

S.A. Musician's Faith In Composer Vindicated

By John Dempster

To hundreds of the world's greatest musicians Adelaide is the headquarters of a now famous International Musical Organisation.

The story of the origin and development of this society is one of the romances of modern times, telling as it does of the faith of a disciple in the greatness of his master, and determination that the world shall share his beliefs. Paul Howard of Adelaide, is the disciple, and Godowsky the master.

THE unconquerable spirit of our kith and kin in England, Scotland, and Wales is not more faithfully demonstrated by stimulating utterances of leading statesmen than by the evidences that reach us of the heroic calm which permits sustained interest in everyday affairs.

For instance, since last May, when the work achieved by Mr. Howard, in the cause of Godowsky's music was lauded by the London "Musical Times," Mr. Howard has received "flocks of entries" from artists in England and Scotland for the International Godowsky Society founded by him.

It is remarkable that the sheer persistence of one pianist, and that man a highly gifted amateur musician in Adelaide, should have been the means of shaming pianists the world over to study and, if able, to perform, the colossal works of a contemporary giant, Leopold Godowski.

Szigeti a Member

Australian pianists will be jolted out of their complacency this year, for Szigeti, who is coming to Australia this year, has joined the Godowsky society, and, being now pledged to perform that composer's works, will introduce several masterpieces to both concert-goers and listeners over the air.

It will be interesting to see who, if any of our concert pianists are stimulated to the extent of tackling these masterpieces, which one of our master-pianists recently admitted to me "were too difficult to even attempt."

Recently Leonard Liebling, the American critic, told us of David Saperton's "All-Godowsky" piano recital

in New York, when a number of outstanding works were performed. The works showed that Godowsky has developed pianoforte technique further than any other composer since the time of Chopin and Liszt.

Liebling pertinently asks:—"Why do the very virtuoso whom I have seen in Godowsky's home raving over that master's compositions, practically ban his music now?" and adds:—"Apart from Josef Hofmann and David Saperton, the remaining Godowsky performers seem to be Nadia Reisenberg and the indefatigable Paul Howard, of South Australia."

Lovers of records will be soon able to determine much about Godowsky's compositions, and the probable cause of their neglect, for Victor is recording Saperton's readings.

Like Paul Howard I am in part of Irish extraction (Mr. Howard is a descendant of Field, the Irish composer of the first nocturnes), and so I can appreciate the many chuckles he must enjoy at our expense (I mean the musicians of Adelaide).

For it is a fact that long before Mr. Howard got personally in touch with world-famous pianists to advocate the claims of Godowsky to recognition as a master, he had done his level best to gain us over as disciples—and failed.

Paul Howard's devotion to a superior mind is as romantic and intriguing as was Boswell's worship of Samuel Johnson.

In all probability, through hitching his wagon to a star, Paul Howard's name will find a permanent place in musical history when we very clever people, who ignored his claims for our support, are long since forgotten.