

MUSIC IS HIS BUSINESS

"I'M on a round-the-world journey to reintroduce the rebuilt Peters Edition of the classics. The Nazis took it away from us before the war, and the Communists confiscated it in 1950, but now we are back in business again." Max Hinrichsen, the London music publisher, told *The Listener* this while he was in Wellington recently to meet officers of the NZBS and local musical organisations. He explained that the Peters Edition dated back to 1800, when it first published the works of Bach and Beethoven, and had been in his family since 1863 when his great-uncle Max Abraham was appointed managing director. It was now being published in London, New York and Frankfurt. In addition to the classics, Peters Edition had the copyright of many contemporary and late 19th Century composers.

"My brother in the United States told me I should come to Saint Louis for a music teachers' convention, which was attended by 2000 musicians," he said. "I saw a map in the travel agency and I said to myself, I think I'll go home the other way round. So I told them I'd like to change my return journey, and I came back this way. I stopped at Hawaii, where there is a great deal of musical life, and after leaving New Zealand I'm going on to Australia, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece and Rome.

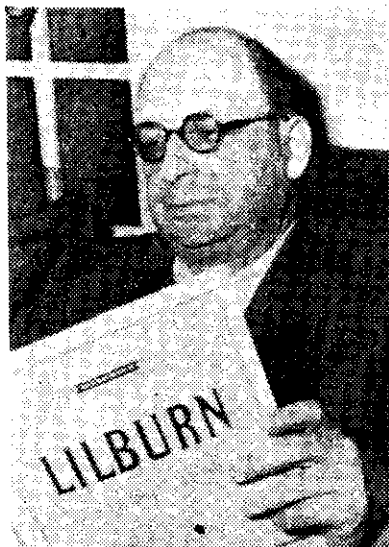
"The outstanding person I've met in New Zealand is Dr. Vernon Griffiths," he said. "His 30 years of work here must have influenced the musical life of New Zealand very much indeed. I was also amazed to see such a great interest in music teaching here. Perhaps New Zealand is the country with the most piano pupils. I don't mean in actual numbers of course, but per person it must be much more than anywhere else. Here everyone seems to learn the piano.

"I was greatly impressed with the National Orchestra, and the fine work it's doing under James Robertson, whom I knew in London, and I was also very pleased to see such a wonderful music library as the NZBS has in Wellington. It is splendidly organised."

Max Hinrichsen said he was born in 1901 at Leipzig, the original home of the Peters Edition. His father became sole owner of the firm in 1900. "As the eldest son, I was prepared from boyhood by my parents to become a music publisher," he said. "I joined the firm in 1927 after four years in America as apprentice with the firm of Carl Fischer, and a year in Switzerland with the firm of Hug.

"Although we have gained fame for the high standard of our publication of the classics, we have also tried to serve living composers," he said. "For this reason I recently accepted the position of managing director of CELL (the Composers and Editors' Lending Library). CELL is forming a lending library of unusual classical and contemporary works, and, thanks to our connections in many lands, it is international in scope. It includes among its members the New Zealander Douglas Lilburn.

"The objective of CELL, like that of a similar fund established recently by the Australasian Performing Right



A.P.S. photograph

MAX HINRICHSEN

"Here everyone seems to learn the piano"

Association, is to enable composers to get their works performed. Orchestral works are hard to get published because it is so expensive to print all the parts, but any composer can submit work to CELL and the manuscripts are vetted by a panel of musicians. Once a work is accepted by CELL we are able to make half a dozen sets of it available on request and without any obligation to any orchestra which wants to perform it. Thus, composers are able to see their works performed, even though they have not been published.

"In general I think composers are much better off today than they have been in the past," he added, "because in every country, organisations for the production of music have been set up. In London there is the Composers' Guild, and there are societies for the presentation of new music in France and the United States. That has never happened before. Music has also been much helped by broadcasting. In London sometimes there are three orchestral concerts a day. Every day you can go to an orchestral concert. Before the war that sort of thing didn't occur, and one was considered lucky to fill one hall on Saturday night. Then there are very good professors of music at seven universities, each one an outstanding personality. Yes, we are most enthusiastic about the progress of music in Britain today."

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