

The Cape Town Municipal Orchestra.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra.

The City Council has invested during the past 25 years as a contribution towards the cultural interests of its citizens the sum of £325,000, and it can be claimed that the continued maintenance of the Cape Town Orchestra is fully justified as a musical manifestation of this substantial financial investment. This claim is not made with regard to the Thursday Symphony concerts alone but because of the manifold types of music-making provided, which have been extended to all classes of the community at a minimum cost, and at the same time have given opportunities and privileges for a real and permanent development of musical appreciation.

The Symphony Concerts, inaugurated in 1914, have grown from strength to strength and the personnel of the Orchestra is now augmented to 50 players, which is the highest number since its inception, and for the first time in its history there is a satisfactory complement of strings. Several new players have been engaged, including players who have been important members of the famous B.B.C. Orchestra, London.

In addition to the soloists of first class rank who appear continually throughout the year, the following great artists of international fame have appeared at the Symphony Concerts with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra without any extra charge to the permanent Thursday subscriber: Florence Austral, soprano; Amadio, flautist; Ignaz Friedman, pianist; Jascha Heifetz, violinist; Moisevitich, pianist (two appearances); Sir Henry Wood, conductor (three appearances); Keith Falkner, singer (three appearances); Mark Hambourg, pianist; Mischa Elman, violinist; Sir Granville Bantock, composer-conductor; Joseph Szigeti, violinist; Gallurci, singer; Sir Hugh Allen, Principal, Royal College of Music, as conductor and pianist; Richard Tauber, singer, conductor; etc., etc. Negotiations are now taking place for the engagement of several artists of international fame for the year 1939. No extra charge is made to subscribers for these special concerts.

Opera and Ballet.

The presentation of local opera is an important feature of the Orchestra's work. The following operas have been produced during the last two years in conjunction with various local organisations: Don Pasquale, Figaro, Hansel and Gretel, The Secret Marriage, Tosca, La Boheme, Bar-

ber of Seville, Shamus O'Brien, Cavalleria Rusticana, La Traviata.

The temporary lack of a suitable theatre is hampering the work of opera development, and the indulgence of patrons is respectfully asked for (when productions have to be given in the unsuitable City Hall) until a proper auditorium is erected, which it is hoped will shortly come to pass.

Second only in importance to the Symphony is the Sunday Concert. This concert performs a service to the general community parallel to the famous Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts. The Orchestra is augmented to 40 players. Admission is free and 6d. is charged for a certain portion of the hall.

The programmes, owing to the extraordinary rise in the musical appreciation of the public, are of a semi-symphony standard and the works of the great masters are often performed.

The School Educational Concerts for children have grown enormously since the inception ten years ago. Twenty thousand European children attended the concerts this year, and the experiment of extending the privilege to non-European children has met with great success. Forty thousand had attended the concerts arranged for them and this new extension of the Orchestra's educational work has now become a prominent feature of the educational school concerts.

Without reference to the other classes of concerts, it is obvious that the Orchestra plays an important role in the musical and general cultural development of the city. It has always needed the support of those interested in music and it still needs increased support if its work is to be continued and developed.

Appeal for Subscribers.

"Three hundred subscribers are not enough to keep the Orchestra alive," says the Musical Director, Mr. W. J. Pickerill, "and although I have made from time to time appeal upon appeal for 500 subscribers I have not as yet succeeded in securing this most desirable number. The lack of a sufficient number of subscribers imposes upon me many onerous duties (some very distasteful) in order that the cost of the Orchestra to the city be kept within a reasonable figure, and I am forced to sponsor many inartistic undertakings which produce revenue in order to preserve intact the Thursday and other concerts of good standard. I appeal for subscribers to the Thursday Symphony Concerts."

There is a minimum of 46 concerts during the year. The ticket is transferable. The seat is available at all celebrity concerts at which the Orchestra is engaged in spite of the enormously increased charges to non-subscribers. First class soloists are engaged at regular intervals. Important new works are performed as soon as pos-

sible after publication. Payment for the ticket can be made to suit the convenience of the patron; the price for one year is £4 4s. Local artists are regularly engaged. Musical students have opportunities for the necessary experience of the performances of concertos and solos with the Orchestra.



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