

30 years service to the colony

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30 YEARS SERVICE TO THE COLONY.



E. P. DICK.

During the last twenty years in which I have been connected with this paper, it has fallen to my sad lot to write many a last farewell to personal friends or compatriots, who have distinguished themselves in the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

To-day, I am privileged to write about an old personal friend, who is happily still amongst us, and I am glad to say, still very much alive.

E. P. Dick is celebrating the completion of 30 years service as conductor of the Swiss Orchestral Society, an institution which is well-known in the London Colony. For many years, this orchestra has unselfishly put its services at the disposal of the Colony on innumerable occasions and has proved a valuable asset to its social life.

To be active in a Swiss Colony for years on end is no sinecure, as many have since found out; it requires tact, devotion to duty and above all, a great deal of enthusiasm; all these qualities our friend possesses and thus he can look back to-day on a life rich in achievements.

It was perhaps not always plain sailing; to be in the public eye and subject to little jealousies and intrigues; requires a stout heart and a strong will, and many have through disappointment, quitted the field of their activities.

Not so our friend, smilingly and undeterred he has carried on the good work to this day, and for this he deserves the unstinted thanks of all those who have the Colony's welfare at heart.

Apart from his activities in the Swiss Orchestral Society, he has rendered many valuable services to other Societies, as will be seen presently.

Paul E. Dick was born in Berne nearly sixty years ago; when six years old, he began the slow task of learning to play the piano; in those days no wireless existed and the gramophone was in its infancy and it was customary and belonged to the *bon ton* to play an instrument of some kind.

At the age of eight he entered the "Musikschule" in Berne, where he took pianoforte lessons and "Harmonielehre" under "Musikdirektor" Kradolfer. Showing great talent, he gradually rose to become Kradolfer's best pupil. Young as he then was, he was chosen to play piano concertos with the "Berner Stadtorchester" under the conductorship of his

teacher. At this time, he also received tuition in organ playing.

In 1902 he joined the orchestra of the "Gymnasium" in Berne which was then under the conductorship of "Musikdirektor" E. Hoechle, as pianist, and it is during this period, that the writer made his acquaintance playing in the same orchestra. At this time Dick learnt to play percussion instruments, which he played with this orchestra when no piano accompaniment was required.

Two years later (1904) he became one of the founders of the "Zwingli Verein," and immediately undertook the formation of an orchestra, and with this institution he learnt the art of conducting. A number of concerts were giving both in Berne and Basle which were very successful.

In the meantime, he took matriculation and in 1908, he played for the last time in Berne, Mozart's Piano Concerto in D. minor with the "Stadtorchester" under Kradolfer. This constituted the final exam as far as the "Musikschule" was concerned.

Having now chosen not to follow the precarious profession of a musician he entered, in 1908, the Banque Cantonale in Neuchâtel as an apprentice. In this town he joined the Société des Commerçants, where he became conductor of their orchestra, continuing at the same time his piano lessons under Professeur Quinche.

Then followed posts in Brussels and Paris.

In 1910, E. P. Dick arrived in London, and two years later joined the Swiss Institute, since disbanded. This Society, of which the writer was a member, at the same time, possessed an orchestra which was then under the conductorship of Mr. Luder. In 1914, the post of pianist became vacant, and E. P. Dick was chosen, this post he retained until 1919. Meanwhile he was also organist, for three years, at the Eglise Suisse at Endell Street. During 1918/19 he was conductor of the "Maennerchor Helvetia" which post he vacated to become conductor of the Swiss Institute Orchestra, then stationed at Red Lion Square, W.C. (The name was later changed to Swiss Orchestral Society.) This post, which was an honorary one, he filled until to-day, i.e., for thirty years.

In 1938, the Swiss Choral Society was revived, and E. P. Dick was chosen as its conductor, which post he occupies still, the name of this Society was later on changed to Swiss Male Choir.

These biographical notes show, that our friend, has, apart from his profession (he is a signature holder of the Swiss Bank Corporation in London), devoted almost a life-time to Music, in one way or another.

Mr. Dick will conduct the Swiss Orchestra and the Swiss Male Choir at the forthcoming concert, which will take place on Friday, March 25th, 1949, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C., and this will be a splendid occasion to show him our affection and appreciation for his great and lasting services rendered to the Swiss Colony in London.

No better tribute can be paid to him, than to fill Conway Hall to the last place.

To end these few lines, may I be permitted to strike a personal note in thanking him for many years of friendship, and the many hours of enjoyment he has given me in the golden realm of music.

Dear friend, may you be permitted to remain with us for many more years, giving us joy and pleasure, this is the wish of us all and especially of yours

ST.