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CONCERT.

Swiss Male Choir, Swiss Orchestral Society and Swiss Accordion Group, in aid of the Swiss Benevolent Society, on Friday, April 23rd, 1948, at Conway Hall, Holborn, W.C.1.

One often hears that generosity has become a virtue of a rare occurrence, whether this is so or not, I would not venture to say; in any case, the programme presented by the above Swiss Societies at Conway Hall, on Friday last, was generous in the extreme, and no one could complain, that they did not get their money's worth.

May I be allowed, before I go any further, to give to the organisers one gentle hint, in all good faith, and without any malice or preference, that nearly three hours of entertainment, is to my mind, too much of a good thing in these days of austerity.

The programme could have been cut here and there without making it less attractive, and in re-viewing item for item I shall voice my humble opinion where these cuts could have been made.

Taking advantage of the privilege usually accorded to the Press, to criticize, I shall first of all say, without reserve, that it was an excellent concert, and I am sure that the audience of nearly five hundred, thoroughly enjoyed it.

I am more than glad to be able to report, that the performers played and sang before a "Full House" and the Colony is to be congratulated on the support they have given to the performers.

The Swiss Orchestral Society opened the programme with the Overture "The Marriage of Figaro" by Mozart, and the Symphony in B. minor (Unfinished) by Schubert, both excellently executed under the efficient conductorship of Mr. E. P. Dick.

They were followed by our brilliant pianist, Albert Ferber, who has by now firmly established himself as an artist of great accomplishment in the musical sphere of this country.

In playing Chopin's Nocturne C. minor, Mazurka G. minor and Scherzo C. sharp minor, he displayed a complete mastery of his instrument, and a thorough understanding of a wide range of musical styles.

The next item consisted of two songs, Keldorfer's "Hab' Sonne im Herzen" and "Le Retour du Printemps" by Abt, sung by the Swiss Male Choir, conducted by Mr. E. P. Dick.

These were finely rendered, both diction and tone were almost faultless and the Choir is heartily to be congratulated for their really outstanding performance, "Le Retour du Printemps" was especially enjoyable to listen to.

The Accordion Group under the competent leadership of Mr. A. Gandon, then appeared on the platform dressed in their becoming national costumes.

They played with great vivacity three pieces "Sommerabend in Interlaken" (Valse) by Oehrli, "Süsse Erinnerung" (Tango) By Müller, and a March "Flott im Schritt" by Wenk.

It was a creditable performance and judging from the applause, these catchy tunes met with the approval of the audience. The first number "Sommerabend in Interlaken" must be labelled as "generous," and here a cut would not have been out of place, in fact, one very sweet Lady sitting next to me, remarked that they must have "double summer time" at Interlaken.

After a short interval, the Swiss Orchestral Society again appeared on the platform. This time, they played the "Egmont Overture op. 84" by Beethoven, and an operatic selection of Puccini's "La Tosca." A rather ambitious undertaking by an amateur orchestra.

It would be wrong to judge this performance from the angle of those performances which concert-goers are used to hear at some of our well-known Concert Halls by famous orchestras.

I would say that a brave and even creditable attempt has been made, especially with the Egmont Overture, but I am somehow uneasy in my mind, whether the Orchestra has not perhaps attempted too big a job; it might be, that with more rehearsing, a better balanced performance could have been achieved.

The selection from "La Tosca" suffered by lack of co-ordination between the conductor and the players, and here again a cut would have been beneficial to both performers and audience.

All the same, making due allowances and taking all facts into consideration, it was an achievement which should not go without praise.

Albert Ferber again played three pieces: "Navarra" by Albeniz, "The Lover and the Nightingale" by Granados, and De Falla's "Fire Dance" which were superbly executed, the Fire Dance being especially brilliantly played.

Then for the second time the Swiss Male Choir lined up to sing "L'Alpée" by Bovet, and that lovely song "Mein Herz ist fröhlich alle Zeit" by Fehrmann.

As in the first part of the programme, here again a really enjoyable performance was given, and both conductor and Choir deserve great praise. The Colony possesses in the "Male Choir" an institution of which they can be rightly proud.

The Programme was wound up with a few numbers played by our accordionists in fine style. Mr. Gandon certainly has his group well in hand, and both he and his players deserve a compliment.

Specially mention should be made of Mr. E. P. Dick, the untiring conductor of both the Orchestra and the Male Choir, who by his untiring efforts has once more given us a few hours of sheer delight.

ST.

SCHWEIZERBUND (Swiss Club)

74, CHARLOTTE STREET, W.1.

MEETING

Saturday, May 15th, 1948,

at 4 p.m. sharp, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

AGENDA: Rebuilding and Reorganisation.

Social Evening, May 15th, 1948, at 8 o'clock.

Dance, Accordionists, Yodels.

Pre-announcement: July 31st, 1948:

Reception of Basler Yodler Truppe, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1.

Particulars to follow.

THE COMMITTEE.