

out him to get them into tune again, all that the musical talent of the place could produce was hideous discords. Mr. Drew abandoned the attempt in 1884, when the burden was taken up by Mr. George Garry, of Napier, and Mr. Garry—after seeing the old Philharmonic Society utterly wreck its finances, and finally disappear, and finding his plans thwarted at every turn, *not* by ill-will, and *not* by incompetence, but by sheer weariness after the strain produced by Mr. Forrest's genius—devoted his attention to the organisation of a military band, which was a brilliant success. It is now many years since my regular visits to New Plymouth ceased, and my acquaintance with Mr. Garry was so slight that he is not likely to remember me, but I remember very distinctly the struggle he underwent to maintain the position to which his abilities undoubtedly entitled him.

Outside New Plymouth I must mention Mr. Pinches, who for some years fought the battle of music in Hawera, and of Mr. R. C. Tenant, who laboured most successfully in Patea. So far as Taranaki is concerned these are both people of the past, and both those towns are fortunate if their successors are only half as self-sacrificing and enthusiastic. I was once in Patea when the New Plymouth orchestra came there and gave a concert. At that time an expedition of the kind was an undertaking of some magnitude, for after a tedious railway journey from New Plymouth to Hawera the party had to be conveyed from the latter town to Patea by coach. They rendered an excellent programme under Mr. Drew's baton, but unfortunately the evening was wet and stormy, consequently they had not anything like the audience they would have had if the weather had been fine. At that time Patea possessed the best concert room on the West Coast. I could not help smiling at the intense energy the members of the orchestra put into all their performances, under such

love of thoroughness the pieces could not help going off well. But the energy of all the performers put together was nothing compared with the enthusiasm of Mr. Tennant, who made a capital speech just before the concert closed, when proposing a vote of thanks, and at the supper which took place afterwards to hear Mr Tennant singing "William Rufus" (I cannot recollect ever hearing him sing any other song in public, but he always sang that one well) was a treat. Patea used to be a very musical place, but besides Mr. Tennant, the only musical notoriety with whom I was acquainted there was Mr. Samuel Taplin, who possessed a very fine and mellow bass voice.

There were several pioneers of musical aestheticism in New Plymouth without whose names this article would be incomplete: Miss Humphries, Miss Govett, Mrs. G. F. Robinson, Mrs. Knight, Mr. T. Humphries (it is impossible to speak too highly of the musical abilities of the Humphries family, or of the services they rendered to the old Philharmonic Society), Mr. F. L. Webster, Mr. J. O. George, Mr. Tribe and Mr. Holdsworth. These were for years the mainstay of the chorus, and without them but few good solos could have been performed. The amount of hard work they put into all the practices and concerts was creditable to their love of music, and should be an example to their successors.

The days of those old concerts—when the Philharmonic Society (rejoicing in the strength of the above-mentioned vocalists, and of others whose names I have forgotten) performed music which nobody in Taranaki has now the courage to look at, much less produce in public—are over; and it behoves the present generation, while avoiding the mistakes, to emulate the energy and enthusiasm of their predecessors, whose names must—for many years—be associated with all that is best in music in Taranaki.

