

CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC.

FOUNDATION STONE.

LAI'D BY MADAME MELBA.

The foundation-stone of the new building for the Conservatorium of Music was laid yesterday afternoon by Madame Melba, in the presence of a numerous company. The chancellor of the University (Sir John Madden) received the guests in the Wilson-hall, where a short programme of music was provided by the students. Amongst the company were Lady Madden, Sir Henry Wrixon (vice-chancellor) and Lady Wrixon, Mrs. Peterson, Professors Spencer, Allen, Gilruth, Laurie, Peterson, and Nanson, Mr. and Mrs. Sachse, Dr. J. W. Barrett, the Rev. Dr. Marshall, and the heads of Trinity, Ormond, and Queen's. A special telegram of congratulation was received from Professor Ennis, of the Adelaide University, and was read by the chancellor.

The platform in the new building, to which an adjournment was made after afternoon tea, was decorated with the colours of Madame Melba and the University.

Sir John Madden, in calling upon Madame Melba to lay the foundation-stone, said that all were deeply grateful to Madame Melba for the interest she had taken in the conservatorium. Her advocacy had influenced the Government to provide money for the building. On the stone would be the name of the possessor of the finest voice that had ever been, or, he might say, would ever be heard. (Applause.) Madame Melba had been a constant inspiration to students. (Applause.) He was glad that Madame Melba's visit happened to coincide with the ceremony. She had during her stay impartially helped every deserving object, and had shown the greatest kindness to all. They were proud that she belonged to this great country, of which they all had such high hopes as to its future. Madame Melba had been particularly kind in hearing young singers and advising them, and he hoped that amongst them there might be some Melbas in the making. He had much pleasure in asking Madame Melba to lay the first stone of the new conservatorium building, and if there was anything in heredity he was sure it would be well and truly laid. (Applause.)

The stone was laid by Madame Melba with a silver trowel presented by the architect (Mr. Peebles).

The Rev. E. H. Sugden, chairman of the committee of the conservatorium, in moving a vote of thanks to Madame Melba, referred sympathetically to the illness of Professor Peterson. Though Professor Peterson was not able to speak, they were glad to see him present. They were indebted to Mr. Sachse for persuading the Bent Ministry to provide the funds for the building. The work was carried out as the result of a challenge thrown out by Madame Melba on a previous visit that, if they would build the conservatorium, she would come to its inauguration wherever she might be. Madame Melba had shown her interest in the conservatorium by giving singing lessons to a dozen of the most promising students, without fee, and had bestowed the utmost pains upon them. She had also rendered the greatest service to music by calling attention to the need for a permanent orchestra in Melbourne, and had backed her opinion by a generous challenge, which he hoped would be responded to with equal generosity.

The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation, and the proceedings terminated.