

The mayor of Lucerne comes to London

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A BEAUTIFUL CONCERT IN THE SWISS CHURCH AT ENDELL STREET

Twenty youths born between 1940 and 1955, most of them music students, two teachers, a few secretaries and a housewife came to perform works by Bach, Handel, Telemann and Albinoni at the Swiss Church. The "Frenckendorf Kammer Ensemble" had come to perform under the auspices of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. Their journey to London had led them to St. Georges Church, Hanover Square, to St. Paul's of Wilton Place and to St. Martin-in-the-Fields. But they said that their best concert was the one given at the Swiss Church. Apparently, it is also where they reaped the most from the collection bag. They made £30.

They began with the Sinfonia in A major for strings and the whole assembly vibrated with such sweet Italian melodies and the hum of the violins. The sixty members present (about thirty of them from the N.S.H.) were given the permission to applaud, although they were in a church, and did so without inhibition. The next piece was a viola concerto in G by Telemann. The soloist was Conrad Zwicky, who was also the group's conductor. The viola is a rare instrument and it was a new experience to listen to its sad and mellow sound from so close in the dry acoustics of the Swiss Church.

There was a short interval following which we listened to Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor. The soloist was a young girl from Tokyo, now studying with Hansheinz Schneeberger in Basle, called Hisayo Nagai. She played flaw-

lessly, except perhaps during the last movement, which is an allegro and calls for considerable virtuosity. I had the feeling that the understanding between her and the orchestra was being lost and that the conductor was not quite in control of the situation. But as this happened on the final beats of the concerto, little harm was done. The performance ended with Handel's Concerto Grosso in G minor. The young orchestra then gratified us with two encores. They left the church, beaming with their rosy Swiss faces, put their instruments inside a hired van, and left for a party at the pizzeria next door.

ANOTHER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL CONCERT

Flute and harpsichord together is not a particularly frequent combination. On 8th March at the Wigmore Hall we heard just that. The Swiss flautist Peter-Lukas Graf and the Swiss harpsichordist Jörg Ewald Dähler got together and performed sonatas for flute and harpsichord by Johann Sebastian Bach and his son Johann Christian Bach. Peter-Lukas Graf also played a fantastic but esoteric "Sequenza for flute solo" and got all the wrong notes right. The harpsichordist performed a few pieces in solo, among them the delightful "Variation on an old drinking song" of Hugo Distler. The Daily Telegraph said that the duo "set a standard of musicianly excellence which threw into shade much of today's artists' shortcomings in balance and execution". The Wigmore Hall was fairly full and the Swiss were present in strength. The number of compatriots who turn up on such occasions can be surprising.

The next time you chance to go to the Swiss Centre, perhaps note that a record by Peter-Lukas Graf and Jörg Ewald Dähler is on sale at the kiosk. It is a beautiful stereo recording of works by Mozart, Bach, Quantz and Handel.

THE MAYOR OF LUCERNE COMES TO LONDON

The Stadtpräsident of Lucerne and Mrs. H. R. Meyer, the Councillor of the town and his lady, Mrs. Kurzmeyer, spent a busy and glamorous three days in London. Relying entirely on the printed programme of the Corporation of London, which played hosts to these eminent Swiss civil servants, the story of these three days runs as follows:

The Mayor (and his suite) arrived at London Airport on Tuesday afternoon, 7th April, at 4.20 p.m. They were driven like VIPs straight to Mansion House, where they were met by the Lord Mayor's private secretary, who took them to meet the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. After an informal conversation which lasted about one and a half hours, they left Mansion House for the Innholders Hall, where they were to attend the Innholders Company Dinner.

There they were met by the Aldermanic Sheriff and Lady Mais and by Col. Harvey-Kelley. They were shown the Aldermanic and Lord Mayor's Rolls.

The next day, they left Mansion House for the Central Criminal Court to watch the ceremony in which the Lord Mayor greets Her Majesty's Judges at 10.10 a.m. They then visited the Old Bailey. At 11.20 the party was at Buckingham Palace to sign the visit-

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ors book and watch the Mounting of the Guard. They returned to Mansion House and prepared for a "Spital Luncheon". They left Mansion House for St. Lawrence Jewry to attend a Spital Service. At 4 p.m. they visited the Barbican Site and, to cap the day, they were the guests of honour at an Easter Banquet given by the Lord Mayor at Mansion House. The mayor (or rather Stadtpräsident) of Lucerne recalled in his speech that Lucerne's famous wooden bridge owed its continued existence to British residents in the town. The demolition of this bridge had been planned when three hundred British residents, who, true to their background, loved ancient things, campaigned against this decision and won their case.

The next morning, the Stadtpräsident and his party left at 9.20 a.m. for a visit of the Tower of London. He met the deputy keeper of the Tower, Mr. McCartney, and the Lord Mayor's Yeomen. He returned for a Buffet Luncheon at Mansion House at noon. Then ladies and gentlemen parted to leave for the Guildhall separately. A few minutes later, they were all seated and ready to attend the Court of Common Council, which the Stadtpräsident addressed.

The ceremony at Guildhall lasted no longer than an hour and was followed by a short visit of St. Paul's Cathedral. They returned to Mansion House to leave at 5.55 p.m. for the P&O Building, Leadenhall Street, in order to attend the Reception for the Canberra Award Dinner. The closing function was a second "Dinner for Stadtpräsident" in Mansion House.

The mayor of Lucerne, the Councillor and their ladies took off from London Airport the next day at 10 a.m. It can hardly be said that they had a good glimpse of "Swinging London". They saw more pomp, more aldermen, swordbearers, yeomen and pageantry in those three crowded days than most of us can hope to see in all our lives.

(PMB)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Every Thursday from 6 to 7.30 p.m. Discussion Circle in English. Young men especially invited. Tea from 6 to 6.15 p.m. Swiss YMCA Building, Gt. Russell Street, W.C.1.

Secours Mutuels des Suisse de Londres. Monthly Meetings every first Wednesday of the month at 34 Fitzroy Sq., W.1. 7 p.m.

APRIL

Sunday 26th, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the "Siberia" range at Bisley. Swiss Rifle Association.

Tuesday 28th. City Swiss Club AGM. 6.30 for 7.00 p.m. at the Stanhope Suite, Dorchester Hotel.

Wednesday, 29th April. "Music without distraction" presentation at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Works by Pergolesi, Strauss, Wagner and Haydn. 8 p.m. Entrance fee. MAY

Friday 8th. 6.00 for 6.30 p.m. at the Ambassador's Residence. Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K.

Wednesday 13th. Swiss Mercantile Society monthly meeting.

Sunday 24th. Landsgemeinde.

Tuesday 26th. City Swiss Club card evening.

Sunday 31st. Annual Church Assembly of the Swiss Church at Endel St., W.C.2.

Please note that the ASSEMBLY OF THE SWISS ABROAD will be held at Zofingen between 28th and 30th August.

MUSICAL EVENTS

Here are two performances with Swiss artistes:

Sunday 17th May at 3 p.m. Recital by the distinguished Swiss duo (one piano, four hands) Isabel and Jürg Von Vintschger at the Wigmore Hall.

Thursday 21st May. Recital by the Swiss pianist Jürg Von Vintschger at the Queen Elizabeth Hall at 7.45 p.m. Works by Schumann, Debussy and Schubert.

CELEBRATIONS

We have pleasure in announcing and congratulating some of our readers for their birthdays. Dr. William Preiswerk was 77 on April 13th and so was Mr. Louis Portmann. Dr. Hans Gysin, from Basle, was 57 on April 16th. Mrs. Wera Schedler's 60th birthday fell on April 20th. Mr. B. Kaluza had his birthday on April 21st (but his exact age has been refused to the Swiss Observer's Intelligence Department). Mr. E. Zwicky was 73 on the 22nd, Mr. J. B. Brutsch was 81 and Mr. Gottfried Keller 65 on April 23rd. Mr. and Mrs. George Bouverat celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary on that same day. Mr. Léon Jos Faivre was 77 on Friday 24th.

AN ANGLO-SWISS ITEM

(This letter was sent to us from Geneva recently).

Dear Sirs,

On January 9 you published an item concerning the centenary of the English church in Zermatt. As a follow-up to this item it might interest you to know that as a result of reading this piece the choir of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Geneva volunteered its services to sing mattins on the occasion of the centenary on August 9, services which were kindly accepted by the Bishop of Leicester who will be taking charge of the church during August.

The Geneva English-church choir is about 25-strong and is virtually the

only, if not the only, English church choir left in Switzerland and in consequence is also sometimes called upon to sing in the English churches in Lausanne and Vevey and frequently sings in ecumenical services with the churches of the Swiss and international communities in Geneva and environs.

This will not be the choir's first visit to Zermatt. Their first visit was last summer in July when they also sang mattins in the English church there.

I trust that this information may be of some use to you.

Yours faithfully,

Marion B. Bywater,
Choir Secretary.

JOSEPH GUGGENHEIM

It is with regret that we have to announce the death of Mr. Joseph Guggenheim, of 71 Hamilton Terrace, N.W.8, on Tuesday 7th April at the age of 90. A summary of his career was printed in these columns no later than this Christmas. We shall be including a detailed account of his life in the next issue.

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