good service in the overture and accompaniments. Professor Heinze secured from his forces the many illuminating and dramatic expressions upon which the success of the performance so greatly depends. Isabel Matthews was at her right place at the organ".

482 (455) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (59) 19th Apr. *, Town Hall. Extra.

Good Friday night rendition. "Mr. Stevens again gave an outstanding rendition of the part of the Prophet Elijah - artistic singing by the other principals contributed to the success of the performance. The chorus was in good form while the orchestra was helpful in the descriptive parts of the score".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 13th May, Her Majesty's Theatre. Assisted.

Jubilee Gala Performance of "Viktoria and Her Hussar" in celebration of the Jubilee of His Majesty King George V. The Society assisted with "Land of Hope and Glory" (2) with Miss Sylvia Welling as Soloist.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 8th Jun., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

City of Melbourne Centenary Celebration in the presence of Lord Huntingfield, K.C.M.G., Governor of Victoria.

Apart from speeches by The Governor, The Lord Mayor (Councillor A. G. Wales, J.P.) and The Premier (Hon. A. A. Dunstan), the celebration was entirely choral. A Centenary Choir (in which members of the Society took part) rendered "Gloria" (Mozart) (5), "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn) (16), "And the Glory" (10) and "Hallelujah" (Handel's "Messiah") (26), "Hallelujah" (Beethoven) (4), "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar) (3). Combined Competitive Choirs rendered "Seadrift" (Coleridge-Taylor) and "Love's Tempest" (Jenkins). The Conductors were Prof. Bernard Heinze, Mr. Fritz Hart, Mr. Graham Burgin, Mr. George

English, Mr. H. R. Hillier, Mr. Leslie Curnow and Mr. Fred Watsford. Accompaniments were supplied by the Salvation Army H.Q. Band.

483 (456) MISCELLANEOUS (136) 3rd Aug., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Ballade No.17 (G. de Marchaut) (1), "The Flowers that Bloomed in the Field" (Lineva) (1), "Lullaby" (Curtis-Burlin) (1), Irish Tune from County Derry (Arr. Grainger) (1), "The Hunter in His Career" (set Grainger) (1), "Harvest Hymn" (1), "Australian Up Country Song" (1), Tribute to Foster (1), "Green Bushes" a Passacaglia (Grainger) (1), Pianoforte Concerto No.1 (Tschaikowsky) (2).

A concert "with Percy Grainger". "A design so partitive and disparate could not be considered ideal" said one commentator. Possibly one of the oddest assorted of the Society's many miscellaneous programmes. A large audience saw Mr. Grainger in the roles of Composer, Conductor, Pianist and Lecturer. He appeared as Soloist in the Concerto. "Throughout the programme, Prof. Heinze obtained plucky, and, in the main, unanimous support from the singers and from an orchestra composed of players of varying grades of technical proficiency". The Orchestra was largely professional. Miss Freda Treweek appeared as Soprano Soloist.

The Annual Report stated that in regard to the two Christmas concerts, "they were given with for the first time a full professional orchestra; performances which were on a scale not possible before ..." Though the year's work was gratifying from a musical point of view, the Report was concerned mainly with the financial position, especially as again a loss was shown - £144. Only the Christmas concerts returned a profit while subscriptions fell to £149/1/6. "Musical Societies have been fighting the depression just as business houses have and stock must be taken of the position just as is done in the commercial world", continued the Report. One step "has been the formation of a Ladies' Committee" with Mrs. Bernard Heinze as chairwoman and Miss Lynette Eddy as honorary secretary. The object, primarily, was to rouse interest in the Society's doings and to submit suggestions to the General Committee. During the year, Mr. William G. James retired as Assistant Conductor and Mr. Frederick Earp and Mr. Dan Hardy filled the breach.

484 (-) MISCELLANEOUS (137) 28th Sep., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Concerto Grosso No.10 in D Minor (Beethoven) (1), The Choral Symphony (Beethoven) (6).

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Isabel Biddel (C), Mr. Browning Mummery (T), Mr. Horace Stevens (B).

"A huge audience assembled". The concert was sponsored by the Melbourne "Herald" and directed by a visiting Conductor, Dr. Gerhard von Keussler who "deprived, at one stroke, both players and audience of the conciliatory influence of colour. Music lovers in Melbourne have seldom heard an orchestral programme so competently drilled or so consistently monochromatic" (both works were written in the key of D Minor). Nevertheless press reports to 13" joined in general praise of both numbers. "The Quartette gave invaluable service and the valiancy of the chorus merited sincere praise. The sopranos brilliantly sustained their high A. The stupendous vigour and the overwhelming grandeur of Beethoven's conception were unmistakable and unforgettable". Dr. von Keussler, who conducted without a score, was accorded a prolonged ovation and was recalled several times. Miss Phillips made the first of her 19 appearances as a Soloist.

485 (458) THE MESSIAH (117) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Irene Bennett (S), Miss Dorothy Clark (C), Mr. Ben Williams (T), Mr. Sydney De Vries (B).

"A big audience". A professional Orchestra and a "well balanced team of soloists" gave a meritorious performance but it was the Choir that excelled. Press reports to 10" agreed on many merits and the only pointed criticism applied to the orchestra. "The audience greatly appreciated the impressive rendition secured by Prof. Heinze but it was regrettable that the sequence of thought running through the oratorio was broken by constant applause".

1936

486 (459) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (60) 10th Apr.*, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Madm. Florence Austral (S), Miss Adele McKay (C), Mr. Lionello Cecil (T), Mr. Raymond Beatty (B).

"An immense audience". Press reports to 12" indicate an excellent rendering in all respects. "The chorus has evidently raised its standard considerably. It sang in terms reflective, descriptive, passionate. or reverent as the case demanded". A professional Orchestra gave a good account of itself. Madm. Florence Austral was given high praise. Mr. Raymond Beatty's "Elijah" was commended, albeit he worked too constantly at high pressure in voice or emphasis.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 24th May, Town Hall. Assisted.

An "Empire Service" arranged by the Combined Empire Societies. Speeches and hymns were the main features in the programme. The Society contributed "It Comes from the Misty Ages" (Elgar's "Banner of st.

George") (8), "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar) (4), "God Guard Australia" (Molly Dangerfield) (1). Prof. Bernard Heinze and Mr. Dan Hardy shared the duties of Conductor.

"The year through which the Society has just passed has been probably the most difficult which choral societies have ever had to face", noted the Annual Report, "and while many musical bodies have for one reason or another found it impossible to carry on as they have hitherto done, the Society has maintained its hold upon the musical community by giving concerts of a particularly high standard. ..." Despite the efforts made, the year closed with a loss of £166/3/7 and £437/19/10 owing to creditors. It was mentioned that after the close of the financial year at 30th June arrangements had been made to pay all outstanding debts and that the administration of the Society had been completely reorganised in such a way that in future the whole expenses of administration "will be met from what we may reasonably expect to be our revenue from subscriptions. This reconstruction has been made possible by sacrifices on the part of the Society's Officers generally, and in particular by the generosity of Professor Heinze in agreeing to accept an honorary conductorship as from 1st July, 1936." It should be added that the liquidation of creditors accounts at 30th June was made possible by a loan of £400 by the President (Mr. A. M. Nicholas) . "Owing to the unsettled state of musical affairs generally it was decided not to hold a fourth concert, but to credit subscribers with one concert in the year 1936-37." During the year Mr. R. J. Oehr resigned the Secretaryship which he had held for 31 years. By his long occupancy of that important position - under three Conductors - he easily established a record of length of service and one which covers nearly one-third of this account. His contribution to the Society's story was therefore an outstanding achievement which was marked by conscientious discharge of exacting responsibilities. At the conclusion, he was honoured by election as a Vice President and the presentation of a crystal centre-piece. Before the Christmas concert Mr. Dan Hardy was appointed Assistant Conductor. Mr. Paull Fiddian undertook the very responsible position of Secretary in February.

487 (460) MISCELLANEOUS (138) 30th Sep., Wilson Hall. 1st Sub.

"Blest Pair of Sirens" (Parry) (6), "Jesu, Priceless Treasure" (1), Excerpts from "St. Matthew Passion" (1). Overture to Suite in D (1), Pianoforte Chromatic Fantasia and Fuge in D Minor (Noel Mewton-Wood, P'st.) (1), Concerto in C Minor (Misses Valda Johnstone and Glen Marks P'sts.) (1), Concerto in D Minor (Messrs. Howard Brown and Paul McDermott V'sts) (1). Except the Parry item all were from Bach's compositions. Mr. Lennox Brewer (T) and Mr. W. Hamilton Brown (B) were the vocal Soloists. The concert was given in association with the University Bach Society. Conductors were Mr. Dan Hardy, Mr. William Mallinson and Mr. Henry Thomas. "The concert was enjoyed by a large and enthusiastic audience". Mr. Frederick Earle presided at the "Hammond" organ in place of an orchestra. It was an "invitation" concert; the Society's share of the cost was £11/0/2.

488 (461) THE MESSIAH (118) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Irene Bennett (8), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Fred Williamson (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B). "A professional orchestra and a well-chosen group of principals performed the oratorio. ..for the edification of a large audience, one receptive and grateful for the reverent spirit pervading the rendition. Prof. Heinze ably conducted. The continuity. ..was broken by undesirable applause. ..otherwise the performance was impressive and in places very thrilling". A Sydney singer, Mr. Stanley Clarkson, made the first of his 16 appearances with the Society and "very soon found favour" because of his admirable musicianship and interpretation. Excellent orchestral work was noted regarding the " Australian Broadcasting Commission (Melbourne) Symphony Orchestra " on its first appearance.

1937

489 (462) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (61) 26th Mar*, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Stella Power (S), Miss Essie Ackland (C), Mr. Browning Mummery (T), Mr. Fred Collier (B). The Society was "commended whole-heartedly on the improved standard of the choral singing" although it was stated that "the tempi in some of the more imposing choruses were uncomfortably breathless. ..." Miss Essie Ackland made her first public appearance after an absence of 12 years from Australia and was warmly praised. "Mr. Fred Collier sang the part of the Prophet with abundant energy and kept the rhythms moving to good effect in the declamatory sections". "Prof. Heinze kept his choral and instrumental forces (A.B.C. Orchestra) well in hand and received an ovation".

The Annual Report stated that to recompense subscribers for a concert not given in 1936/37, the 1st concert was given as an "invitation" concert as already noted. "The generous cooperation of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in two of the three concerts enabled the Society to give performances not hitherto possible", and which were described as 'highly successful musically'. They were also successful in a financial sense enabling the Treasurer to show a credit on the year's work of £209/10/8. The deaths of Mr.

A. M. Nicholas (President) and Mr. E. Brewer, a Vice President and one of the oldest members were noted with deep regret. Mrs. I. Matthews resigned as accompanist and was made a Honorary Life Member. Thanks were extended to Miss M. Wingrove who acted as accompanist for part of the year. The Report also referred to "an announcement made to the Choir and to the public through the press, of the agreement recently made with the Australian Broadcasting Commission". This Agreement marks a highly important milestone history of the Society and as it had far reaching consequences, it will be considered in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XIII. THE AGREEMENT WITH THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION

The year 1937-8 marked a turning point in the life of the Society. As will have been gleaned from earlier pages, the question of finance continued to press heavily on the minds of the Committee and to greatly influence the annual programming. This could only be done after careful consideration of costs and probable losses; a matter of "Cutting one's garment according to one's cloth". In the "cutting", new works - because of probable loss - and revival of old ones - because of high cost - had often to be excluded. The same attitude had to be taken in the engagement of soloists. The embarrassing question "what to perform this year" due to the cause mentioned, of course, greatly hampered the artistic growth of the Society.

During 1935, the executive officers gave much thought to the question and though various suggestions were examined, nothing of a promising nature came forth. Further consideration in 1936/7 however, resulted in the evolution of a plan which certainly had a touch of originality, to wit, a business arrangement with the Australian Broadcasting Commission. A tentative approach by the Society was welcomed and subsequently the Society's officers conferred with the manager of the Commission, when the general details of the plan were settled. Briefly stated, the Society undertook to give four or more concerts a year; the Commission undertook, through its officers, to assist in certain aspects of the management of the concerts and to accept the financial responsibility thereof, while reserving the right of broadcast. An Agreement was drawn up which, after receiving the approval of the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor, was duly signed by both parties. Initially, the Agreement was to run for three years from 1st July, 1937, thereafter, indefinitely. Six months notice by either party was necessary to terminate the Agreement if so desired. So far, no suggestion of such a nature has been made.

In actual fact, the Agreement embodied very closely a conception formulated many years before by previous conductors and various members of the Committee. They visualised a Society, clear of financial worries and relatively free to engage first class artists as soloists, to plan for new works and the revival of old ones considered too costly for performance at the time. The conception did not, of course, foresee the advent of wireless transmission of music or the presence of a Broadcasting Commission. There is no doubt that this rather unique Agreement gave the Society a new lease of life -- to the advantage of both parties.

As in the case of most agreements, it is the spirit rather than the letter which makes for a happy union. In the present case, it is a pleasure to record that cordial relations have continued throughout the whole of the association. While the head office of the Commission has, when necessary, the final decision, the general planning is settled only after full discussion of the Society's wishes and advice. With the local office of the Commission, where frequent contact is necessary to settle many details of concert arrangements, the happiest of relations have existed. For its part, the Society has readily acquiesced in any suggestion by the Commission for assistance beyond the minimum of four concerts per year, as will be observed from later pages. In short, the general aim is to further the interests of choral music by a happy combination of forces. It remains to remark that the Society's entity remains undisturbed by the Agreement. Its internal organisation functions as before, save that the bogey of finance is laid.

Turning to the practical outcome of the Agreement, this is also highly satisfactory. A marked and progressive improvement in the standard of performance has been observed. Since the signing of the Agreement, 3 major choral works, new to the Australian public, have been presented as well as old ones which were seldom heard. The improvement in performance has been accompanied by improved attendance on the part of the public. The Commission has frequently expressed its satisfaction with the Choir's work. The broadcasting of concerts throughout the Commonwealth has, of course, greatly extended the field of listeners from whom, from time to time, congratulatory messages have been received from Victoria and the other States. In saying all this, due acknowledgement is made of the greatly improved orchestral assistance which the choir has received, particularly from the Victorian Symphony Orchestra.

Enough has been said to show that the Agreement has fully achieved the objects sought by its promoters and, at the same time, justified its establishment, despite the widespread difficulties encountered nowadays by the Society, in common with all choral bodies. The final test - "does the public receive consistently high-class performances of great choral works" - has been answered in the affirmative. Viewed conversely, it may be confidently asserted that in the absence of the Agreement (or of some other such form of assistance), no choral body in Australia could attain the standard set by the Society. Indeed, it is claimed, with equal confidence, that Commonwealth listeners receive the highest possible standard in the circumstances. The Society hopes that the present highly satisfactory arrangement will long continue.

It was not long before the association of the two bodies led to an interesting development in regard to the direction of the Society's concerts. When the Australian Broadcasting Commission arranged for over-sea guest conductors to visit Australia, it was found possible - when the visitors possessed experience in choral conducting-to place them in control of some of the Society's concerts. Thus members of the Chorus had the extremely interesting experience of singing under the batons of the visitors. Outstanding among the visitors were Sir Thomas Beecham and Dr. Malcolm Sargent. Subscribers and the public, of course, shared in the experience. The various changes will be noted in due course.

CHAPTER XIV BERNARD HEINZE'S CONDUCTORSHIP

1937

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 16th Oct., Town Hall, Assisted.

The final Orchestral Celebrity Concert for the season. The Choir, in conjunction with the A.B.C. Orchestra rendered "Flourish for a Coronation" (Vaughan Williams) (1), "In their handling of noble selected words and valiant rhythms, the members of the re-constituted Philharmonic choir displayed much admirable breadth of tone and secure and intelligent grasp of phrase and climax..."

490 (463) THE MESSIAH (119) 25th Dec" Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Sylvia Fisher (8), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Cecil Atkinson (T) , Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B) , "Brilliant singing by the Choir and valiant work by four talented young singers gave distinction to the performance", "This was the first performance of the oratorio since the alliance between the Society and the A.B.C. The orchestra was the A.B.C. Melbourne combination. Choir and orchestra and audience united in a cordial reception of Prof. Heinze who was leaving for Europe in the new year".

1938

491 (465) MISCELLANEOUS (139) 15th Apr.* , Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Good Friday Music (4) and The Grail Scene (6) from Wagner's "Parsifal", "Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (7).

Miss Strella Wilson (S), Miss Ailsa McKenzie (C), Mr. Browning Mummery (T), Mr. Raymond Beatty (B), Mr. Frank Lasslet (B),

The change of programme for Good Friday night was welcomed, The performance "frequently stirred the crowded audience to great enthusiasm", Mr. George English conducted and his direction found favour with the press critics. Assisted by the A,B,C, Wireless Chorus "the choral singing throughout the programme was of excellent quality. The tone produced by each section was fresh and vigorous, the phrasing had breadth and elasticity and the rhythmical control was wholly admirable", The A,B,C, (Melbourne) Symphony Orchestra was "congratulated on the sensitive handling of the Good Friday Music". All the Soloists appeared to advantage.

The Annual Report noted that the financial year ended 30th June was the first year of the operation of the Society's Agreement with the Australian Broadcasting Commission and recorded satisfaction that "the Society is happily relieved from financial worry." Also noted, "Because of the re-organisation last year, it was not practicable to hold a concert before. The Christmas performance of 'The Messiah' and the Committee decided that rather than charge subscribers any subscription for 1937, the 'Messiah' concert should be treated as the last concert for 1936/7 and that the new year for subscribers should commence on 1st January, 1938." Immediately after the Agreement became operative, the Choir was extensively re-organised. All members who had been classified as efficient in the last triennial test were included in the reorganised Choir, a small number whose membership was in abeyance were excluded. Many members of the Commission's choir *Trained by Mr. George English. it gave a performance of Elgar's 'Dream of Gerontius'*. organised for Dr. Malcolm Sargent's first visit were among the applicants, "and a good number of these were successful in passing the test." In accordance with the Agreement, Mr. George English, on the nomination of the Commission, was appointed Chorus Master. This necessitated the retirement of Mr. Dan Hardy who was thanked for his "sterling work" and was presented with a cheque The financial accounts showed a loss of £68.

492 (466) MISCELLANEOUS (140) 29th Sep., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton), First performance in Australia. Overture in D Minor (Handel: arr. Elgar) (1), "Enigma Variations" (Elgar) (1) .

Dr. Malcolm Sargent, the Society's Chorus, the A.B.C. Wireless Chorus, the A.B.C. (Melbourne) Symphony Orchestra and Mr. Raymond Beatty were joined in a veritable triumphal performance of William Walton's extremely modern work. "The impression was exceedingly thrilling and unforgettable" ("Age"). "A triumph for Dr. Sargent whose brilliant direction fairly electrified the audience" ("Argus"). "Walton's composition. ...led last night to as vehement a demonstration of approval as any Melbourne Philharmonic audience has made in a generation. ...The Philharmonic singers were mighty" ("Sun"). "The orchestra with an enormous battery of percussion and added brass had a most exacting share of the brazen orgy and the conductor's electric energy made it certain that no scintillation should be dulled" ("Herald") .The Overture found favour and the "Variations" were "loving and delicious". The audience paid a well-deserved tribute to Mr. George English as he sat in the gallery, for his preparation of the "Feast".

493 (467) MASS IN B MINOR (1) (Bach) 19th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Vera Higginbotham (S), Miss Mavis Svenson (C), Mr. Ray Trewern (T), Mr. Newstead Rush (B). There was a "crowded audience". Sir Granville Bantock, the eminent composer and conductor directed the performance. He "used a minimum of directive energy towards a choir and band which have both been accustomed to more athletic commands". "The singers were given a reading by Sir Granville Bantock to which they were not accustomed". Press accounts to 13" indicated a somewhat uneven performance; at times brilliant and thrilling effects were noted. The Conductor was accorded a prolonged ovation at the close in which Mr. George English shared.

494 (468) THE MESSIAH (120) 24th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Strella Wilson (S), Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. Lewis Dawe (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B). "A large audience in a particularly receptive mood". Mr. George English (in the absence of Prof. Bernard Heinze, overseas) conducted and "succeeded in obtaining good results from the expert orchestra and well-drilled choir". The Soloists were commended. "Mr. Stanley Clarkson repeated his previous triumphs". At the conclusion of "The Trumpet Shall Sound" he was greeted with prolonged applause which included Mr. John Robertson for his trumpet accompaniment in which he "displayed great technical skill, admirable judgment and good taste". Mr. Frederick Earle's good work at the organ was noted.

1939

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 2nd Feb., Town Hall. Assisted.

The concert was given in aid of the Lord Mayor's Bush Fire Relief Fund. The Choir assisted with "Hail Bright Abode" from Wagner's "Tannhauser" (11), "Toreador's Song" from Bizet's "Carmen" (1), George Hancock Soloist, and chorus from "Stabat Mater" (Dvorak) (1).

495 (469) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (62) 7th Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. Lionello Cecil (T), Mr. Alan Eddy (B). The Choir "singing in best form" gave spirited renderings of the animated choruses and was "beautifully impressive in "Blessed Are the Men" and "He Watching Over Israel". One account, however, was disposed to be critical as to what was considered a lack of "clearly defined rhythmical framework". The Soloists were praised; Mr. Alan Eddy's rendition of the part of the Prophet was commended. More than one press report criticised the choice of "Elijah" for the Easter concert and desired a change. Prof. Bernard Heinze resumed his accustomed place at the Conductor's rostrum.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 24th May, Town Hall. Assisted.

The Society assisted at the annual demonstration by the Australian Women's National League. No details are available.

496 (470) REQUIEM (Verdi) (1) 31st May, Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Heather Kinnard (M.S), Mr. Lionello Cecil (T), Mr. Raymond Beatty (B). "Spectacular methods of interpretation were displayed. From a score packed to overflowing with incident, the Guest Conductor, Professor G. Szell, extracted the maximum degree of musical excitement. Choir, orchestra and Artistic Director achieved dramatic emphasis without recourse to theatricalism. The choir was ably prepared by Mr. George English. ...Instrumental contribution on occasion was too strenuous for the choir. Long operatic experience proved a valuable asset for Miss Thea Phillips".

In commenting on the second year of the Society's close association with the A.B.C., the Annual Report noted that it "must be one of the most significant years the Society has ever known. No less than five major works were performed under five different conductors, three of them eminent visitors from Great Britain. Three of the works had not been previously performed by the Society." It noted that Verdi's "Requiem" was given less than eight weeks after the Easter concert. "In January Professor Heinze was welcomed home from his tour abroad, and the Society was delighted to join in the congratulations which were heaped upon him as a result of his achievements in Europe." Mr. George English left at the beginning of June to take up an appointment in Sydney when he was presented with a travelling case. Mr. Dan Hardy was re-appointed Chorus Master after a break of nearly two years. The death of Dr. W. A. Sanderson, a former Vice President and one of the oldest members was noted with regret. The Treasurer reported that the year's work showed a surplus of £5/11/3. Choir membership was stated as 225.

497 (471) MISCELLANEOUS (141) 5th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton) (2), Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (Vaughan Williams) (1), Overture in D Minor (Handel: arr. Elgar) (2).

"Town Hall crowded with eager listeners". "Elgar's stirring setting of the National Anthem thrilled every heart". "Last night's performance was no less staggering (than the first)". "The choir grappled splendidly with the exacting polyphony and the orchestra, competing with its energy, added to the fervid pageantry, intensifying its effects". Dr. Malcolm Sargent again conducted. Prolonged applause greeted the close of the performance which was renewed when Mr. Dan Hardy (Choirmaster) was called forward for his share.

-- HIAWATHA PAGEANT (3-17) 21st Oct. - 4th Nov., Exhibition Bldg. Assisted.

Sponsored by Melbourne City Council and given on the floor of the Exhibition Bldg. Mr. T. C. Fairbairn who directed dramatised performances in Albert Hall, London, trained a body of about 700 choristers drawn from twelve choirs. Thirteen night performances and two matinees of Coleridge-Taylor's trilogy were given in full costume and with all stage effects. The pageant was highly successful as a production, roused great interest and drew large attendances. Takings amounted to £10,000. The Annual Report of the Society noted that "musical history was made, that a large proportion of the chorus was provided by the Society" and that for Prof. Bernard Heinze who conducted "it turned out to be nothing less than a personal triumph".

498 (472) THE MESSIAH (121) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Nance Osborne (S), Miss Joan Jones (a), Mr. Frederick Williamson (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

"An enormous attendance was exalted by the performance and frequently demonstrated its approval of the choir and soloists. ...It was Mr. Stanley Clarkson's third year in succession as Bass Soloist and on each occasion his dignified and resonant singing has left the best memory" ("Herald"). "Conducted by Prof. Bernard Heinze it was a superb finale to the 1939 season. ...the Conductor handled the responsive choir superbly" ("Argus").

1940

499 (473) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (63) 22nd Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Elizabeth Coote (a), Mr. Lewis Dawe (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

"A vast audience. ..." Writing in the "Herald", Mr. Neville Cardus, the eminent English musical critic said, inter alia, "This performance by the Society was far better than anything ever done at Worcester where "Elijah" has become mummified by tradition. Professor Heinze sensibly treated the score dramatically in the main. ... The choral singing was for me a distinct change and refreshment. There was not a hint of the suet-pudding heaviness which makes much choral singing in England indigestible to a dangerous degree. The light texture of the sopranos told of a purer air than Huddersfield or Wolverhampton". There was praise for "the competent team of Soloists", particularly for Mr. Harold Williams who sang without a score.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 24th May, Town Hall. Assisted.

The Society assisted in the annual demonstration of the Australian Women's National League. No details available.

Gratifying results attendant on the completion of the third year of the Society's close association with the Australian Broadcasting Commission are stated in the Annual Report which went on to say, "The improvement in the Society's performances resulted in the increased interest shown by the public and subscribers." Regret was expressed as to the death of Mr. Herbert Norman, who as Choir member, Committee-man and Vice President, had served the Society for over 40 years; also as to the death of Mr. H. E. Collyer who had given valued service as Chorister and Committee-man. The Treasurer's Report indicated a profit of £143/6/10 and that the legally defunct Philharmonic Hall Company had refunded a sum of £483/7/11. These sums combined to convert a debit in the Revenue Account to a credit of £337/2/4. The refund from the Company represented slightly more than the total of sums originally advanced by the Society.

500 (474) MISCELLANEOUS (142) 11th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"Requiem" (Brahms) (2), Choral Dances from "Prince Igor" (Borodin) (1), Overture-"Le Rouet d'Omphale" (St. Saens) (1).

Miss Lisa Perli (C), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

A highly successful concert, despite the fact that the two choral numbers differed completely in subject and treatment. Much of the credit was due to the masterly direction of Sir Thomas Beecham who conducted entirely from memory. In the "Requiem", although the performance "did not solve all the many difficulties of Brahms' choral singing, it had many sublime moments and throughout it was a finely conscientious effort..." (Cyril Scott in the "Argus"). In the "Prince Igor" choral dances "the choir responded to Beecham's magnetic personality and gave us an intensely vivid and vibrant performance.... At the concert's end there were scenes of tumult and enthusiasm; Sir Thomas Beecham was repeatedly called to the platform" (Neville Cardus in the "Herald").

501 (475) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (2) 9th Nov., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Dorothy Helmrich (M.S.), Mr. Heddle Nash (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

Choir, Orchestra, A,B.C. Wireless Chorus and Soloists combined in a very impressive performance "by the sympathetic mind of Professor Heinze". Singing from memory and with superb poise, Mr. Heddle Nash gave a "deeply moving performance" of the arduous tenor role which "must be spoken of in superlative terms". He was ably supported by the other Soloists. "The choir sang with earnest conviction. ...Beautifully modulated tones of all degrees showed the choralists to be alive to all that was involved in their share". "The orchestral standard was high".

502 (476) THE MESSIAH (122) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

"The Society, orchestra and soloists gave an impressive rendering. The question of tempi would be a reasonable ground of complaint. Prof. Heinze, in a series of great arias, and choruses, secured thrilling effects, splendidly distinguishing clarion prophecies, pastoral music, solemn Passion themes and glorious anthems of praise" ("Age"). All the Soloists were successful. Mr. William Herbert made the first of his 17 appearances with the Society as tenor soloist, "having beautiful tenor notes, clear diction and sense of style. The Orchestra was ably led by Edouard Lambert".

1941

503 (477) REQUIEM (Verdi) (2) 11th Apr. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Elizabeth Coote (M.S.), Mr. Heddle Nash (T), Mr. Arnold Matters (B).

The audience which "packed the Town Hall was stirred to great enthusiasm by the impressive performance. ..." ("Argus"). "A very impressive interpretation was given by Prof. Heinze who found his forces well up to their work. Mr. Dan Hardy had trained the chorus to attend to purity of tone and dynamic intensities. ...A fully competent cast of soloists" ("Age"). The Orchestra was highly commended.

A remarkable year is the key-note of the Annual Report. "Not only has the active membership increased when similar organisations have found difficulty in carrying on, but public interest in our concerts has grown even to excitement. This was demonstrated at each concert held during the year." The Committee asserted that the great success of the year and the "Society's advancement to a position which it has never previously enjoyed in all its long history, are due largely to the raising of the standard of the performances and to the maintenance of that standard..." The triennial test led to the retirement of 15 members, leaving an effective membership of 225. Only jarring note was a reference to the refusal of the daily press to give any publicity to the Society's concerts (as distinct from advertising which was paid for). War-time restrictions had, apparently, begun to make changes in customary practice. The Treasurer's Report disclosed a surplus of £15/9/5, representing the result of the Society's own transactions apart from concert finance. "That the help and advice of the Hon. Treasurer (Mr. Rashleigh) is always available is a source of confidence to all..." appears in a special notation.

504 (478) FAUST (Gounod) (9) 9th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (Marg.), Miss Kathleen Seabrook (Sieb.), Miss Winifred Gardner (Martha), Mr. Heddle Nash (Faust), Mr. Alan Eddy (Meph.), Mr. Arnold Matters (Val.), Mr. William Crougey (Wag.).

"The captious could easily find fault in the presentation. On the whole the result a matter of congratulation for all concerned, especially Prof. Heinze. Dan Hardy (Choirmaster), Frederick Earle (Organist) and Miss Jean Starling (Pianist) are all to be thanked for their share in the production of this enormous musical undertaking, ...The tremendous appreciation of a capacity house should encourage those responsible to see that Melbourne gets more of these well-known operas" ("Argus").

505 (479) JUDAS MACCABEAUS" (Handel) (11) 18th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Amelia Scarce (M.S.), Mr. Heddle Nash (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

Guest Conductor Mr. Andersen Tyrer directed the concert. "The performance...was victorious on several accounts. Soloists were almost beyond reproach. ...The choir was heard at its best in choruses of vital interest and dramatic power. The Melbourne Symphony orchestra, now finely trained, admirably supported in the accompaniments".

506 (480) THE MESSIAH (123) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Amelia Scarce (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Anthony Strange (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

The Hall was filled. "An outstanding performance" which "reflected great credit on all concerned". "The well-trained choir, accompanied by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra presented the great choruses with stress

upon their weight and meaning". All of the Soloists were commended. "Prof. Heinze concluded a busy and successful season in conducting the oratorio".

1942

507 (481) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (3) 3rd Apr.*, 1st Sub.

Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Anthony Strange (T), Mr. Arnold Matters (B) .

"It is greatly to the credit of the performers that, in a masterpiece so deeply moving, the cumulative results should be so expressive and overwhelming in periods of climax". Soloists, Choir and Orchestra were each credited with fine work and a tribute paid to Mr. Dan Hardy for his work of preparation.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 23rd May, Town Hall. Assisted.

An Empire Day Demonstration arranged by the Australian Women's National League. The Society assisted with "Bugles of England" (Donaldson) (1) and "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar) (5) with Miss Mary Lilley as Soloist. Mr. Dan Hardy was the Conductor.

"In spite of the unsettled conditions due to the War, the Society's record during the past year is one of continuous progress", stated the Annual Report and added, " Although wartime conditions have had their effect on the Choir, particularly the men's sections, we have not had to curtail our activities in any way, nor has the choir's efficiency been reduced." The only regret in the report related to the unsatisfactory number of subscribers, 168. Failing health compelled the Librarian, Mr. A. E. Broadbent, to resign; an appreciation of his services over a long period was noted. The absence from the Annual Meeting (20/10/42) of the President, Sir Owen Dixon, was regretted but the whole Society rejoices at the high honour conferred on him by his appointment as Australian Plenipotentiary to the United States of America." The Treasurer's Report showed a surplus of £9/11/7 which increased the credit in the Revenue Account to £274/5/10.

508 (482) MISCELLANEOUS (143) 25th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

"Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton) (3). Overture-"Oberon" (Weber) (6), Sixth Symphony (Beethoven) (1).

"The Society, Orchestra and Raymond Beatty, came through the ordeal with flying colours....Raymond Beatty gave full force to the Soloist's narrative. The orchestra tackled the unusual score with vigour and understanding. Mr. F. Earle at the organ heightened the colourfulness of the general effect. The two orchestral items were warmly praised and "the performers were vigorously applauded by a well-satisfied audience.

509 (483) HIAWATHA (Coleridge-Taylor) (18) 19th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Mr. Anthony Strange (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

"A large and appreciative audience". "Choral work of outstanding merit marked the choir's singing. ..in conjunction with M.S. Orchestra conducted by Prof. Bernard Heinze. The soloists lent distinction to the performance by masterly handling of the solos". The Orchestra "portrayed the touching scenes with charm of colour and directness of expression with which the score abounds".

510 (484) THE MESSIAH (124) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

A "vast audience" filled the Town Hall. "The chorus, inspired by the Soloists was dynamic; in "For Unto Us" and in "He Trusted in God" obtained a seldom reached dramatic intensity....The orchestra gave magnificent support". Specific praise was extended to each of the Soloists with special reference to "the rare excellence of William Herbert's tenor voice and expressive phrasing".

1943

511 (485) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (5) 23rd Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (c), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Arnold Matters (Bar.), Mr. Stanley clarkson (B).

"A fitting culmination to the observance of Good Friday was the inspired performance of the work....Prof. Heinze brought all through the difficult phases by his intense concentration....The performance was full of pathos and colour". "The sublime work was heard in silence, the audience accepting the Conductor's advice to refrain from applause".

The Annual Report noted that "despite many distracting conditions, your Society has completed its 90th year with a record of achievement possibly unequalled in any past year. The membership roll despite the calls of War Service and Man Power has been splendidly maintained and the Society's concerts have received public support in a larger measure than ever before," and, further - "through the consistently good concert

returns - we are making some return to the Australian Broadcasting Commission whose co-operation, through the Agreement with this Society, had undoubtedly helped to bring about a more perfect realisation of the ideals for which, so many years ago, the Society was formed." By a movement inaugurated in January, the subscribers list was increased from 168 to 312. Noted with regret was the death of Mr. R. J. Oehr, one of the Vice Presidents and Secretary of the Society for 31 years. A large number of members attended a memorial service to the late Mr. Oehr at Cairns Memorial Church, East Melbourne, on 16th May, and took part in the musical section of the service. Also regretted was the death of Mr. William Boulter, Librarian. Mr. T. Matters was appointed to the vacant position. Early in 1943 the Secretary, Mr. Paull Fiddian was granted leave of absence on enlisting with the second A.I.F. At the request of the Committee, the Treasurer, Mr. W. B. Rashleigh undertook the important duties of Secretary and his excellent services were acknowledged with gratitude, likewise the assistance rendered by Mr; D. N. Connal as Assistant Secretary. A surplus of £18/7/7 was shown in the accounts which increased the Revenue Account (in credit) to £292/13/5.

512 (486) CARMEN (Bizet) (1) 17th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Heather Kinnaird (Carmen), Miss Peggy Knibb (Micaela) , Miss Mary Miller (Frasquita) , Miss Vera Higginbotham (Mercedes), Mr. Lionel Cecil (Don Jose), Mr. William Crougey (Morales and 11 Dancario), Mr. Frederick Collier (Zuniga and Escamilo), Mr. William Herbert (11 Remendado).

Though shorn of the essential stage adjuncts, it was a pleasurable performance. "The chorus remained alert and sang well". The various solo parts were well sustained. St. Paul's Cathedral Boys' Choir assisted. Owing to the illness of Mr. William Laird, Mr. Frederick Collier sang two parts with credit. There was "an enormous audience".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 5th Aug., Town Hall. Assisted.

Fourth Symphony Orchestral Concert, 1943 Series, by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The Society assisted with "Choral Dances" from "Prince Igor" (Borodin) (2).

513 (487) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (4) 2nd Octo, Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Serenade for Strings (Elgar) (1).

Miss Etta Bernard (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Arnold Matters (B) .The A.B.C. Wireless Chorus assisted. "The choir sang with every shade and degree of pure tone while attending to the essentials of choral art.... It is doubtful if the choir has ever attained such a success". The fine work of the Orchestra and Soloists was acknowledged as well as the "devotional atmosphere in which the audience heard this deeply moving work. At the end, instead of the usual hand-clapping - a few minutes tense silence - the message as well as the music had reached its goal".

514 (488) THE MESSIAH (125) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Adele McKay (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

"The vast audience came directly under its spell". "The performance lacked none of the religious atmosphere which one associates with the oratorio. Prof. Heinze was fortunate in his four soloists who gave of their very best which could have hardly been excelled". "The whole performance was a very fine one". "Constant applause was disconcerting to those who wished to hear the great thrilling choruses as an aid to subjective devotion".

1944

-- MISCELLANEOUS, Jan.-Feb., Town Hall. Assisted.

Seven Subscription Concerts given by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in a Beethoven Festival. The Society and the A.B.C. Wireless Chorus assisted at the final concert (19/2/44) in the Ninth (Choral) Symphony (7).

515 (489) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (64) 7th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Amelia Scarce (M.S.), Miss Frances Forbes (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

"The Hall was filled before the performance began". "The chorus, trained by Dan Hardy and responsive to Prof. Heinze, rose to the occasion in noble and excited numbers while mindful of contrasts provided by contemplative relief. The orchestra supported with much animation.... Reasonable speeds would have increased impressiveness". The Soloists were commended - "Harold Williams lost no opportunity of bringing every aspect of the title role into dignified expression".

516 (490) FAUST (Gounod) (10) 7th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Peggy Knibb (Marg.), Miss Vera Terry (Siebel), Miss Winifred Gardner (Martha), Mr. William Herbert (Faust), Mr. Arnold Matters (Val.), Mr. Alan Eddy (Meph.), Mr. Morris Williams (Wag.).

"A pleasurable performance. ...In the absence through indisposition of Prof. Bernard Heinze, Mr. Dan Hardy conducted with skill and decision. The A.B.C. Orchestra, was equal to the demands made on it but colour and dash were lacking at times. The performance was uneven but the choral work was good throughout".
"The audience was responsive throughout".

517 (-) FAUST (Gounod) (11) 8th Jun., Town Hall. Extra.

Repeat performance with the same Soloists, given in aid of the Chinese Soldiers' Comforts Funds. As a result, cheques for £350 and £90 were handed to the Chinese Soldiers' Comforts Funds and to the A.B.C.'s Patriotic Fund for the provision of wireless sets in service establishments.

"Constant progress", despite the unsettled conditions due to the War, was the key note of the Annual Report submitted to the Annual Meeting (31/10/44). "The active membership has been maintained and the Society's concerts have consistently received a large measure of public support." During the financial year, the Society made no less than eight public appearances - three in opera, three in oratorio, one performance of the Choral Symphony and assistance at an orchestral concert. Truly a notable year. Subscribers increased to 550. Triennial test was held and while it led to the retirement of a few members, "the standard, generally, was particularly gratifying." Mr. Fiddian resumed duty as Secretary in October. The Treasurer's Report showed a surplus of £7/19/0 and an accumulated credit of £300/12/5.

--MISCELLANEOUS, 2nd and 4th Sep., Town Hall. Assisted.

Sixth concert (repeated) of the 1944 Subscription Series given by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The Society assisted with performances of "Appalachia" (Delius) (1 & 2) Soloist, Mr. Morris Williams. First performance in Melbourne.

Prof. Heinze conducted. "The choir found the peculiar harmony difficult to secure, but as the work advanced, the strength of the choir as an expressive body became evident" ("Age"). "Well sung" ("Argus").

518 (491) MASS IN D (Beethoven) (1) 30th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd, Sub.

Miss Sylvia Fisher (S), Miss Margaret Murphy (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Richard Watson (B).

"Nearly 3000 present an impressive performance... for the performers there can be nothing but praise. The chorus and orchestra tackled their task with vigour, intelligence and musical insight and gave their Conductor, Prof. Bernard Heinze, their full attention. ...The Soloists were well contrasted and their voices blended beautifully" ("Argus"). The "Age", "Sun" and "Herald" were equally warm in praise of the presentation. Inter alia, respectively, "a debt of gratitude should be paid to all for the splendid effort", "one of the really noble achievements in its long life", "a stirring performance that carried tumultuous praise and buoyant faith". Mr. Dan Hardy was "rightly led to the public view by the gratified Conductor".

519 (492) THE MESSIAH (126) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Margaret Murphy (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

One press account was mainly concerned with a criticism of the tempi. " ...The quality of the voices was normally beautiful. The error was in mistaking velocity for vitality. The soloists gave splendid service". Another account touched upon the tempi employed but had much praise to offer, adding "the crowded audience found this performance much to its liking".

1945

520 (493) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (6) 30th Mar.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Margaret Murphy (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B), Mr. Morris Williams (Bar.).

"The performance received reverent and finely balanced treatment by the Society, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Soloists. ...conducted by Prof. Bernard Heinze, Dan Hardy Chorus Master and Frederick Earle at the organ. The merit of the performance was enhanced by the excellence of the instrumental and vocal solo work generously provided by the composer" ("Argus"). "The choruses held their dramatic power and the matchless chorales were beautifully expressive, only broken phrasing needing attention. ...and had the final chorus been unhurried, the effect would have been profound". William Herbert was "beyond reproach" ("Age"). "By request, the audience of 3000 refrained from applause".

521 (494) REQUIEM (Verdi) (3) 9th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Elizabeth Coote (M.S.), Mr. John Fullard (T), Mr. Harold Williams (B).

"Dynamic contrasts and shading of first importance to chorus and orchestra were not neglected though not always well measured. The defects were balanced by the deeply impressive effect of the whole. ...prolonged appreciation was expressed at the conclusion". "The Soloists ably conveyed Verdi's emotions to the audience".

Again, the Annual Report, while referring to unsettled conditions due to the War, was able to record "continued progress". Performers numbered 235 and subscribers reached the record total of 622. A consistently large measure of public support was noted. Freedom from box office worries was also noted, with gratitude, enabling the Choir and executive officers to give their whole attention to performances and "to the maintenance of standards which concert-goers and broadcast listeners have come to expect from the Society." Mr. Connal's recovery from a critical illness and resumption of his duties as Assistant Secretary were noted with pleasure. Tribute was paid to the whole hearted and valuable assistance of Mr. W. B. Rashleigh. His report indicated a satisfactory position. Income for the year showed an excess of £59/14/0 over expenditure and an amicable settlement of an outstanding loan relative to the estate of the late Mr. A. M. Nicholas, a former President, left a credit of £280. Revenue Account, in credit, showed £640/6/5.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 29th Sep./2nd Oct., Town Hall. Ass'td.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra 's Seventh Concert 1945 Series. The Society assisted with "Rio Grande" (Constant Lambert) (1 & 2), Miss Margaret Murphy (C) and Miss Mary McLeod (P'st), First performance in Melbourne. And Choral Dances from "Prince Igor" (Borodin) (3 & 4) .

The Choir sang "Rio Grande" "with great zest" and the Dances provided a "brilliant conclusion" for the programme.

522 (495) MISCELLANEOUS (144) 21st Dec., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

"Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton) (4), "Seadrift" (Delius), Introduction and Allegro for Strings (Elgar) (1). Mr. Harold Williams Soloist in both choral numbers.

"Beauty pervaded the performance" of "Seadrift". "The performers, feeling the spell, cast it upon the audience. Grateful acknowledgment was made of their efforts". As to the "Feast" "the choral work, especially the clear enunciation, was of outstanding merit". The Orchestra and Soloist were commended. Elgar's introduction was "a splendidly animated interpretation".

523 (496) THE MESSIAH (127) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Peggy Knibb (S), Miss Gwen Collett (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

"An enormous audience received the performance with unabated enthusiasm" despite one critic's comment that "some choruses could have been sung better". "The four soloists were well equipped, and Prof. Heinze, by strictly keeping them from a tendency to drag the arias, noticeably intensified the quality of the singing". "Frequent applause proved a disturbing element".

1946

524 (497) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (7) Town Hall, 19th Apr.* 1st Sub.

Miss Irene Bennett (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B), Mr. Thomas Riddell (Bar.).

"The vast audience was greatly impressed". "The performance, directed by Prof. Heinze was suggestive in deliniation, graphic in descriptive portrayal and powerful in personal appeal. The chorus, sonorous and flexible, was alert in dramatic scenes, singing with the living intensity which Bach desired. The sublime chorales were most beautifully sung. Something has yet to be acquired to make the final chorus a complete summary". All the Soloists were warmly commended and the good orchestral work acknowledged.

"Steady progress" was again noted in the Annual Report which was submitted to members at the Annual Meeting held in the lower Town Hall, on 17th September, after which a social evening was held to celebrate the addition of Royal to the Society's title. Continued happy relations with the Australian Broadcasting Commission were noted and the smooth working of the Agreement with that body was "claimed to be distinctly beneficial to the Commission, the Society, and most important of all, the community at large". Early in the calendar year, the Society was notified that its petition for authority to add the word Royal to its name had been granted by His Majesty The King. By an Order-in-Council dated 20th March, 1946, the Society became the "Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society." Another pleasant item was that, after agitation over many years and a renewed effort on somewhat different legal grounds, a ruling was obtained that the Society's concerts were exempted from Entertainment Tax. Chorus strength was stated at 240 and "it is gratifying to note that many young people are joining the Choir with the result that the average age is constantly falling." The Report also noted that the Committee viewed with pleasure "the great increase in choral music shown by the establishment of many suburban choral societies" and that the Society had "contributed greatly to their success by making available experience in organisation and the many works comprising our valuable library, without which the younger societies could not carryon" (Seven Victorian choirs were listed). During the year, Mr. Paull Fiddian relinquished the duties of Secretary and an appropriate recognition of ten years service as such was included in the Annual Report. With his flair for

concert management and efficient administration, Mr. Fiddian made a notable contribution to the Society during a difficult period and his services are gratefully acknowledged. Mr. W. B. Rashleigh was appointed to the vacant position and Mr. D. N. Connal became Hon. Treasurer in addition to his duties as Assistant Secretary. The Treasurer's Report showed a surplus of £29.

525 (-) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (65) 24th Aug., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Sylvia Fisher (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Maxwell Cohen (B).

"The hall was filled to capacity". The performance was given to mark the centenary year; the first presentation was at Birmingham on 26th August 1846. "The chorus, trained by Dan Hardy, has never been heard to greater advantage. The tone was pure, flexible and beautifully modulated...." "The orchestra's contribution was superb in all departments". The Soloists were warmly commended with high marks for the role of the Prophet. "Prof. Bernard Heinze conducted in masterly fashion". Altogether an extremely worthy "centenary" celebration.

-- DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (Cancelled). 3rd Sub.

On account of a transport strike the performance was cancelled. This is the second record of a cancellation of an advertised concert. *By a double coincidence, the first cancellation also related to "The Dream of Gerontius" -the cause again being a strike; on this occasion, by members of the Victorian Police Force.*

526 (499) THE MESSIAH (128) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Mary Miller (S), Miss Noella Cornish (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B).

"A very large audience received the performance with every sign of appreciation" despite a very warm evening. Owing to the absence of Prof. Heinze in Canada, the performance was conducted by Mr. Dan Hardy who "kept the contrasts in the choruses very clear" and never allowed the performance "to sink to the level of massed choral histrionics".

1947

-- AIDA (Verdi) (1) 15th Mar., Town Hall. Assisted.

Miss Sylvia Fisher (Aida), Miss Wilma Whitney (Amneris), Mr. William Herbert (Radames), Mr. Frederick Collier (Ramphis), Mr. William Crougey (The King), Mr. Morris Williams (Amonasro) .

"It was notable for the high standard and even quality of the singing by the Principals and for the grand manner in which the ..Choir of 170 voices, in association with the A.B.C. Melbourne Orchestra reacted to the able direction of Joseph Post" who "was accorded an enthusiastic response from the audience" ("Argus").

527 (500) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (8) 4th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Stanley Clarkson (B), Mr. Morris Williams (Bar.).

"The choir, singing with beautiful tone, accepted its vocation earnestly. The descriptive phrases were vivid and energetic. In chorales of matchless beauty and pathos, the singers excelled. The orchestra assisted in the immense expressive range with illuminative accompaniments. The organ added desirable touches. A revision of tempi is overdue in several choruses". The Soloists were praised; Mr. Herbert's rhythm, style and vocalisation were "beyond praise" ("Age") .Prof. Heinze conducted (his first appearance since his return from Canada) and he was very warmly applauded.

528 (501) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (5) 7th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

" A magnificent performance". "The choir excelled itself. Its singing was deeply beautiful. ..the conclusion of the first part was most moving in its supernatural qualities". " A profound impression resulted from the deeply moving performance". Mr. Payne made the first of his 11 appearances as a soloist.

The Annual Report again bore witness as to the happy results attendant on the Agreement with the Australian Broadcasting Commission and to a year of "steady progress and artistic achievement" all of which led to "conferring a very great benefit on all the music-loving members of the community." A sincere tribute was made to Prof. Bernard Heinze, "who has during his 20 years occupancy of the position of Conductor completely revolutionised the outlook and standards of performance, as well as adding many new works to the repertoire of the Society." Unfortunately the earlier decision exempting the Society's concerts from Entertainment Tax was rescinded. The triennial test was carried through by the Audition Committee and revealed, "an excellent general result." A few members voluntarily retired; several others were retired on the recommendation of the Committee. To all, thanks were extended for services rendered-in some cases over many years. Assistance to new and to smaller choral bodies was again noted. The death of Mr. C. A.

Holmes who had acted as Hon. Auditor over many years was recorded with regret. Financial accounts showed a surplus of £55/12/6.

529 (502) MASS IN B MINOR (Bach) (2) 13th Sep., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Sylvia Fisher (S), Miss Wilma Whitney (M.S.), Miss Noella Cornish (C), Mr. Leslie Adams (T), Mr. Gunther Hershberg (B).

"The performance was one of the outstanding landmarks of this year's concert season". Despite some shortcoming. "the singing of the choir was undoubtedly the most noteworthy feature...for, under the Conductor, the massiveness of the tonal and polyphonic beauty which so characterises this Mass impressed the audience deeply".

-- BRAHMS FESTIVAL, 13th Nov.-13th Dec., St. Paul's Cathedral. Assisted.

Sydney Myer Free Concerts conducted by Prof. Bernard Heinze. The final concert, "Requiem" (Brahms) (3), was given by the Society, assisted by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Soloists, Miss Thea Phillips and Mr Maxwell Cohen."

A profoundly expressive performance to a keenly receptive audience" ("Age").

530 (503) THE MESSIAH (129) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Patricia Howard (S), Miss Trudy Daunt (C), Mr. Lewis Dawe (T), Mr. Victor Harding (B).

"The performance. ...thrilled the audience by the conviction which it brought. The choir sang with skill and zest, the orchestra fortified its efforts and the soloists sought the inner meaning of their roles". "Prof. Heinze directed the performance which aimed at a graphic as well as a reflective style".

1948

531 ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (9) 26th Mar.*, Town (504) Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Godfrey Stirling (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

"The chorus gave of its best, the double choruses were graphic, and the chorales, floating in from afar, were deeply impressive. The orchestra added support and colour. Mansel Kirby presided at the harpsichord and Fred Earle at the organ". The Soloists' excellent work was acknowledged, with Miss Phillips "supreme". Prof. Heinze conducted "an extremely moving performance".

The Annual Report is not available. The Treasurer's Report disclosed a surplus of £104/5/8 for the year with Accumulated Fund at £829/5/1.

532 (505) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (6) 6th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Wilma Whitney (C), Mr. John Dudley (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

"The choir was first rate. It rose to many dramatic occasions and fell to the smallest pianissimos with admirable control that suggested much rehearsal". "A most moving experience". Soloists and Orchestra were commended. Mr. Eugene Goossens conducted and he was highly delighted with the Choir - "a virtuoso choir", he declared.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 29th/30th Oct., Town Hall. Assisted.

Ninth Celebrity Concert 1948 (repeated). The Society assisted with "West Wind" and "The Silent Land" (Cyril Jenkins) (1-2). Both items were "well presented and pleasant to hear". The composer sat in the audience.

-- KING DAVID (Honegger) Nov. 3rd Sub.

Concert cancelled. The third recorded cancellation.

533 (506) THE MESSIAH (130) 25th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Auriel Garratt (S), Miss Trudy Daunt (C), Mr. Harold Blair (T), Mr. Thomas Hopkins (B).

The performance "was of a high standard". "The choral singing, conducted with artistry and thoroughness, was exceptionally good". "The aboriginal tenor, Harold Blair, impressed by the feeling he introduced into his singing. ..." "The beautiful playing of the orchestra was a delight".

1949

534 (507) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (10) 15th Apr.* 1st Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Godfrey Stirling (T), Mr. Robert Payne (Bar.), Mr. Keith Neilson (B).

"This peculiarly Good Friday music was sung by the choir with a verve and appreciation that lifted it into altitudes of celestial expression. ...The orchestra produced string tones of great beauty and the wood wind

was responsible for some lovely moments". "The unaccompanied chorales were characterised by flawless intonation and sincerity". The Soloists ably supported by fine singing.

535 (508) KING DAVID (Honegger) (1) 24th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Auriel Garratt (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Narrators-Miss Nanette Nutt and Mr. Kenneth Lawrence.

Symphony in D Minor (Cesar Franck) (1).

"Was most enthusiastically received. ...The highlight was the splendid choral singing. ...At the same time the entire performance was characterised by ideal unity from all sections" ("Argus"). "The Incantation of the Witch of Endor was the most exciting and unearthly thing in it. Chorus and orchestra here reached a pitch of supernatural excitement and unhibited color that can hardly have been equaled anywhere in music at any time. The final Allelulia ...was just tremendous... Sir Bernard Heinze conducted and made the orchestral participation a remarkable event" ("Age"). "The oratorio was preceded by a deeply beautiful interpretation of the Cesar Franck D Minor Symphony". Mr. Dowd made the first of his 11 appearances as a soloist.

The 96th Annual Report was presented with "considerable pride in the achievements in the year that has passed." In congratulating Sir Bernard Heinze on the honor of knighthood bestowed upon him by His Majesty The King, the Society "feels that at no time has this honor been more deserved." The smooth working of the Agreement with the Australian Broadcasting Commission was again acknowledged. Reference was made to reasons for the cancellation of the third subscription concert ("King David") and to its presentation in June when it "proved to be one of the most thrilling and finished performances of the Society's history." An innovation in regard thereto was a "Concert Preview", arranged by the Australian Broadcasting Commission and given over the air by the Society's Secretary . Regretful reference was made to the death of Mr. Keith Roberts who had capably served on the Committee for several years as a representative of Subscribers. The Treasurer's Report indicated a surplus of £111/19/9 with Accumulated Fund at £941/4/10.

536 (509) THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE (Pierne) (1) Town Hall, 29th Oct. 3rd Sub.

First performance in Australia.

Miss Elsa Haas, Miss Auriel Garratt, Miss Halinka de Tarczyńska (8), Mr. Keith Neilson (B), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T).

A choir of 160 girls from the Methodist Ladies' College sang the children's part. Trained by Miss Ruth Flockhart, they sang as one voice with absolute clarity while their stage deportment was beyond reproach. Indeed they "stole the show". The Choir, Orchestra and Soloists capably supported the children and "great audience enthusiasm marked the conclusion". The Society was commended for its enterprise and the hope was expressed that the performance would not be the last.

--MISCELLANEOUS, 19th, 21st & 22nd Nov., Town Hall. Assisted.

Tenth (and final) of 1949 Subscription Concerts by the Victorian Symphony Orchestra under direction of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. The Society assisted at each concert with a performance of Beethoven's Ninth (Choral) Symphony (8, 9 and 10).

537 (510) THE MESSIAH (131) 24th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Betty Fretwell (8), Miss Trudy Daunt (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

"In most respects a fine performance". "The chorus singing was nicely modulated and swelled into vast ecstasies of sound in 'Lift up Your Heads', 'Hallelujah' and 'Worthy is The Lamb'. Some weakness in blending the Orchestra with the Soloists was noted. In a good caste of Soloists, Mr. Ronald Dowd was outstanding.

1950

538 (511) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (11) 7th Apr.*, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Elsie Findlay (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Godfrey Stirling (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

"A deeply moving and unified interpretation of the great work. The choral singing was excellently moulded. Probably the most beautiful singing of all was that of the unaccompanied chorales. 'Be Near Me When Dying' which under sensitive direction was whispered in a way that hushed the entire hall". "Robert Payne's outstandingly fine singing was one of the most vital factors in the success of the performance".

The 97th Annual Report indicated that the three concerts given in the financial year (the fourth was presented in July) "were well up to the Society's standard" and that "performances have a huge listening public all over Australia and many expressions of appreciation are received from distant States." In referring

to a marked reduction in applications for use of the Society's extensive library by other Societies during the past two years, the Report significantly comments on-"a tendency, noticeable in our own Society, for a retrogression of the interest in choral music which was at its peak under war conditions. The impact of habits formed under abnormal conditions, such as the Tramway strike, and the present day tendency to seek freedom and excitement has a marked effect on the conduct of a large proportion of the general public, and is reflected in the lessening of the number of people who are happy to work under the loyal and arduous conditions necessary for the training of a first class choral singer." Regret was expressed at the death of Mr. T. I. D. Matters an enthusiastic member of the Choir for many years, his activities including Committeeman, Captain of First Tenors and Librarian. The financial accounts showed a surplus of £57/6/2 and Accumulated Funds standing at £998/11/0.

539 (512) B MINOR MASS (Bach) (3) 7th Jul., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips (S) , Miss Muriel Luyk (M.S.) , Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. William Herbert (T), Mr. Alan Eddy (B).

Owing to the illness of Sir Bernard Heinze, his place was taken at very short notice by Mr. Charles Groves, an English Conductor who was visiting Australia under exchange with Mr. Joseph Post. He "made good use of the little time allotted to him. The change was obviously the cause of a lack of confidence in the performers at the beginning but a gain of strength came in the 'Gloria'. ... 'Confietor Unum Baptisma' was below the standard of the Philharmonic". The performance "gave the packed audience great enjoyment". Among the Soloists Mr. William Herbert was warmly commended.

540 (513) REQUIEM (Verdi) (4) 14th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Patricia Baird (S), Miss Florence Taylor (M.S.), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Morris Williams (B).

"This lovely music was given such a satisfying performance that Mr. Eugene Goossens (who conducted) may be persuaded to conduct Victorian choirs much more frequently than hitherto. He knows what he wants and is able to extract it. He produced the most beautiful pianissimo choral singing heard here in recent years. Any blemishes came with the fortissimos. The Soloists found favour; the two ladies making their first appearance.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, Sunday, 17th Dec., 3 p.m., Town Hall. Assisted.

Final of the 1950 Series of Free Matinee Concerts. Conducted by Sir Bernard Heinze. The Society contributed Five Australian Carols (W. G. James) (1), "For Unto Us a Child is Born" (11) and "Hallelujah" (27) from Handel's "Messiah". The carols were recorded and played by the British Broadcasting Commission in London on Australia Day following.

541 (514) THE MESSIAH (132) 23rd Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Alice Halifax (S), Miss Florence Taylor (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Morris Williams (B), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

Three press accounts spoke in adverse terms as to both Choir and Orchestra, though conceding praise to the Soloists. A fourth had little to say regarding the performance itself. The tenor of the three accounts suggested that the writers had acted in collusion. Nevertheless the Committee and others agreed that a meritorious performance had been given. A significant change in date is touched upon in extracts from the Annual Report.

1951

542 (515) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (Bach) (12) 23rd Mar. *, Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Elsie Findlay (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Godfrey Stirling (T), Mr. Robert Payne (Bar.), Mr. Keith Neilson (B).

"Generally the performance reached a commendable standard". "The disappointing sections were the vast opening and closing choruses which were taken too quickly". "The choir appeared to realise how much was demanded of it, achieving pastel shades of musical colour in the unaccompanied chorales yet putting on the Royal purple when fervour and emotion ran high. Sir Bernard Heinze conducted and extracted nice tone from the strings".

543 (516) REQUIEM (Verdi) (5) 13th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Patricia Baird (S), Miss Florence Taylor (a), Mr. John Franks (T), Mr. Morris Williams (B).

In taking over the direction of the performance "Joseph Post rose to the occasion with great skill ...in an admirable interpretation of this work. The choral singing was well disciplined and often beautiful". The Soloists were given high marks but there were reservations in regard to Mr. Franks.

The 98th Annual Report commented on the five subscription concerts given in the financial year, "and events which were entirely new to the experience of the Society ...For the five concerts, £our different conductors officiated" £or reasons stated. For the first time since 1854, the Christmas performance of "The Messiah" was given on a night other than Christmas Eve or Christmas Night, Le., 2Srd December. It was not broadcast but a recording was played at the usual time on Christmas Night, thus affording all concerned the opportunity to hear their own performance. The change, initiated by the Musicians' Union, was agreed upon after consultations with the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Musical Union and the Society. Recorded with regret was the death of Mr. Fred Glover, a valuable member of the choir and a Committeeman for several years. The surplus for the year was £71/18/4, bringing the Accumulated Fund to £1070/9/4.

544 T(517) HE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE (Pierne) (2) 28th Aug., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Thea Phillips, Miss Betty Fretwell, Miss Barbara Wilson (S), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Keith Neilson (B).

Again the children's part was taken by the choir of the Methodist Ladies' College, trained by Miss Ruth Flockhart. On this occasion 190 girls took part. As only about 25 appeared in the 1949 performance, practically a new choir had to be trained. Sir Bernard Heinze conducted "a brilliantly successful performance". "The choir, Victorian Symphony Orchestra and an experienced group of Soloists. ...did able work. But the Methodist Ladies' Choir 'stole the show' as the composer intended". The singing and deportment of the girls was all that could be desired. This and the previous performance were the only occasions in the Society's long history when it was associated with a large girls' choir.

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 7th Dec., Town Hall. Assisted.

A concert presented by the Victorian Symphony Orchestra. Alceo Galliera conducted. The Society's Choir contributed "Salmo" (Marcello) , "Salmo" (Vivaldi) and "Gloria" (Vivaldi).

Soloists -Miss Betty Fretwell (S) , Miss Jean Cameron (C), Miss Muriel Luyk (C), Mr. Alan Eddy (B). First performance in Australia of all three.

"The choir showed a great and unsuspected capacity for imaginative singing in its items".

545 (518) THE MESSIAH (133) 22nd Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Linda Parker (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Robert Payne (B).

"Soloists, choristers and orchestra showed a stimulating appreciation of the work and a collective desire to do justice to Handel as well as to the expectations of a large and earnestly responsive audience". The Soloists were described as "competent". The performance was recorded and broadcast at the usual time on Christmas night.

1952

--MEMORIAL SERVICE, Sun., 17th Feb., Parliament House Steps. Assisted.

In respect to the death of H.M. King George VI. Salvation Army H.Q. Staff Band led a combined Choir and people in the musical part of the service. Hymns sung were "O God Our Help in Ages Past" and "Abide with Me". Sir Bernard Heinze conducted and the Society was strongly represented. Unfortunately rain fell steadily all day.

546 (519) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (13) (Bach) 11th Apr.* , Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Patricia Moore (S), Miss Florence Taylor (C), Mr. Godfrey Stirling (T), Mr. Robert Payne (Bar.), Mr. Keith Neilson (B).

"Choir and orchestra conducted by Sir Bernard Heinze made an excellent impression. The chorales revealed the choir in one of the best performances it has given". There was praise for the Soloists. "The continuo was as usual furnished by the distinguished Mancell Kirby. Fred Earle was the organist. The audience filled the Town Hall".

547 (520) ELIJAH (Mendelssohn) (66) 25th Jun., Town Hall. 2nd Sub.

Miss Peggy Knibb (S), Miss Florence Taylor (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. John Brownlee (B).

A full house. Press accounts agreed on the merits of the performance - "memorable", "worthy", "outstanding" - with praise for all sections. In an excellent cast of Soloists Mr. Brownlee's portrayal of the Prophet was a notable one. "The choir was responsible for many dramatic moments. ...did much admirable work in combination with an alertly virile orchestra". Sir Bernard Heinze's control of the Orchestra was particularly commented upon. Mr. Lance Hardy's excellent work at the organ was noted. Twenty four years earlier, Conductor, Principal Soloist and Choir had performed the same work together.

The 99th Annual Report stated, inter alia, that "the loyalty of the performers had never been more marked, nor had their efforts been received with greater praise by musical critics." Tributes were paid to the Conductor, Sir Bernard Heinze and to Mr. Dan Hardy (Chorus Master) "who has never served the Society better or with finer results than in the year under review." During the year the Society's Secretary was invited to act as organiser of Music for the reception of Princess Elizabeth (later postponed) and to join the conference of State leaders who arranged the memorial service to the late King George VI. To both, members accorded their enthusiastic support and formed the core of the choirs associated for the purpose. Although the death of Mr. J. P. Bainbridge, O.B.E., J.P., took place after the close of the financial year, his passing was noted in the Report, with great regret. Though not a performing member, he had since boyhood been associated with the Society. For many years he represented subscribers on the Committee, for 25 years acted as Chairman of Committee and for 15 years was Vice President. His consistent advocacy was mainly responsible for the Society's attainment of "Royal" in its title. Mr. A. T. Martin, a choir member and Committeeman for 20 years, was elected Chairman in his stead. The Treasurer's Report showed a surplus of £92/17/4 for the year and Accumulated Fund standing at £1163/6/8.

548 (548) THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Elgar) (7) 11th Oct., Town Hall. 3rd Sub.

Miss Dorothy Deegan (M.S.) , Mr. Ronald Dowd (T) , Mr. Alan Eddy (B).

The Society was associated with the A.B.C. Melbourne Singers and Victorian Symphony Orchestra. Due to the absence of Sir Bernard Heinze in Canada, Mr. Joseph Post conducted and "produced one of the best performances of its kind heard here in recent years, its virtues being -well-controlled chorus, intelligent singing by Soloists and finely-shaped orchestral utterance". Corner stone of the performance was the beautiful singing and sensitive interpretation of Mr. Ronald Dowd in the part of Gerontius. All reports accorded him the highest praise. The oratorio was preceded by Concertino for Double String Orchestra (Goossens) (1).

549 (549) THE MESSIAH (134) 20th Dec., Town Hall. 4th Sub.

Miss Peggy Knibb (S), Miss Florence Taylor (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Charles Skase (B).

A full house greeted the "Hundredth Annual Performance". Mr. Norman Chinner of Adelaide conducted with "a strong personality and a forceful vitality". It was an exceedingly fine performance and well worthy of the occasion. All sections contributed notably as well as Mr. Lance Hardy at the organ. Audience, Chorus and Orchestra "went wild at the conclusion" in giving an ovation to the Conductor in which Mr. Dan Hardy was joined. The performance was recorded and broadcast at the usual hour on Christmas night.

1953

550 (550) ST. MATTHEW PASSION (14) 28th Mar., Town Hall. 1st Sub.

Miss Betty Fretwell (S), Miss Joan Jones (C), Mr. Ronald Dowd (T), Mr. Robert Payne (Bar.), Mr. Keith Neilson (B).

For the first time in 83 years, the Easter concert was given on a night other than Good Friday. Like the change in the night of the previous three Christmas concerts, the move for the change originated with the Musicians' Union. The attendance, while good, fell below the standard of Good Friday night performances. Of necessity, the normal Good Friday night atmosphere was not wholly secured, but a fine performance was attained which "went a long way towards realising Bach's intentions". Four press accounts varied remarkably in reporting the concert but all agreed that Mr. Ronald Dowd gave an outstanding and beautiful rendering of the part of the Narrator. Mr. Post's direction was marked by precision and complete control of 220 performers.

As it happened, the Easter concert marked the Society's last appearance in its own right in its hundredth year. This was brought about by the decision to defer further programming until December when the concert programme for the Centenary Celebrations was planned to take place. Meantime, a programme of four half-hourly broadcasts, in co-operation with the Australian Broadcasting Commission and conducted by the Society's Chorus Master (Mr. Dan Hardy) was planned and carried out as follows:-

8th May Excerpts from "The Creation" (Haydn)

12th Jun Excerpts from Judas Maccabeaus" (Handel)

17th Jul. Excerpts from The Golden Legend" (Sullivan)

28th Aug. Chorales from St. Matthew Passion" (Bach)

The Annual Report noted "The members enjoyed the preparation of these programmes and numerous appreciative comments were received from listeners".

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 31st May, Exhibition Bldg., 3 p.m. Assisted.

Citizens' Coronation Commemoration held in the presence of General Sir Dallas Brooks, Governor of Victoria. The musical part comprised three hymns and contributions by the Society "in conjunction with

Combined Church Choirs" accompanied by the Victorian Symphony Orchestra and conducted by Mr. Clive Douglas. The items were -"Zadok the Priest" (Handel) (1) and "Hallelujah" (Handel) (28).

-- MISCELLANEOUS, 10th/11th Aug., Town Hall. Assisted.

The third of Victorian- Symphony Orchestra's 1953 Subscription Concerts. The Society assisted with a Choral Suite from "Boris Godounov" (Moussorgsky) (1 & 2) with Yi Kwei Sze, a Chinese bass, in the solo parts. "Conducted by Mr. Juan Jose Castro, this combination of choir and orchestra was one of the most notable heard in recent years. ...An exhilarating performance". From the choral point of view, the second performance was even better. The Hundredth Annual Meeting was held in Nicholas Hall, Lonsdale Street, on Thursday evening, 8th October. *The first meeting of the Society was held on 8th October. 1853.* Over 300 attended. Formal business and musical items were happily intermingled for the occasion. The President, Sir Owen Dixon, presided and in a notable speech touched on the Society's preference for the legal profession when electing its Presidents. Miss Joan Jones contributed vocal items and the Society's Pianist, Miss June Epstein, rendered pianoforte solos. Included in those who tendered congratulations were the wife and the daughter of a former Conductor (George Peake, 1889/1911) and the widow of a former Secretary (Henry Buck, 1891/1901). Among the guests were a grand-daughter and a great-grand- daughter of the Society's first Conductor, John Russell; two grand-daughters and a grand-son of one of the Society's Founders, Theo Dredge. Regret was expressed at the absence of Sir Bernard Heinze, due to an engagement in Brisbane.

To mark the occasion, the Annual Report (printed) was in the nature of a "special issue." "To the present Committee" it began "has fallen the unique experience of tendering the Society's Hundredth Report. It does so with much pleasure, great interest, and full-hearted gratitude for a century of continuous service in the cause of choral music in Melbourne. In the older countries of the world, the attainment of a centenary by a cultural body would be a noteworthy event; in such a young country as Australia, it is in the nature of a historical highlight. The Society is the first cultural body in Victoria to attain its Centenary and, most probably, the first in Australia. In addition, it is now the oldest choral society in the British Commonwealth (outside of Britain), and because some older societies in Britain had to suspend activities during the War of 1939/45, it is now the oldest with continuous public appearances."

Reference was made to the completion of the writing of "A Century of Harmony" and to the anticipated printing thereof. An extended historical summary touched on the Society's long story which began in 1853 in the hectic days following the discovery of gold in Victoria two years earlier. Continuing, the Report noted "The year that has just terminated has been, owing to various causes, in many ways unique. The visit of our Conductor, Sir Bernard Heinze to America and Europe, necessitated the introduction of guest conductors, and in three of the concerts these officiated. ...All these performances reflected great credit on the Chorus Master, Dan Hardy, whose careful and consistent work in the past year helped to mark this 100th year as a further triumph in the long run of artistic successes achieved by your Society". Regretful reference was made to "the loss by death of two outstanding members who had given many years of distinguished service" - David N. Connal as Assistant Secretary and Treasurer; Sydney T. Ellis who served as Chorister, Chairman. of Committee and for a considerable time as Vice President. The vacant positions of Treasurer and Assistant Secretary were filled by the appointment of William Francis Rashleigh (son of the present Secretary) and Mr. W. A. Carne, a member of the Committee respectively. The financial statement for the year indicated a surplus of £46. Assets were stated - Library £364, Cash and Investments at £1,244. The last paragraph should be stated in full - "In conclusion, we cast our minds back to those citizens of the village of Melbourne *In 1850. with a population of 14,000 Melbourne was proclaimed a city. However. In view of the state of its roads and footpaths and the general lack of amenities, the use of the term might be misleading, having regard to present-day conceptions of what should constitute a city.* who, 100 years ago, took their courage in their hands and invited John Russell to join them in establishing a choral society worthy to sing the works of the masters. To them and the thousands of loyal and willing workers who have, over the years, joined together for the same object, we pay our tribute and joy to find that their faith and courage have achieved a worthy result". An appropriate addendum testified to the long and loyal service in various capacities of the present "Secretary, Mr. W. B. Rashleigh.

On Sunday, 11th October, the Centenary Celebrations were carried a stage further with a "Service of Thanksgiving for Music - Celebrating One Hundred Years of Choral Music in Melbourne" in St. Paul's Cathedral. Extremely unfavourable weather affected attendance, nevertheless the service was followed with close attention by all present. The Rev. W. R. Dowel, Th.L., in his sermon referred to the contribution of music in the development of Melbourne over the years; particularly in regard to choristers' services. St. Paul's Cathedral Choir rendered the incidental music and the service concluded with the singing of Handel's "Hallelujah" by choir and congregation.

As this volume goes to press, preparations are in hand for the culmination of the Society's Centenary Celebrations which will take the form of a musical festival comprising -

Dec. 12 "King David" (Honegger) (2) Town Hall.

Dec. 19 "Elijah" (67) Exhibition Building.

Dec. 23 "The Messiah" (135) Exhibition Building.

The first mentioned will be given by the Society in its second performance. It is a modern work by a Swiss composer and in its original version was first performed at the little village of Mezieres in Switzerland in June 1921. As already recorded, the Society had the honour of introducing it to Australia in June 1949. Although it constitutes but a half-programme, it will provide an excellent foil for the two older and longer works which will be presented by a specially enlarged choir of 450 voices in the Exhibition Building. For these concerts it had been planned to present four notable soloists from overseas but insuperable difficulties prevented the fulfilment of this much desired arrangement. All three works are in active rehearsal and although much hard work and frequent rehearsals are necessary, the Society looks forward hopefully and confidently to a worthy festival.

A summary of the works performed during the period covered by the last three chapters follows.

		Performances
The Messiah	(Handel)	31
Elijah	(Mendelssohn)	19
st. Matthew Passion	(Bach)	10
The Dream of Gerontius	(Elgar)	6
Requiem	(Verdi)	5
Faust	(Gounod)	4
Hiawatha (Trilogy)	(Coleridge-Taylor)	3
Mass in B Minor	(Bach)	3
The Children's Crusade	(Pierne)	2
Damnation of Faust	(Berloiz)	1
Judas Maccabeaus	(Handel)	1
Carmen	(Bizet)	1
Mass in D Minor	(Beethoven)	1
King David	(Honegger)	1
Miscellaneous		<u>22</u>
		110
Assisted		<u>53</u>
Total		163

Broadcasts Apr.-Dec. 1929 7 programmes
 May-Aug. 1953 4 programmes

First performances in Australia.

"Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton)

"King David" (Honegger)

"The Children's Crusade" (Pierne)

"Salmo" (Marcello)

"Gloria" (Vivaldi)

"Salmo" (Monteverdi)

The last 3 at a concert given by the Victorian Symphony Orchestra.

First performances in Melbourne.

"Good Friday Music" from Wagner's "Parsifal"

"Ode to a Grecian Urn" (Hoist)

"Appalachia" (Delius)

"Rio Grande" (Lambert)

"Sea Drift" (Delius).

Note: Works directed by Conductors other than Sir Bernard Heinze will be found in the Appendix.

No prolonged appreciation of Sir Bernard Heinze's contribution to the Society's record is necessary. The story unfolded in the Chapters covering the last 27 years tells its own tale; one of constant endeavour on Sir Bernard's part to attain higher and still higher standards of technical performance and interpretation - to be met with a very large measure of success; oftentimes brilliant and sometimes thrilling success. Fortunate indeed was the Society, when faced with the difficulty arising out of the sudden and unexpected death of Mr. Alberto Zelman, it was able to turn to a musician who, though not qualified chorally, was endowed with musical gifts of a high order, was determined to progress ever upwards and, at the same time, was blessed with the priceless gift of youth. With such qualifications and outlook and granted good health, the response

of an experienced Choir as well as its traditional good management, Sir Bernard's attainment of the high plains of inspired conductorship was virtually a foregone conclusion. In simple terms, the time produced the man. In presenting this well-deserved appreciation, simple justice calls for a tribute to both Choir and Committee who joined forces to give their Leader full support, hard work and devoted loyalty. The combination progressed hand in hand, to be rewarded with the happy results already noted. It remains to add that the notable contributions of talented Guest Conductors enlivened and enriched a period which, in retrospect, is considered to be the most progressive, successful and significant in the Society's history.

This Chapter would not be complete without a reference to the services of some of the Society's executive officers. The valuable contributions of Mr. R. J. Oehr (31 years) and Mr. Paull Fiddian (10 years), as Secretaries, have already been noted. Mr. Dan Hardy has received an occasional mention. His is the unspectacular task of training 170-200 choristers (of at least 8 classifications) and bringing their united efforts to "platform condition." Much slogging work is required but the "platform results" clearly speak for themselves. Nevertheless, recognition and an expression of warm appreciation are his due. The contribution of the present Secretary, Mr. W. B. Rashleigh, calls for special mention. Many years service in the Choir has been supplemented by 16 years as a Vice-President and 20 years as a capable Treasurer and adviser generally. In 1946 when the Secretaryship became vacant, he was the obvious choice and has so continued since. For many years, much of the smooth working of the Society's internal economy may be attributed to his foresight, sagacity and constant attention. In his numerous and necessary contacts with the A.B.C. he has established an imaginative and tactful office; to the benefit of the Society and the Commission. By natural progression over many years, he is the acknowledged doyen of Melbourne choral executives; a dispenser of sage advice, a helper of the needy and worthy, a chider of the self-seeker. If some Choir members have found him less sympathetic to their requests and excuses, well (he contends), there are the Rules and after all, there are such things as loyalty and hard work for consideration of members of a worthy choral Society.

CHAPTER XV. THE PRESS

In his "Historical Souvenir," Mr. George Peake included sections dealing with "The Press," "The Orchestra" and "The Chorus." Because of their highly interesting nature and great historical value, they have been included in this volume. In each case, supplementary notes have been appended with the object of covering the period between 1913 and 1953.

"The History of the Society would be incomplete without some direct reference to the Press. But for their influence and active interest the progress of musical art and musical societies would have been slow and tedious. By giving a critical analysis of the compositions, pointing out the deficiencies in performance, and by creating a wholesome discontent, they can do much to assist both the creative and interpretative sides of art. Moreover, they can appeal to a constituency, to which the audience actually present at any performance, is as a drop in the ocean.

"It is scarcely possible for any individual to acquire the historical, technical, and artistic knowledge in all branches of musical art necessary to become an expert musical critic. For average newspaper purposes, literary skill has been the main desideratum, ability to make copy without betraying lack of knowledge. Early musical criticism reminds one of the replies given by a celebrated violinist to the Duke of Edinburgh. The Duke, who was a fair amateur violinist, had played a solo at some social function at which Norma Neruda (Lady Halle) was present. Naturally, he felt somewhat curious to know her opinion of his performance. She replied by referring to the lovely tone of the instrument, and then to the beauty of the composition. Being further pressed, she declared the Duke played like a Prince. Much in the same manner early Press criticism would refer to the sweet voice of the singer and the beauty of the composition, which was sung in the singer's best style, or quite up to her usual standard. Other phrases of a non-committal, euphonious and space-filling nature were ready to hand for every emergency. It is interesting to notice the change which has taken place in Press criticism. In 1854, a critic wrote: "There was a vast improvement in the renderings of the choruses, the popular 'See the Conquering Hero Comes' being remarkably well executed on this occasion." If this very simple number was well executed on this occasion, what must have been the more difficult choruses on the first occasion. The criticism is decidedly amateurish.

"For many years, criticism consisted mostly of literary production, with just an occasional dash of musical terminology to give it the necessary flavour. In it there was little that would suggest practical musical study or intimate acquaintance with the varied technique of voice or instrument, to say nothing of constructive criticism. Occasionally the local performance would be judged by the standard of Exeter Hall concerts or those held in Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, ignoring the difference in population, as well as scholastic and climatic conditions. In London and other cities leading choral societies can fill their seats to overflowing, obtain a first-class orchestra at 24 hours notice, and the finest singers in Europe within a few days. The purely literary critic was utterly incapable of appreciating the tremendous difficulties under which such a Society as the Melbourne Philharmonic Society must of necessity give its concerts. Before the final rehearsal takes place, the Society becomes responsible for a sum varying from £100 to £200, the greater part of which would be lost in case of postponement. It has to be content with the best available talent, much of which has often proved to be of very second-rate quality. *Mr. Lee used to say that for many years his first duty, preliminary to any concert, was to search the city slums for additional players. The Italics are those of the present writer.* Even down to comparatively recent years the orchestra always included a percentage of those who moved their hands or inflated their cheeks exactly at the right moment, but produced no sound; string players unintentionally imitating the bag-pipe; men who dodged rehearsals regularly, quite regardless of their signatures to the forms of engagement; dance players, who had been playing all night, with scarcely enough energy left to keep awake; to say nothing of the player who ostensibly was trying to supply a missing part as well as his own, and who, in looking for the notes he never hoped to find, missed all the difficulties of his own part. Think of such a work as "The Damnation of Faust" with its cataclysmical effects and almost hysterical emotionalism by a composer who understood the genius and technical possibilities of every orchestral instrument as probably no other composer had ever done, to be given without one full rehearsal and with an orchestra containing some of the individuals described above. Such conditions are simply heart-breaking, and, to make matters worse, the critic next morning bases his remarks on the finest performance he has ever heard or can imagine, and proceeds to 'Worry the poor conductor, who has been suffering the tortures of the damned for weeks previously. It must be an immense relief to the musical profession to know that in our leading cities the musical critic is no longer represented by the individual whose principal qualification is his literary ability, but who is utterly incapable of appreciating the difficulties under which the work is done. Unfortunately, the musical specialist also is not free from fault, as a musical critic. As a specialist, his bias is liable to make him too severe on that branch which he specialises, and too vague and general in other departments. The evolution of the modern musical critic is the outcome of these two types,

and today the musical profession can rejoice that we have gentlemen who can use the pen both as critics and composers and wield the baton with equal proficiency. Their judicial tone, in which personal idiosyncrasy is kept in subjection, and their broad musical sympathy with all sincere artistic effort, is a development of the most encouraging nature.

"Let it be frankly stated that the dominant tone of musical criticism for the past sixty years has been one mostly of good nature, that any harshness or injustice - and there have been both - seldom suggested the spirit of 'malice prepense.' Probably a hypnotic influence, emanating from certain individuals of strong personality, disturbed the critic's judicial impartiality in favour of institutions which have since ceased to exist. May the present relationship long continue with mutual appreciation of each others difficulties."

XX

In general terms it may be said that since Mr. Peake's time, press reports and criticisms reflect the great change in social conditions which has taken place in the interim. The change applies to both length and nature. Since the "nineties" of the last century, there has been a steady reduction in the amount of space given to reports of the Society's concerts. The change coincides with and is the result of a world-wide development in methods of collection and dissemination of news and the recording of events in Australia and beyond. Obviously space for local items had to be curtailed to allow for the wider field of information. The advent of radio very sharply accentuated the change alluded to and brought to listeners, inter alia, a wide and relatively continuous choice of music. Gone are the days when a musical critic could write a long preliminary notice and criticism of a work to be performed and, after the concert, settle down to fill a column or thereabouts with his report. During the Second World War, shortage of newsprint and the calls of the national emergency led to further reductions in space available for the critic's report. On one occasion, pruning by a sub-editor led to the omission of any reference to the part of the Prophet in a performance of "Elijah".

Apart from the question of space, modern journalism aims to present a condensed and crisper narrative to the public which finds some difficulty in assimilating the great mass of information tendered by the Press in various forms. The presentday writer must therefore conform to the requirements of his paper and endeavour to cover the essential points of a performance with the minimum number of words.

In another important respect, the critic's task has been greatly simplified by the marked and progressive improvement in the standard of choral performance given by the Society, more particularly over the last quarter of a century or more; an improvement which went hand in hand with a progressive raising of the quality of orchestral work. Unfavourable criticism has tended to a minimum with a corresponding increase in space for coverage of performances as a whole. For historical presentation, Press reports in recent times lend themselves to quotation; a fact which explains to some extent, the generally longer extracts appearing in the last two chapters of this volume.

Coming more particularly to the nature of the present-day musical criticism applied by the Press to the Society's concerts, it is felt that, in a strict sense, the term criticism cannot be generally applied. Ability to write musical criticism, obviously, must be based on knowledge, experience and study of the functions of chorus and orchestra. If these essential requirements are lacking, how can the writer speak with authority? Frankly, it is also felt that, generally, Press accounts lack the authority which springs from the essentials stated and, consequently, the versions tendered to readers of the Press are really in the nature of musical reporting, not musical criticism; a distinction with an important difference. These observations do not arise out of a grudge against the Press - its difficulties in regard to space and the supply of competent critics are duly appreciated - but are tendered as a realistic setting forth of the present position as the Society sees it. Even when fully qualified, the musical critic is liable to error arising out of the frailties of human nature. That is a factor which must be accepted, but the Society considers that in writing for the public on musical performance, lack of competence cannot be overlooked. To condone the present position is to ensure its continuance and to postpone the advent of greatly desired reform.

The Society has long since learned to appreciate the true value of Press criticism and Press reports, being well aware that a good performance remains a good performance, despite what may appear in print to the contrary. But leaving aside the foregoing observations, the Society has no quarrel with the Press. Indeed, it is very grateful for and acknowledges a century of valued publicity and hopes that nothing will happen to disturb a long-continued association. Further, in its own efforts towards musical perfection, it feels justified in expressing publicly the hope that -hand in hand with its own endeavours - the Press will see to it that competent musical criticism accompanies the Society towards that goal for which all earnest musical and journalistic spirits should aspire.

CHAPTER XVI. THE ORCHESTRA

"Some of the difficulties in securing an orchestra have already been referred to under the heading of 'The Press.' At first, it was composed, probably, of representatives from Mr. Winterbottom's orchestra (then giving concerts in Melbourne), players from the English Regimental Bands, and some more or less competent amateurs. Among the players are the well-known names of Messrs. G. Ryder (violin), Izard (viola), Reed and Hailes (cellos), Johnson (clarionet), Kohler (horn), Hardman, Chapman and Thorne (double basses). According to the first printed list, the orchestra consisted of six first violins, six seconds and the rest in proportion. Under Mr. Russell's conductorship, the band, as a rule, received favourable notice, although occasionally the criticism was rather qualified. In the time of Herr Elsasser and C. E. Horsley, praise, more or less pronounced, was the general result. Owing to the unrest of the period, and the consequent movement of theatre professionals from State to State, the difficulty of securing a competent orchestra was greatly increased. It became more and more composed of amateurs whose ability was apparently not of a very high order. The arrival of Herr Schott, an eminent oboist, and Mr. Howson, a clarionet player, brought about some improvement. At Mr. Lee's first concert the names of the orchestra were printed on the programme, as had been occasionally done previously. Although the list contains the names of some very able musicians, including Herr Littolf, Alfred Montague, M. Harvie, S. Hore, R. Hore, J. P. Hornidge, Richardson and several from the Fourteenth Regiment, the balance left much to be desired. The list consisted of only four first violins and four seconds, altogether too small for the other sections of the band. The printing of the names of the orchestra was speedily discontinued. Probably it gave too much away. Throughout the whole period of Mr. Lee's long term of office, the procuring of a satisfactory orchestra was attended with unusual difficulty. The atmosphere and environment of some of the players was not conducive to refinement of culture, or the observance of good taste. Dependence had still to be placed largely upon the amateur element. Some of them were excellent players, but others belonged to the Ripieno class, who were scarcely safe, even under the cover of a full orchestra. The system of holding the weekly rehearsals of the amateur band and chorus together without separate rehearsals was opposed to common sense, probably due to the Society's inability to pay the conductor.

"For the Exhibition in 1888 Mr. Cowen (now Sir Frederick) was authorised to engage a number of first-class London instrumentalists to form the nucleus of the Exhibition Orchestra. From that period dates the general improvement in orchestral performances and in public taste. At the close of the Exhibition the Victorian Orchestra was established, consisting practically of the Exhibition Orchestra. The Melbourne Philharmonic Society, with characteristic enterprise, became one of the largest guarantors, and engaged its services, minus the conductor, whenever possible. The Orchestra now contained 10 or 12 first violins, and the same number of seconds. Unfortunately, the Victorian Orchestra failed to secure adequate public support, and, after running for a brief period was discontinued or dissolved. The London players dispersed – some returned to England, and others accepted engagements in the theatres. Thus, while the public and the press were demanding a higher standard of excellence, the difficulties of obtaining an efficient orchestra for evening performances were greatly increased.

"About this time, the Marshall Hall Orchestra was formed, the concerts being given in the afternoon. The members of the orchestra were paid on the share system, and they gave the conductor the privilege of calling unlimited rehearsals. The Philharmonic Society, unfortunately, had to submit to conditions that were almost paralysing. Many of the best players would not attend more than one rehearsal. Others would not attend extra rehearsals, although payment at an increased rate was guaranteed, and, finally, some of those who were available were inefficient or physically unfit. The standard of professional excellence required by the Society was not determined by the demand, but solely by the supply available.

"One of the greatest hindrances to orchestral success is the professional and the quasi-professional who never takes the instrument out of the case from concert to concert until the final rehearsal is announced. The player who thus fails to recognise the fact that executive skill, worthy of a true artist, can only be maintained by regular daily practice, will speedily revert to the rough, coarse type of the uncultivated species. In such players, the sense of artistic responsibility is weak, and incipient artistic decay has already commenced. Through their rough, coarse, slipshod technique, the beauty of perfection is impossible. It is these, and such as these, who deserve the lash of the critic, and not the unfortunate conductor. Until orchestral conditions approach more closely those of London, where each player is an artist, and can step forward and give a solo performance if required, it is neither wise or fair to judge local orchestral performance by the English or Continental standard. The whole question is one of serious importance. The cost of a full professional orchestra is equal to all the other expenses put together, or nearly so; it is less amenable to control, and its constituent parts are by no means of equal merit. However, the Society has done much to improve and encourage the orchestra in the past, and, in the future, it will no doubt proceed with all possible enterprise."

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From the foregoing notes it will be seen that for the first sixty years of its life, the Society had to contend with a major and continuing problem and one that was, for the time being, insoluble. In the circumstances, no degree of choral excellence could result in a completely finished performance unless the orchestra attained the same level. Those occasions must have been, relatively, infrequent. But a better day was dawning. When Mr. Alberto Zelman succeeded Mr. Peake as the Society's Conductor, he brought to his new post the distinct advantage of possessing orchestral experience as already noted. At the same time, the generally improved standards established by Professor Marshall Hall (Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne University) and the benefits accruing from The Lady Northcote Permanent Orchestra Trust Fund in helping to retain professional players in key positions in the amateur orchestras were working for improved orchestral assistance. The press reports of the time frequently refer to Mr. Zelman's success with the orchestra; a welcome change from those of earlier years.

The Society's amateur Orchestra continued to function until its dissolution in 1921. Occasionally in several years prior to that date the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra appeared with the Society and after the dissolution referred to was constantly associated with the Society until 1927. Mr. Zelman (with other enthusiasts) had founded the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 1906 and as he assumed control of the Society's Orchestra in 1911, his dual conductorship made for smooth working and ready co-operation between the two bodies.

Again, on Professor Bernard Heinze's appointment as the Society's Conductor in 1927, the Society obtained the benefit of association with an experienced orchestral director. After his second concert the University Symphony Orchestra replaced the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and continued with the Society until December, 1932. Composite orchestras followed, then, at "The Messiah" performance in 1934 a "full professional" appeared with the Society for the first time since 1888/90 when the short-lived Victorian Symphony Orchestra (of Centennial Exhibition fame) appeared with the Society. In 1936 the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Melbourne Symphony Orchestra made its appearance with the Society and so continued until 1948. Then, at long last, ,at the Easter concert and very soon after its formation, the Society began its present association with the Victorian Symphony Orchestra, a permanent body of highly competent professional players maintained under an agreement between the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the Government of Victoria.

Thus, briefly stated, is the long journey along which the Society traveled before it attained orchestral support in keeping with its own standards. To a great extent, the improving standards of both sections went hand in hand which, of course, was logical progression. In retrospect, it was a long and arduous journey but the earlier and prolonged efforts were justified by the result now happily achieved. The Agreement between the Society and the Australian Broadcasting Commission which covers orchestral support has been referred to in an earlier chapter.

CHAPTER XVII. THE CHORUS

"And now, finally, we come to the chorus, who are, and ever must be, the very life blood of the Society. Possibly some of those who have held the reins of office have thought otherwise. Still, the fact remains, that the Society was founded principally by singers, and that even under its new constitution it is governed and controlled by a Committee who are mainly representative of the chorus. As Nature's instrument is nearer the heart, and the voice more expressive of the soul's emotions than the artificial instrument, it follows that, physically, psychologically, and numerically, the dominating factor in the growth and development of a Society must be the chorus.

"Music, that is born of human breath,
Comes straighter to the soul than any strain
The hand alone can make."

"When the first concert was given, the chorus consisted of 40 voices. This number gradually increased to the first period (1853-66) to 150, and, on some festive occasions, to 400. Probably the average number would be affected by the capacity of the theatre, hall, or other building in which the concerts were variously given. When the Melbourne Town Hall became available, in 1870, the number settled down to 200. In determining this number, the financial value of the hall would no doubt have had some influence. Since the foundation of the Society, certain innovations have been introduced, which have had a beneficial effect upon its tone and general development. Looking back, it seems that the average age of the chorus today is younger than formerly. Uniformity of costume has disarmed all criticism as to the fearfulness and wonderfulness of the ladies' apparel. The triennial test has worked miracles in relieving the Society of its drones, its sleeping beauties, its novel readers, its chatterers and those whose artistic interests in the latest fashion displayed by the audience made them oblivious to the conductor and dumb as singers. Finally, it passed into honoured retirement those whom nature had deprived of sufficient vocal qualification to be of any further assistance. In recognition of their long, faithful, and devoted service, they were elected Honorary Associates. In the matter of test, no conductor has been able to adopt his own idea of what should constitute a reasonable and adequate standard. The limited supply of capable singers, especially those who can sing at first sight, compels him to accept a much lower standard than he would otherwise do. In Mr. Russell's time, purity of voice and correctness of intonation, with the ability to read any ordinary hymn tune, were the three essentials. When Mr. Lee was appointed, the Education Department had been teaching singing in a systematic manner for a considerable time. Gentlemen like Mr. G. L. Allan, S. Kaye, W. Bontick, J. H. Allen, and others, strong enthusiastic and well-equipped teachers, were engaged by the Department to give singing instruction. As the result of their labours, it is probable that Mr. Lee had many first-class sight readers. Be that as it may, the test of admission through the whole of the second period (1867-88) was not regarded very seriously. Unfortunately, in later years, the singing master was practically abolished so far as the State Schools were concerned, and the Education Department has been content that singing may be taught by incapable teachers, and, moreover, may be examined by examiners absolutely deficient in all musical sense.

"What with the increasing number of pianos, pianolas, and gramophones, sight reading bids fair to become a lost art, as regards singing. The misfortune of singing by ear or imitation, is that it never develops the capacity of calling up mentally the sense of pitch, consequently no reliability can be placed on those who sing by ear. They are merely followers. In leading such members, enthusiastic sight singers may be advised never to exceed their psychic or natural force, or they may injure their own vocal organs.

"In the third period (1889-1911) the conductor introduced a test which had been used by one of the finest choral societies in England. This met all requirements as regards intonation and memory of time, but an additional test was required for sight-singing. In the matter of personality, the Society has been singularly fortunate in securing ladies whose courtesy and bright, happy nature have produced an atmosphere of refinement, which has made the Society attractive to all classes. On the other hand, the gentlemen of the chorus have included representatives of the University, Legal, Mercantile, Financial and Professional classes, who have introduced a strength and dignity which cannot fail to increase its vitality and to add to its popularity.

"In reviewing the past, visions of former choral worthies arise. Workers like Miss Cook, Miss Grierson, on whose grave the members erected a foot-stone, Mrs. Hornidge, Mrs. Cavanagh, Mrs. Binns, Mrs. Dawson and the Misses King, Curtis, Porritt, Rose, E. Smith, Orme, E. Curtis, Dufty, Treloar, Ninnis, Noar, Middleton, Vincent, Albinson, E. Anderson, Blair, K. Berggy, Faravoni, K. Fyffe, Edith E. Peake, Alice Potter, A. Burton, Ada Clarke, Holt Canterbury, Hillier, Sprott, Grainger, Hutton, Muir, McBeath, A. E. Sanders, Moore, Topp

and Mrs. Warren; also Messrs. C. Radcliffe, Brownhill, Llewelyn, Grierson, Beeson, J. P. Turner, J. O. Broadley, Cornell, Fellows, Freeman, J. Juniper, J. Vernon, Peacock, J. Ross, Scott Barnett, R. Brodie, J. Y. Bilsborrow, Maynard, W. Mann, W. S. Danks, Francis, Kirkwood, Page, H. Dodd, E. Jones, C. Lavers, D. T. Couch, F. T. Emms, G. M. Garside, A. Harrison (the shock of whose voice was so powerful that all doubt concerning the fall of the walls of Jericho was set at rest), and, lastly, W. Juniper, whose services as soloist, chorus singer and member of the Committee entitled his name to special mention.

"These, and such as these, were the real lineal descendants of the founders. All honour is due to them for upholding and increasing the prestige of the Society .The line of succession continues, and the future historian will no doubt have the greatest pleasure in recording the names of many of the present members, who are equally !worthy.

"The human mind is slow to move, and, as it took centuries before it could reconcile itself to unprepared discords, so for centuries it has been content with the double choruses of Handel, Bach, Parry and others. But the dawn is near at hand when triple and quadruple choruses will be composed, which must provide the musical world with a more glorious polyphony, magnificent contrasts, and interplay of choral effects, such as yet has not entered into the heart of man to conceive. To the choralist and the conductor the dream is inspiring, and gives promise of such and magnificent and thrilling effects, that all previous efforts shall fade into insignificance, great as they have been. With such a prospect in view, one feels that the chorus is still in its infancy, and that it has a splendid future before it in advancing musical art. But for the belief that choral work is not a spent force, that the chorus has not said its last word, and for the undying hope of a never-failing supply of young and beautiful life, with its ever revivifying and rejuvenating power and influence, one would despair in witnessing the ceaseless and constant change in the personnel and life of old Philharmonic comrades. If the present and future members of .the Society will rise to the full dignity of membership, and recognise their splendid opportunity in doing great and noble service in the cause of musical art, then will vicissitude strengthen, experience teach, and study enable them to approach more nearly the perfection of the Author of all Art, thus will the Great Transcendent Musician become the Immanent One, who will resolve all the seemingly harsh and chaotic discords of the most advanced modern thought, and so bring all musical life into perfect tune with the Infinite."

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The matter of numbers is always a point of importance to a large choral body, particularly when performances of great choral works are involved. As far as the Society is concerned, a limitation is imposed by the seating capacity of the stage of the present Town Hall. With additional chairs the plan provides for 212 singers but it is doubtful if that number can be accommodated with comfort, having in mind the requirements of the orchestra. Consequently there have been periods when a waiting list of ladies was established. The supply of male singers, however, has never been such as to require a waiting list.

In recent years the number of applicants seeking admission to the chorus has tended to diminish. This cannot be attributed to a raising of the standard of test, which, incidentally, is ability to sing scales and given notes and provided the quality and volume of voice are adjudged suitable for choral work. The causes of the decline in applications are various. One is the encouragement given to young people to become interested in orchestral music. In particular, the admirable work of Sir Bernard Heinze over a quarter of a century in regard to orchestral performances designed for young people is well known. It was inevitable that such a sustained effort would bear fruit and probably has diverted potential choristers to the realm of orchestral listeners. No objection is raised to any scheme which seeks to improve musical taste but it does appear that a longrange plan is called for with a view to encouraging the youth of this State to become interested in choral work. Here lies a field awaiting the attention of those who have vision and are prepared to put their hands to the plough.

Another cause may be attributed to the great advance in wireless transmission of music and entertainment. The tendency is, of course, to produce listeners rather than performers, particularly among the young who provide the potential field for future choristers.

But probably the greatest factor may be attributed to the times in which we live. Material values have been exaggerated out of all proportion, to the serious detriment of things spiritual and in the process choral music has suffered. The 97th Annual Report of the Society referred to the retrogression of interest in choral music all over Australia and, inter alia, observed that "the tendency to seek freedom and excitement has had a marked effect on the conduct of a large proportion of the general public, and is reflected in the lessening of the number of people who are happy to work under the loyal and arduous conditions necessary for the training of a first-class choral singer."

There is no doubt that "loyal and arduous conditions" are necessary to become "a first-class choral singer", therefore the requirements, as they relate to the Society, may be stated. The Society's "working year" begins on the last Tuesday night in January and ends with the Christmas concert. Weekly rehearsal continues through the year with a break of one night in Easter week. Usually, immediately before a concert, an extra rehearsal or two is called. One extra with the Orchestra usually suffices for the Easter and Christmas concerts but for new works or works of infrequent performance, two with the Orchestra are sometimes needed with, possibly, additional choral rehearsals if time presses. All this relates to the Society's normal four "subscription" concerts. When assistance is rendered at the orchestral concerts of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, or others, additional rehearsal may be required.

During the seven years to December 1952, the Society appeared at 26 of its own concerts and at 9 others (8 in support of A.B.C. concerts), an average of 5 per year of 48 weeks. To meet such an annual programme, regular attendance at rehearsal is essential. Even the well-known (?) "The Messiah" requires intensive rehearsal because constant change in choir personnel necessitates the learning thereof by new members and the obligation for old members to avoid the musical pitfalls and dangers of a, supposedly, "well-known" work. Then, apart from correct notation, general ensemble and interpretation require close attention. Home work and study are called for, especially when a new or infrequently performed work is in rehearsal. Further, members are expected to practice vocally to ensure the voice being in good order. Overall, it will be seen that "arduous" is the right descriptive word - to which must be added its corollary - "loyal".

While the requirements can be readily specified, it is not so easy to define the benefits that ensue. They depend, to a large extent, on the individual concerned and on his or her musical sense; particularly for choral music. If the requirements become burdensome, interest flags and the individual - at best - is an indifferent chorister or ultimately drops out. If, on the other hand, requirements and musical sense go happily hand in hand, the rewards more than justify the exertions put forth. Then, continuous rehearsal, the study, the occasional inconveniences become passports to that musical and spiritual realm wherein harmonic union of voices against an orchestral back-ground brings its own thrill and reward. The chorister may then inherit and share the mind and spirit of the composer and feel, with him, the joy and rapture when the "Blest Pair of Sirens, Voice and Verse" unite in proclaiming the composer's message and his spiritual exaltation.

Over the years, it is impossible to say how many choristers were members of the Society but many thousand it certainly was. An appreciable proportion gave freely of their time and talents - always without monetary recompense - over a large part of their working lives, until physical infirmity, or the "triennial test" brought their labours to an honourable close. Truly they received their reward but the debt the Society and the public owe to them can hardly be computed.

Numbers do not, of course, determine the quality of choral performance. Despite the difficulties that have been referred to, the standard of the Society's performances - in singing and interpretation- has steadily and markedly improved, especially over the last quarter of a century or more. Gone are the days when the critics considered it necessary - for example - when reporting a performance of "The Messiah" to refer to "the traditional crop of wrong notes" in the chorus "He Trusted in God." Indeed, on a relatively recent occasion, one report specially commended this chorus. The Society's capacity to give finished performances of "King David" and "Belshazzar's Feast" with its extremely modern concept and idiom and 'presenting great difficulties of tempi and tone, indicates a technical and interpretative standard which speaks for itself. The Society's experience has shown that better work is done by a smaller choir of enthusiastic and serious members than by a larger one which contains a proportion of singers somewhat indifferent to the requirements of loyal and competent choristers. The long journey by which the Society reached orchestral excellence in keeping with its own advancing standards has already been noted.

In the last paragraph of Mr. Peake's notes on the chorus, he ventured into an interesting field of prophecy relative to the chorus' work in the future. Forty years may not be a long period for choral development to manifest itself but it is interesting to note the great advance on the choral composition of his day when - for example - "Belshazzar's Feast" (Walton) is studied. Mr. Peake was doubtless taking a longer view than that afforded by forty years but his view that the chorus has a "splendid future" holds good. This statement is made, despite the retrogression in interest in choral music already referred to and which, incidentally, has been observed in England also. Combination of human voices in musical expression has been a feature of human social relations since time immemorial. Surely it is inconceivable that the present retrogression is the beginning of the end or the emergence of a time in which choral music holds but little interest for humanity. Some of the causes of the retrogression are known and are doubtless transitory. Rather should it not be regarded as one of the historical lapses from the long line of musical development and progression which will again assert itself in an upward curve. This, at least, would appear to be a sane, balanced and logical

view of present conditions, quite apart from the hope that springs eternal in all musical and spiritual breasts. Meanwhile, the Society's choristers can feel that they are "holding the fort" - as their predecessors did for a century - and, at the same time, contributing a worthy part to musical culture - to the satisfaction of themselves and for the benefit of listeners who are now Australia wide. While rejoicing in the memory of a century of meritorious achievement, they may enter the next with high hope based on well-founded optimism.

CHAPTER XVIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Pageant of "A Century of Harmony" is at an end. During its course, there passed in review –

700 Conductors
2,500 Soloists
110,000 Choristers
28,000 Instrumentalists
in
550 Concerts given by the Society, and
86 other Concerts and Celebrations
at which the Society assisted,
presenting in all
422 performances of Major Choral Works, and
214 Concerts of Miscellaneous Works,
the latter comprising
660 Choral Items, and
230 Instrumental Items,
as well as
The Centennial Exhibition Musical Festival of
18,000 Choristers, and
17,000 Instrumentalists.

The figures relating to personnel indicate appearances and are the results of systematically calculated estimates.

All that now remains to the historian is to present a general review and summary. Preceding pages have chronologically recorded "the yearly round and common task" (to vary a homely metaphor); musically, a few failures but many successes and great achievements, against a changing historical background, as the Colony of Victoria emerged from the purely pastoral conditions of its early years - to take and hold its place as an important State in the Commonwealth of Australia. But out of the Society's long life emerge four outstanding features or characteristics which, to a great extent, explain its long life and achievements. They are the Society's –

- (1) Amazing vitality and output;
- (2) Continued determination to uphold the spirit of the Objective of the Founders - "The cultivation and practice of classical music, vocal and instrumental";
- (3) Ability to march with the times and, at the same time, maintain leadership in the presentation of choral music, and
- (4) Initial good management and its continuance over the years.

The vitality displayed at the outset of the Society's career was maintained throughout the century. The same may be said of its output, albeit the flush of 11 appearances in the first year gave way to a minimum of four "subscription" concerts per year but often supplemented by "extras". In five years only did the number fall below four. When negotiations with the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1937 delayed programming, two concerts were given. *The Society assisted at an A.B.C. Orchestral Celebrity Concert that year.* The four other years saw three appearances. Only three advertised concerts were cancelled (they were given later); one due to a transport strike and one due to a strike by members of the Victorian Police. The record is even more meritorious when it is realised that up to the signing of the Agreement with the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1937, no financial support had been received from sources outside of the Society's own members and its own resources. An admirable example of self-help!

It is astonishing to find that the Society appeared in its own right in 550 concerts in the century. Nor was its vitality and output confined to its own activities. On 86 occasions it assisted at other concerts and celebrations, some of them marking important events in Victorian History. Thus it exhibited a commendable public spirit. That spirit was further exemplified in assistance extended to other choral bodies over many years. Advice, based on the results of long experience, has been freely given and the loan of music from the Society's extensive library has long been regarded as routine. The Society's library is available to choral bodies throughout Australia and has become something in the nature of a clearance house for the purpose.

Considering the second characteristic and turning to the strictly musical aspect of the 550 concerts, it may be observed that while relatively few of the items comprising the programmes possibly possess little of merit

(inevitable in such a large number), at no time did the Society descend to the level of the puerile or merely popular to catch the ears of listeners or to draw audiences by lowering standards of musical taste which it considered its duty to uphold. Indeed, over the years, many works were presented in the knowledge that little gain, or actual loss, was more than likely but which were considered worthy of presentation to a public to whom they were unknown or partly understood. Musical enterprise along the lines indicated and limited only by its financial resources has been the Society's guiding principle. During one period the Society was frequently criticised because of its continued presentation of "Elijah" at Easter. The reason was a mundane one- financial considerations. Normally the Christmas performance/s of the much loved "Messiah" returned a profit but not sufficient to meet the financial requirements for the year. Consequently a loss at Easter could not be contemplated, especially as the normal two remaining concerts often returned a small profit but more often resulted in loss. After nine years of "Elijah" at Easter, a change was made in 1938. Despite the fact that the new programme was acknowledged to be meritorious and desirable and the performance itself was warmly praised by the critics, a loss of £128 was realised.

The third characteristic - ability to march with the times and maintain leadership - suggests a survey of the nature of the music presented by the Society. It is a far cry from the frequent presentation of "Miscellaneous" programmes in the early days to the present preference given to major works constituting a full or half programme. Glee, part songs and short works were appropriate and acceptable at the time and, indeed, still have a rightful place in choral concerts. But after 25 years a definite change took place -in favour of major works. To the premier choral society in Victoria the progression was logical and almost inevitable. Public taste changed with the passing years and an alert and progressive Society met the need to march with the times. How the progression took place and the extent thereof is revealed by the subjoined analysis. In the last section covering 4 "Miscellaneous" programmes, "Belshazzar's Feast" (of 40 minutes duration) was given on three occasions and on the fourth, Brahms' "Requiem". From this it is clear that -as to its own concerts -the Society is now solely an interpreter of major choral works.

Period	Conductor	Misc. Programmes	Total Concerts	% Misc. to Total
1853/60	Russell	30	58	52
1861	Elsasser	4	12	33
1862/65	Horsley	10	20	50
1865/66	Pringle	3	6	50
1866/74	Lee (I)	24	61	39
1874/76	Summers	6	14	43
1876/88	Lee (II)	11	56	20
1888/11	Peake	22	115	19
1911/26	Zelman	14	98	14
1927/53	Heinze	22	110	20
		146	550	27
Since 1938 (last 15 years)		4	56	7

In considering the change alluded to, an opportunity for interesting study is afforded by the General Summary of Choral Performances as set out in Appendix C. It will be seen that "The Messiah" and "Elijah" were and are first favourites in oratorio and "Faust" in opera. These preferences appear to be in line with those indicated in other English speaking communities. During the last quarter of a century, Bach's St. Matthew Passion" has been given on 10 occasions; it is now a regular presentation at Easter and fittingly so. Elgais "Dream of Gerontius" with 6 performances has become better known and, in consequence, better understood and appreciated. The same may be said of Verdi's "Requiem" with 5 presentations. Beethoven's great "Choral Symphony" (in "Miscellaneous") was given 7 times as against 3 previously. All of these are acknowledged masterpieces and as such have a strong appeal. On the other hand, Gounod's "Mors et Vita" and "The Redemption" and Spohr's "Calvary" have passed out of favour. The same applies to Sullivan's "Golden Legend". Turning to the "moderns" in choral composition, Walton's extremely modern "Belshazzar's Feast" (in "Miscellaneous") has received 4 performances, Honegger's "King David" one, and Pierne's "The Children's Crusade", of older vintage, 2 performances. The last mentioned three were introduced to Australia by the Society and were most enthusiastically received. Truly the Society has marched with the times.

A complete list of the Society's "First Performances" – in Australia, in Victoria and in Melbourne, will be found in Appendix A. It is an extremely impressive record and of itself indicates, not only ability to march with the times but a capacity to lead in choral performance as well. The same spirit of enterprise will be seen in the list of "First Performances" of orchestral works in Appendix B. These were largely confined to the "sixties" of last century when the preponderance of "Miscellaneous" programmes afforded greater

opportunities for the Society's own Orchestra. It was inevitable, of course, that the more frequent presentation of major choral works would restrict opportunities for the Orchestra in its own right.

It is simple justice to touch on the last characteristic – good management – and so acknowledge the diligent and self-sacrificing labours of the various Committees during the years. From its inception, the Society's affairs have been directed by a Committee working through the Society's officers, all of whom are elected annually. It is clear that, overall, direction was capable and intelligent; otherwise the Society would not have sustained the stresses and strains of a century of continuous public appearances. It is clear, also, that the various crises, which have been duly recorded, were handled in a way appropriate to the circumstances. The first, the "break away" in 1860 was met with patience and wisdom; an open door maintained which permitted the return of most of the "rebels" to their first allegiance. Despite the lack of an appropriate music hall in Melbourne, the Society continued to give high-class concerts until an enormous load of debt produced another crisis. Notwithstanding, the Society continued its public appearances while it negotiated (successfully) a settlement of 6/8d. in the £ and, at the same time, managed to retain its valuable library!

With the opening of the - Melbourne Town Hall in 1870, the Committee's financial worries were resolved into a question, mainly, of good management. The capacity of the new hall (1758) was sufficient to enable a balance to be maintained between enterprise and financial stability. But two decades later the impact of the financial depression, or "land boom" of the "nineties", was encountered and remained a constant problem for nearly ten years. Banks, business houses and other institutions closed their doors and the general position, musically, as well as in other ways, was extremely bleak. Nevertheless normal appearances, with orchestra, were maintained although rates of admission were reduced and ranged as low as 1/-. Careful and imaginative management was rewarded with a safe issue.

Thirty years later (1930) another financial depression raised the same old problems. Largely through internal financial economies the crisis was surmounted; a fact that was not forgotten when negotiations were opened with the Australian Broadcasting Commission relative to what became the present active association of the two bodies. The scheme and proposal originated entirely with the Committee and while it sprang from enlightened self-interest, it must be conceded that it was the outcome of a fine spirit of imagination.

Two World Wars brought their own peculiar problems but despite the calls on man-power, high standards of concert performance were maintained. As noted, public appeals were more numerous in 1914/18 when the Society assisted at four in aid of various wartime funds and in addition handed over the proceeds of one of its own concerts for the same purpose. All and in all, the Society, and for that matter, the public, owe a great deal to the various Committees.

One failure of consequence must be noted; the Society's inability to secure a "home" or music hall. That reproach, however, must be shared by the public of Melbourne. The Society made three attempts to establish its own hall but all failed. The last - an ambitious scheme - came to naught because the Government of the day lacked vision and the capacity to grant a desired and specified site south of the Yarra river and adjacent to St. Kilda Road, which, incidentally, was all that was requested. A later Government has advanced so far as to reserve the site in question - with adjacent ground - "for cultural purposes".

In its Conductors, the Society was extremely fortunate as earlier pages testify. It remains to remark that, excluding five with short terms in the early days, the remaining four account for 92 years and the last is, happily, still in charge. Long tenures of office made for stability and as the holders possessed competence and enthusiasm, progress in choral matters followed.

Over the years, nearly 600 soloists appeared at the Society's concerts. Clearly their contribution to the success of the concerts and to the enjoyment of listeners was very notable. It is therefore regretted that greater space could not be given to their part. To attempt a reference to well over 2,000 appearances would manifestly be out of the question in a volume of this size. Care has been taken, however, to ensure the inclusion of the names of all who appeared and some recompense is offered in that the names of all who sang on ten or more occasions are listed in the Appendix. Another list gives the names of notable visitors as well as a number of Australians who (in most cases) after appearing with the Society, went overseas and achieved success in wider fields. In the illustrations to this volume, space has been given to a reasonable representation.

On the general question of the standards attained at the Society's concerts, the only records are the press accounts of the time and the occasional references in the Annual Reports, most of which have been quoted. From the former, the writer has submitted summaries, extracts and quotations for the purpose of presenting

the reported merits, or otherwise, of each concert. Care has been taken to render a fair and balanced verdict. Judged from this evidence, the lapses from the choral standards of the time were infrequent and the verdict is largely one of successful concerts, in varying degrees. An exception must be made in regard to the Orchestra, particularly in the pre-Zelman era. The difficulties in regard to orchestral support pursued the Society from its inception until recent times and, generally, were well known to the press writers who often referred to them.

So much for the Press, but what of the audience, for after all, it is towards the members thereof (and radio listeners, nowadays) that the performers' efforts are directed -to entertain, to edify and uplift; as the case may be. The press accounts do not consistently note the reaction of the audience but when they do, they are invariably of a favourable nature. After perusing well over a thousand such reports, the writer cannot recall a single instance to the contrary. His own observations over 30 years have left a pleasant memory of continuous appreciation, varying from polite to spontaneous warmth and occasional exhilaration as expressed by applause. As the Society's audiences over the years were composed mainly of music-lovers, their consistent reaction is valuable evidence and should be accepted as such.

The two preceding paragraphs attempt to summarise the available information from the point of view of the press writers and the audience and should be read in conjunction with Chapters dealing-with The Press, The Orchestra and The Choir. The definite pronouncements in Chapters XI, XIII and XIV, are the outcome of personal experience supported by observations by Conductors, members of the Committees, officers, performing and subscribing members and members of audiences. Sir Thomas Beecham's "astonishment" as to standard of performance and the complimentary views tendered by Mr. Neville Cardus (both visitors to Australia) have been noted.

The subject of applause during performances has some interesting historical aspects in the Society's record. From the first concert to relatively recent times, it was the custom of the audience -when it felt disposed -to applaud Soloists at the end of their numbers and the Choir at the end of choruses. Sometimes encores were called for and sometimes conceded, but gradually the practice was frowned upon and came to an end in Mr. Zelman's time. There were times during Mr. Zelman's conductorship when the question of applause or no applause during performances was debated - in Committee and among performing members. For the time, the ayes prevailed. During the regime of Sir Bernard Heinze, the frequent performance of "St. Matthew Passion" and in a lesser degree "The Dream of Gerontius", again raised the question of applause during performances. It was felt that in view of the deeply spiritual nature of these works and the solemnity attaching thereto, applause would be entirely out of place. Accordingly, the programmes included requests - as to the former - "to refrain from applause during the progress or at the end of the oratorio" and as to the latter - "to refrain from applause". At first the appeals were not entirely successful but ultimately the desired end was achieved as to the former and almost entirely so as to the latter; certainly during the performance.

From this beginning, it was found possible to extend the new rule, generally, to other works -no applause during the performance. At the interval and at the end of the performance, the audience was free to express itself in applause; which it invariably did and none the less heartily for its forbearance. The merits of the new rule are undoubted and are of benefit to performer and listener alike. Absence of interruption (however well meant) permits the orderly presentation of the composer's work and the continuance of the created and life-giving atmosphere which is essential for a completely finished performance and one that brings, at the end, the maximum cumulative effect to performer and listener. Thus, both have been afforded an opportunity to enter the mind of the composer and, without distraction, to share his joy, his sorrow, his exhilaration or his spiritual devotion as it happens to be. The cumulative effect of a deeply moving performance of "The Dream of Gerontius" was noted in one press report thus - "At the end, instead of the usual hand-clapping - a few minutes tense silence - the message as well as the music had reached its goal".

The passage of a century left its mark on other things associated with the Society. In the Society's archives there is much printed matter, including well over 600 concert programmes - from the single broad-sheet of the "fifties" to the tasteful productions of the printer's art of today. Until the sharp increase in printing costs enforced economies, the Society's concert programmes had expanded to the dimensions of a booklet - presenting photographs of the Conductor and Soloists, annotations of the work for performance, other illustrations and information of interest. Altogether, they were musically interesting and informative and acceptable as souvenirs. Between the two points of time mentioned, there is a diverting pageant of changes in personal habilaments; male and female. Ladies appear with wasp-like waists and fearsome head-dress, gentlemen are profusely bewhiskered or heavily moustached. Later, the ladies hair and skirts appreciably shorten, the waists are somehow transformed, while the facial adornments of the gentlemen disappear. Later still and gradually, the familiar, present-day "styles" in hair and dress prevail.

There is also an interesting story in printing. The various changes in type, emphasis, set up and general layout would delight the eye of a student of this art. Accordingly, the illustrations to this volume include a few. There is a reproduction of the programme of the first concert and one of the first performance of "Elijah" in Australia, both of the "fifties" – to compare with the covers of the programmes of "Caractacus" (1912), "The Creation" (1925), "Hiawatha" (1929) and "Belshazzar's Feast" (1938).

Lastly, the list of names of the Society's Auditors in the Appendix also tells of times that are past. For the first 45 years it was the practice to elect two members, presumably with clerical experience, for the annual audit of accounts. Changes were frequent and no one held office long or often. In the late "eighties" and "nineties", accountancy institutes were founded in Australia and their advent is reflected in the later appointment of qualified auditors and improved presentation of accounts. Before the end of the century, the name of a member of one of the institutes appeared, to be followed by others up to the present time. A feature distinguishing these appointees was almost continuous service, in most cases, over many years. One of the present holders of the office, Mr. W. T. Forster, has served continuously for 40 years. Three of the name of Holmes are in the list. The last mentioned two were brothers and second-cousins of the first. Mr. W. M. Holmes, a member of the present Committee, is a member of the same family.

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The last choral chord has died away and with it the echos of the Orchestra; the Conductor's baton lies on his stand; the last audience has dispersed -and this long account comes to an end. By virtue of continuous appearances in public, the Society has joined a very small group of public institutions in Victoria which have attained their Centenary .In this group, the Society is the first cultural body to obtain that distinction. Indeed, it is probably the first in Australia. In the wider sphere of musical activity in the British Commonwealth of Nations (as the Hundredth Annual Report states), the Society is now the oldest choral body with continuous public appearances. A number of similar societies established in Great Britain in the early days of last century are older but, because of stern necessity, they had to suspend activities during the Second World War; That unfortunate interruption advanced the Melbourne Society to the status indicated. It is an honour accepted with regret for the circumstances which brought it about. Nevertheless, the Society is content to join the ranks of the senior societies -as the first junior - and feels that it is in honoured company indeed.

And so the Society is left - in its unique place amid honoured company - and this volume must be left - to the general reader for his interest and information; to the musical student for his study; to the press reader for his review and, finally, to the historian who will write the full story of The Development of Music in Australia - for his assessment of the value of the Society's contribution thereto and of the merits of this record of its long life.

As a last word must be said - at the close of one century and the beginning of another - surely that word should be –

"Hats off to the Past; coats off for the Future".