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#### HONEGGER AND HIS CRITICS.

The Honegger Concert at the Albert Hall was a dismal failure—for the critics. From Arthur Honegger's point of view it was an unqualified success, but the failure of London journalism and

pseudo-criticism was practically complete. The only excuse for London musical writers was the Albert Hall, True, it is difficult to grasp subtleties of orchestration in this great building. Apparently it was impossible for the critics. But the very large audience, after being a little at sea in the earlier stages, gradually began to realise that In the earlier stages, gradually began to realise that the work was grand, impressive, thought provok-ing, and at many odd times when least expected, beautiful in the older fashioned sense of the word. In the face of an obvious popular enthusiasm, the critics went away and wrote notices that gave a very bad impression. This in itself is inexcusable, for popular enthusiasm is often misdirected. But surely it was flying in the face of Providence to condemn a work that had already won the approval of critics really capable of judging such matters !

of critics really capable of judging such matters I Without entering into the question of criticism in such towns as New York or Rio, it will be sufficient to recall the effect which the work made at the Festival of the International Society for New Murie held in Zurich heat lung Ar Madamaicalla at the Festival of the International Society for New Music, held in Zurich last June. As Mademoiselle Wyss pointed out in these columns at the time, "King David" was regarded as being by far the most impressive and significant work presented at the Festival. Many of the best musical brains in the world were present. Amongst the audience were such men as the Director of the "Editions Universels," Scherchen, Furtwangler, Denzler, Gieseking, and a host of really reliable critics from Germany. And their verdict was unanimously in favour of the work

Germany. And their verdict was unanimously in favour of the work. In opposition to the considered opinion of the experts gathered in Zurich, we have a London Press upon which it is not really necessary to comment. The acknowledged leader made the complaint that the beauty of the piece, such as it was, lay with the wind instruments rather than the string! "*This*," he said in effect, "*is not in the least like Besthoven. How can I be expected o like it*" So much for the 'highbrow' point of view. The 'lowbrow' representative, the man who thought Grisi was an alto, said that he "would not miss this Swiss Miss," or some similar ex-pression of that kind of mentality.

not miss this Swiss Miss," or some similar expression of that kind of mentality. These opinions are scarcely worth mentioning, except in so far as they show that it is inadvisable to place too much reliance upon the views expressed in most of the leading London newspapers upon works of modern music. And if any of the Swiss Colony in London were dismayed to find that the work of this composer, who is of Swiss parentage and partly of Swiss musical education, was held of so little account in London, they can was held of so little account in London, they can rest assured that this was not the opinion of the real authorities, nor the view of the world at large. *Vice Honegger* ! \_\_\_\_\_\_ A.G. -----

#### **THOMAS MASSNER OF COIRE, 1710.\***

While Europe was still in the throes of the second series of wars consequent upon the Revo-cation of the Edict of Nantes, shortly before the signing of the peace of Utrecht, a clizen of the little mountain Canton of Grisons made a diver-sion which drew the excited attention of even the warring powers.

Thomas Massner had a private bank and for-warding agency in Coire. He was rich, highly re-spected and a member of the town council. Pre-vious to the date when our story opens, this extraordinarily energetic man had established widespread relations of a business kind with various countries, relying entirely upon his own initiative, which in those days was the only road to success. In the year 1691 he dealt energetically with Count Hannibal von Hohenems of Vaduz. This person-age had stolen the sum of 4,000 florins from Mass-ner and sent it over the border to Vaduz, in the Vorarlberg (Austrian territory). Shortly after this the Count, accompanied by

shortly after this the Count, accompanied by two squads of Austrian outriders, for whom he had the right of way, rode into the town of Coire. Massner, as a member of the town council, ordered the gates to be closed and manned and refused to

the gates to be closed and manned and refused to allow the Count to leave until he guaranteed the repayment of the stolen sum. When the war of the Spanish succession began in Northern Italy in 1702, Massner was appointed by Austria, largely in the interests of the Grisons League, to watch over the smuggling, and was nicknamed "the Imperial Captain and Chief Com-missary of Contraband." In this capacity, in 1706 he surprised a French courier, Sonnery, on the Lake of Como, who, com-ing from Lombardy with messages, was on his way to France. He carried with him the official mail destined for Prince Eugen This Massner confis-

destined for Prince Eugen. This Massner confis-cated, together with contraband goods to the value of 2,000 thalers, to recompense himself for goods of his own confiscated by the French in Germany at a profit of 1000 doubloons. This insult inflicted on France, as well as the

substantial services which Massner had rendered (\*This delightful page of history is reprinted from the March number of the "Swiss Monthly.")

to the Emperor in this war, could not go un-avenged. The French ambassador du Luc at Solothurn invented a method with the aid of his secretary, Francois de Merveilleux. In 1710 Massner's 16 year old son Thomas went to Geneva to learn the French language and boarded with a clergyman named Maurice. Sec-retary Merveilleux sent his young brother Samuel to the same place. Worming his way into young Massner's confidence he invited him with great friendliness to go for a walk to the village of Grange-Canal on the French frontier. Purposely the boundary line was crossed, and at once the two young men heard a loud dispute and found themselves in the hands of the French pickets. Merveilleux was set free, but young Massner was carried to the citadel of Lyons, This happened in April, 1710. In the meantime, as du Luc's representative, Secretary Merveilleux came to Coire, where Councillor Massner, discovering the trick played upon his son, went in company with a few armed men to his lodging in the morning of May 12th and made him prisoner, carrying him off to bis own house, as had been agreed should be done 2th and made him prisoner, carrying him off to his own house, as had been agreed should be done by the corporation. Merveilleux himself declared at this time that he was well treated by Massner. Du Luc used all his influence with the town cou-I in order to get his secretary away, even promis-ing that within the space of three weeks young Massner should be released and allowed to return to Coire.

Massner therefore determined to see du Luc Massner therefore determined to see du Luc personally in Solothurn, and Merveilleux, having given his solemn word not to leave the town until his return, was given his liberty. A few days later Merveilleux broke his parole and escaped. At Solothurn du Luc demanded from Massner for the foredom of his gave that he should sim

At Solothurn du Luc demanded from Massner for the freedom of his son that he should sign an ignoble declaration which would have debased him in his own esteem. This he promptly re-fused to do : but his father's heart urged him against even his own honour, and he returned to tell du Luc that he agreed, but was told that his sacrifice came too late as the letter had already been sent to the King. At Massner's request the Confederates and the Allied Powers applied to France officially for the

Allied Powers applied to France officially for the young man's release, but without any success. Mass-ner was again thrown upon his own resources. He ner was again thrown upon his own resources. He racked his brains for another forfeit by which he could force them to liberate his only child. Final-ly he bethought him of the treasurer of the French Embassy, the rich banker La Chapelle of Solothurn with whom he himself had transacted business. He therefore invited him to come to the much-frequented Autumn Fair at Zurich, and it was agreed that both should arrive there before it began. La Chapelle promised to come. Mass-ner accompanied by five of his specially chosen ner, accompanied by five of his specially chosen bravi, floated on a raft down the Rhine. At the hour appointed for the meeting he hid his men among the bushes on the banks and awaited his the business acquaintance. The latter arrived and they walked up and down for a while and then La Chapelle, who was probably growing suspicious, without any warning broke off the conversation and withdrew, which so upset Massner that he forgot to give his men the sign agreed upon. Thus the plot miscarried

and withdrew, which so upset Massner that he forgot to give his men the sign agreed upon. Thus the plot miscarried. Massner returned in haste to Coire, but he was not the man to be thwarted in his purpose by obstacles. Soon after this he learned that His Highness the Duke of Vendôme, Grand Prior of the Order of the Knights of Malta, brother of the Marshal of Vendôme and cousin of Louis XIV, coming from Italy would pass through Coire. On the 17th October, the day on which Ven-dôme was expected, Massner and his 'bravi,' to-gether with a number of young men from Coire, waited in Sargans, near the Felsburger Bridge. As the Duke neared it, Massner rode out to meet him and declared that he and his suite were prisoners. At the same time numerous troops came to Massner's aid and the French gentlemen were obliged to yield to numbers. Massner explained to the Duke the cause of this hold-up and led him and his followers to a neighbouring inn, called the "White Winepress," where they were given good rooms, well served meals, and excellent accommodation for the night under the strict guard of Massner's men. In the morning the French prisoners were taken up the Rhine on three rafts as far as Balzers, and there imprisoned in the country house of Vadiuz in the Vorarlberg ; here Massner gave the Duke and his followers his word of honour that as soon as his son was set at liberty, they would receive their freedom and be set on Swiss terri-tory. After waiting in vain for seven weeks for the

After waiting in vain for seven weeks for the boy to be set free, Massner proceeded to hand the Duke over to the Austrian military authorities. He was taken to Vienna, but gave Massner on this account so little trouble that in the following year, 1711, he was able to return to Paris determined to

seek his boy's freedom even in that quarter. And here diplomatic circles began to get ex-cited. France demanded that the Duke be instantly set free, and that Massner be heavily punished. Austria and her Allies spoke in his favour, de-claring that the national laws permitted reprisals and that his only mistake was in taking that law

into his own hands, The knotty problem of his guilt was turned over to the electors for decision. On December 7th, 1710, this body met to classify the votes. This over to the electors for decision. On December 7th, 1710, this body met to classify the votes. This was no easy matter, for they did not agree. Party feeling ran high, some being for Austria, others for France, and the last named proved to be in the majority. Austria had lost much sympathy by her behaviour in matters of rights of way. As a result it was decided that Massner was to be punished. Secondly, it was arranged that if possible before the 23rd of January, 1711, Ven-dôme must be found, either where he was a prisoner, or placed upon Swiss territory. Thirdly, Massner must pay all costs. The question arose as to whether Massner's offence came under the heading of common law! Before the Court met a pamphlet was printed anonymously (but in reality printed by Merveilleux), asserting that Mass-ner had repeatedly sent smuggled goods. The accused man, replying to these insults, stated that they were a pack of wicked lies, and the English and Austrian representatives agreed in defending him.

defending him.

defending him. There was a rapid volley of vituperative letters from the ambassadors, Grenth threatening to hold up the grain supply; du Luc demanding the im-mediate punishment of Massner, and Mannings, the English chargé d'affaires, making du Luc a laughing-stock and showing that Merveilleux was a man utterly devoid of honour. In fact, little by little the real character of Merveilleux was so clearly shown that du Luc was obliged to dismiss him from his service. "All this diplomatic inter-ference only served to envenom the quarrel," writes Zchokke, "and it became a political affair from that time forth. The government of the Grisons made vain efforts to secure the release of both prisoners." prisoners.

Meanwhile Mannings was assassinated at the baths of Pfeffers. When the Senate met in January Massner had

When the Senate met in January Massner had not as yet succeeded in securing the liberation of Vendôme, though he had even appealed to Vienna. Massner wrote to the Senate : "I am resolved to protect my rightful cause and to achieve success for my innocent boy as long as there remains a drop of Bundner and father-blood in my body as well as breath."

He was so wrought up in his defence before the Senate that he challenged one of his bitterest opponents, Rudolf von Salis, to fight a duel. The verdict was that Massner was to be given a re-spite till April 4th for the freeing of the Duke of Vonderpril 4th for the freeing of the Duke

of Vendôme. A special court of punishment was to meet at Ilanz on July 15th. This court consisted of 24 members, mostly

French partisans and Massner's avowed enemies, who had gathered all the most damning evidence imaginable against him. It asserted that in 1691 he had captured the French courier Sonnery, and other in the standard of medical data and and and and and a standard of medical data. had Merveilleux arested by a band of masked men, who treated him so brutally that he nearly died. (Only afterwards did they learn that Mer-veilleux was the instigator of the whole evil plot.) Massner was also accused of the theft of merchanveilleux was the instigator of the whole evil plot.) Massner was also accused of the theft of merchan-dise to the value of 22,000 thalers and money from the Milanese treasure chests, which, with the help of three other men, who were named, he had re-placed by stones of the same weight. For good measure they added false coining and poisonings, these last utterly groundless and the former stories of theft unprovable. False witnesses who had been bribed vouched for these sorry deeds. As he was not to be reached and no portrait of him could be found, a clever judge drew his face upon a piece of paper and this was publicly burnt by the executioner amid great rejoicing. Massner lost much of his fortune, though when an inventory was made he was still very well off. At the plea of his wife, his house was not demolished and it was still standing in 1892, according to Dr. P. C. Planta, from whose "Geschichte von Grau-bünden" most of this chronicle is taken. The League of the Ten Jurisdictions had nominated Massner for bailiff of Mayenfeld ; but the Swiss Cantons, on the contrary, declared him beyond the law and set a price on his head. The Grisons finally proscribed the unfortunate man at the Court of Punishment held at Ilanz on the 17th Angust, 1711, his fortune was ordered confiscated, he himself was to be drawn and quar-tered, and a portion of his body exposed at the corners of the main thoroughfare of Coire, his house to be razed to the ground and on its site a column of shame to be erected upon which were to be inscribed his misdeeds ; finally, as Massner

column of shame to be rected upon which were to be inscribed his misdeeds; finally, as Massner had fied to the Voralberg, a reward of a thousand ducats was offered to whoever should capture him, dead or alive.

dead or alive. Meanwhile Massner had gone to Vienna to en-deavour to put an end to this embroglio by secur-ing the liberation of the Grand Prior which, after great difficulty, he succeeded in doing. The Duke of Vendôme agreed to the conditions imposed upon him, namely, that he would appeal in person to Louis XIV. for the release of the unhappy young Massner, and also see that no legal proceedings were instituted against the father ; failing in this, he agreed to place himself again under arrest within three months.

For a long while Massner remained at Vienna under the Emperor's protection, but after a while he found the friendly attitude changed to one of coolness and he could no longer endure it. Heartbroken, homesick and ill, Massner braved

colness and he could no longer endure it. Heartbroken, homesick and ill, Massner braved the terrible sentence in order to return to his native land. He wandered as a fugitive in the quiet valleys of Glaris ; but du Luc's spies discovered him and demanded his delivery. Massner, warned in time, hid himself at night in a farm wagon filled with straw which was going in the direction of Balzers. When on the other side of the Rhine, owing to the badly kept roads of those days, the wagon upset and Massner was mortally injured, dying a few hours later, on Austrian territory and in safety, but too late! So ended this man, who, while he may have transgressed, was truly great in his paternal love, facing such tremendous odds singlehanded in his endeavour to rescue his boy. Peace was concluded at Baden in 1714 be-tween France and Austria. Among the pleni-potentiaries of the Emperor was a nephew of Thomas Massner, who, after strenuous efforts even-tually succeeded in getting his cousin out of the dungeon where he had been kept for four years. When young Massner returned to his home he was received with universal expressions of es-teem and delight, and his fellow citizens did their best to atone for his sufferings by covering with honours this innocent victim of great nations at war. <u>EMILY KEENE BARNUM</u>.

# SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EDUCATIÓN DEPARTMENT. In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during last week:— Miss M. Homberger, Zurich: "A Trip across Umbria." Miss A. Keller, Winterthur: "Holi-days in the Canton of Grisons." Miss Bertie Schneider, Winterthur: "A Salad." Mr. F. Michel, Interlaken: "Spiritualism." Mr. Fr. Michel, Interlaken: "Spiritualism." Mr. Fr. Jaeggi, Solothurn: "Pro Juventute." Miss Berta Hilfiker, Rüschlikon-Zch.: "Shopping." Mr. Hans Muller, Buchs: "Hotellerie." Mr. Alfred Galli, Burgdorf: "Political Crimes." Mr. Emil Kellen-berger, Zurich: "The Financial Situation of the U.S.A." Miss M. Siegenthaler, Bern: "The Eternal Flame." Mr. Emil Bucher : "Personal Aspects of Modern Sports." Mr. Hermann Steiger: "Buried Alive," Some aspects of the relations between the Swiss artist and his country. Mr. K. Rau : "My Journey from Basle to London."

The debating classes dealt with the following

### A.O.F.B., SWISS VAT.

The second Dinner and Concert was held at the "Swiss Hotel," Old Compton Street, W., on the 16th March, when about 70 members of the Order were present.

The Loth March, when about 70 members of the Order were present. Tornado Coleman took the Chair, and announced the entry of the various officers, who attended the meeting in full regalia. Tornado Wyss, the host, then took over his official duties as Chairman. The members then sat down to dimer, and they had the choice of either English or Swiss dishes, which was greatly appreciated by all. After dinner a splendid Concert was given and enjoyed by everyone. An American auction for a copy of a picture, "The Lake of Uri," was then held and realised the magnificent sum of \$5 5s. Miss D. Ballieu, the buyer of the picture, at another meeting. The amount paid for the picture, together with the out box—the collecting with which kept certain members busy—totalled the sum of \$10 0s. 6d., 50 per cent. of which will be given to the Swiss Poor in London and 50 per cent. to Sir Alfred Fripp's Fund for his Wee Waifs.

#### 58e FÊTE SUISSE DE LONDRES, 1927.

58e FETE SUISSE DE LONDRES, 1927. Avec le mois de Mars, le Comité de la Fête Suisse s'est réuni comme de coutume pour prendre connaisance du rapport du Trésorier et des résul-tats généraux de la fête de l'année précédente, la 57e en nombre. Cette séance a eu lieu Lundi der-nier, M. Borsinger ayant eu l'amabilité de venir représenter le Ministre. Le Trésorier a constaté que les comptes de l'année 1926 soldaient de façon satisfaisante et qu'un don spécial de £5 5s, avait pu être versé au Fonds de Secours, grâce à ce résultat favorable. Celui-ci est dû essentiellement à la participation enthousiaste des compatriotes venus en très grand nombre l'année dernière. Toute l'amosphère de la Fête en a grandement bénéficié. Par contre, certains arrangements d'ordre pratique ont quelque peu souffert de cette affluence extraordinaire.

Aussi le Comité, heureux de voir que notre vieux "Thé Suisse" conserve sa vogue au sein de la Colonie, a t-il voté à l'unanimité le principe de la célébration de la 58e Fête. Il l'a fixée au Mercredi, 22 Juin, à Caxton Hall. D'autrepart, soucieux de ses devoirs envers tous ceux qui perticiperont à la Fête, il a décidé le loure en outre des locaux amplorés incavité.

de louer, en outre des locaux employés jusqu'ici, la belle salle du premier (council chamber) où un grand buffet pourra être installé, et quelques pièces en sus, pour servir de vestiaires. L'ancien buffet (lounge) au rez de chaussée, pourra faire office de pièce de dégagement, s'il y'a un trop plain plein.

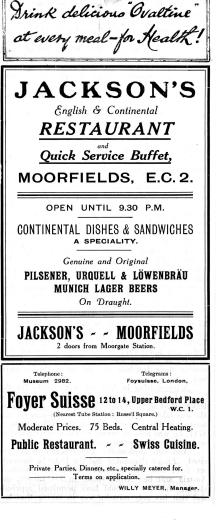
plein, De la sorte, la Colonie retrouvera à Caxton Hall tout ce qu'elle avait jadis à Portman Rooms, ou à peu près, et le Comité espère que ces arrange-ments nouveaux ajouteront un charme de plus à notre bonne vieille Fête de Juin, qui date de 1864 déjà. Le buffet agrandi permettra en tous cas, semble-t-il, à chacun de profiter véritablement de l'entre acte encore prolongé, en dégustant quelque douceur en compagnie d'amis. D'autres détails seront nubliés par la suite ceur en compagnie d'amis. D'autres détails seront publiés par la suite. *Le Secrétaire*.

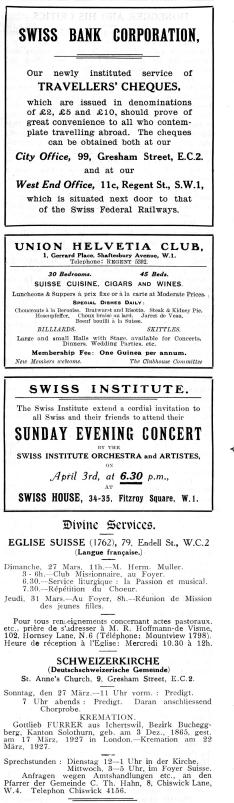
### PERSONAL.

The many friends of Mr. G. Cusi will be glad to hear that he is deriving great benefit from his sojourn at Lugano, where he has been staying for some weeks in order to recuperate from his recent illness

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED. (The figure in parentheses denotes the number of the issue on which the subscription expires.)

(The figure in parentheses denotes the number of the issue on which the subscription expires.)
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#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

- FORTHCOMING EVENTS.
  Saturday, March 26th. -SWISS RIFLE ASSOC. : Opening of the Shooting Range at Hendon (opposite the Welsh Harp).
  Sunday, March 27th.-SWISS GYMNASTIC SOC. : Display and Dance at 1, Gerrard Place, W.1.
  Wednesday, March 30th, at 8 p.m.-SWISS MER-CANTILE SOCIETY : Jass und Bockbier Abend at Swiss House, 34-35, Fitzroy Sq., W.1.
  Saturday, April 2nd, at 6.30 p.m.-SWISS MERCAN-TILE SOCIETY : Cinderella Dance at the Mid-land Grand Hotel, St. Pancras Station, N.W.
  Sunday Anril 2nd, at 6.30 p.m.-SWISS INSTITUTE:
- Sunday, April 3rd, at 6.30 p.m.—SWISS INSTITUTE: Concert at Swiss House, 34-35, Fitzroy Square, W.4.
- W.A.
  W.A.
  W.A.
  Tuesday, April 12th, at 7 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Annual General Meeting at Pagani's, 42, Great Portland Street, W.1.
  Saturday, May 28th, at 2.30 p.m.—' SWISS SPORTS ' at the Herne Hill Athletic Ground.
- SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.—Rehearsals every Friday evening. Every Swiss heartily invited to attend. Particulars from the Hon. Sccretary, Swiss Choral Society, 74 Charlotte Street, W.1.

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